



National Workforce Development Fund

Revised Interim Program Guidelines 2011-12

The *Building Australia's Future Workforce* package announced by the Australian Government on 10 May 2011 in the 2011-2012 Budget provides a \$3.02 billion investment for a new approach to deliver the skilled workers the economy needs and ensure more Australians have the opportunity to share in the nation's prosperity.

The package has four components:

- Putting industry at the heart of the training system
- Modernising apprenticeships
- Skills to support increased participation
- Reforming the national training system

Through the National Workforce Development Fund the Government will provide \$558 million over four years to support training and workforce development in areas of current and future skills need. Industry will be required to make a co-contribution to training costs. There will be \$147 million available during 2011-2012.

The National Workforce Development Fund also forms part of Australian Government Skills Connect. Australian Government Skills Connect is an initiative designed to consolidated Government skills programs and better target training to meet industry and employer needs.

Purpose

These guidelines outline the procedural and contractual requirements and the interim arrangements of the National Workforce Development Fund (the Fund) during 2011-12. They address the funding arrangements, eligibility requirements, application process and criteria against which applications will be assessed. The Fund may also be used to implement the National Resources Sector Workforce Strategy. Guidelines for these projects are at Attachment A. For more information on the National Resources Sector Workforce Strategy visit www.deewr.gov.au/nrset.

The Fund website www.deewr.gov.au/nwdf provides up to date information on the initiative. The Department of Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education (DIISRTE) reserves the right to amend these guidelines. Eligibility requirements may be waived by the Minister for Tertiary Skills in exceptional circumstances. Industry Skills Councils* (ISCs) may bring forward innovative proposals for consideration of the Minister for Tertiary Skills outside of the eligibility requirements and application process outlined in these guidelines. Any proposals considered outside the standard eligibility requirements must be consistent with the policy objectives agreed by the Australian Government and set out in these guidelines.

Objectives and Overview

The Fund forms part of the Australian Government's *Building Australia's Future Workforce* package. The objective of the Fund is to assist individual enterprises to increase their workforce capacity by providing existing workers and new workers with the opportunity to enhance their skill levels through formal training. The Fund will also increase the supply of labour and skills in sectors and occupations where there is a current or emerging skills need.

The Fund allows eligible organisations to apply for funding to support the training of existing workers and new workers in areas of identified business and workforce development need. Government funding will be

* For the purposes of the National Workforce Development Fund, Industry Skills Council (ISC) hereon refers to the eleven existing ISCs and Auto Skills Australia (ASA).

supplemented by a co-contribution from industry with the Government contributing at higher levels for smaller businesses.

Projects supported by the Fund during 2011-12 must involve a partnership comprising of one or more Participating Organisations (PO), an Industry Skills Council (ISC) and at least one Registered Training Organisation (RTO). ISCs will play a key role in assisting organisations to identify their training needs, facilitating the selection of a RTO to meet these needs and monitoring the implementation of successful proposals.

Organisations will be eligible to apply for funding if they operate in a high priority sector or if the occupations in which they are seeking to train their workforce are in local or national demand. A key element of the Fund is to encourage organisations to undertake workforce planning and skills needs analysis to develop training solutions that align with business goals. The proposed training to be delivered should be beyond the organisation's existing training commitments, or training that would otherwise not have been provided.

The Fund will be managed by the new Workforce and Productivity Agency (the Agency) once it is established in 2012. The Agency will have a key role in determining the arrangements for the delivery of training and the priority sectors and occupations to be targeted from 1 July 2012. DIISRTE will manage the Fund during 2011-12 through the arrangements outlined in these guidelines.

The Australian Government will determine the priority sectors, regions and groups for funding under these guidelines during 2011-12 based on industry advice.

Proposals for funding may be submitted by lead organisations to ISCs on an ongoing basis until all funding available for the financial year has been allocated. An assessment of eligibility and priorities for funding will be undertaken by ISCs in consultation with DIISRTE. This will be followed by a DIISRTE moderation of proposals. Final approval of proposals will be made by the Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills, Jobs and Workplace Relations.

All trainees participating in projects approved for funding during 2011-12 must commence training on or before 31 March 2012. Extensions for commencement may be granted in exceptional circumstances at DIISRTE's discretion.

The length of enterprise based training projects, and completion of training, will be dependent on the time required to gain the qualification sought. All training approved for funding during 2011-12 must be completed by 31 December 2014.

Funding Available through the National Workforce Development Fund

The funding available to support training and workforce development over the next four years is as follows:

Year	Funding committed
2011-12	\$147 million
2012-13	\$150 million
2013-14	\$125 million
2014-15	\$125 million

The Workforce and Productivity Agency will develop the guidelines that will detail the arrangements for accessing funding from 1 July 2012.

Funding Available During 2011-12

Through the Fund the Australian Government will commit \$147 million during 2011-12 to support training and encourage workforce development in areas of current and future skills need. Industry will be required to make a co-contribution to training costs. Funding will be targeted to sectors identified as having acute skills pressure. Funding will also be available to support training in all sectors in occupations that are in high demand and to support the upskilling and reskilling of workers in sectors in decline and facing structural adjustment challenges.

Roles and Responsibilities

Industry Skills Councils (ISCs)

ISCs have a central coordination role in the Fund in both the application phase and in monitoring and reporting to DIISRTE on the implementation of successful proposals. ISCs interested in participating in the Fund must enter into a Funding Agreement with DIISRTE that will outline the terms and conditions of funding.

As part of this role, ISCs will be required to:

- Call for proposals and ensure that a range of industry sectors covered by the ISC are made aware of the program
- Assist interested organisations to develop enterprise based training proposals that are compliant with these guidelines
- In conjunction with DIISRTE assess and prioritise proposals for funding against the Assessment Criteria outlined in these guidelines
- Submit applications to DIISRTE for moderation and final approval
- Maintain regular contact with applicants regarding the outcome of their proposal
- Provide feedback to DIISRTE on any issues with the implementation of Approved Projects and assist with managing risks
- Ensure that partnership arrangements with Participating Organisations (POs) and Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) delivering training meet the legislative requirements of the Funding Agreement
- Receive funding from the Australian Government and disburse funds to RTOs in accordance with the Funding Agreement
- Collect data from RTOs and POs and undertake reporting, monitoring and evaluation as required by DIISRTE.

Participating Organisations (POs)

A PO can be an enterprise, professional association, industry body, consortium or an Employment Service Provider (ESP) (see **Who can Apply?** for further details).

Organisations interested in participating in the Fund will need to work with the relevant ISC during the application stage and if their proposal is successful, work with the ISC to implement Approved Projects. POs must enter into a legally binding agreement with the ISC for the purpose of the Fund. In working with the ISC, organisations will be required to:

- Develop an application that is compliant with these guidelines for submission to the ISC. The application must demonstrate the organisation's current and future business needs and the proposed training and recruitment solutions to address these needs
- Engage a suitable RTO to deliver the required training
- Demonstrate their financial commitment to the project and make a co-contribution to training costs
- Provide written advice to their ISC at the half way point of their Approved Project and on completion of the Approved Project about their satisfaction with the training delivered
- Report to the ISC on the impact of the training delivered under the Fund and any organisational issues such as productivity, performance, staff retention etc. as they arise.

Employment Service Providers (ESPs)

In addition to the roles of a PO listed above, ESPs have a specific role in regard to new workers who are job seekers. In the case of projects involving new workers who are job seekers, ESPs will be required to assist employers with screening and selecting job seekers to ensure they have suitable attributes and employability skills for identified job roles. ESPs must also ensure that training is aligned with job requirements and the skills needs of trainees.

Registered Training Organisations (RTOs)

RTOs are contracted by either the ISC or the PO to deliver training for projects that have been approved for funding. While RTOs may not submit an application, they may participate in the Fund by entering into a partnership with one or more organisations to support a proposal from the organisation(s). To access funding, RTOs will be required to:

- Enter a legally binding arrangement with the relevant ISC (or the PO) with regard to the Fund

- Offer and, where appropriate, undertake Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)/Recognition of Current Competency (RCC) assessments for each trainee
- Deliver training that meets the needs of POs and trainees for Approved Projects
- Maintain records of information collected from and provided to trainees, including a separate file for each trainee issued with a Confirmation of Enrolment
- Collect and submit data to a PO or an ISC to allow ISCs to meet their reporting requirements (see **Performance Management, Reporting and Data Collection**)

Department of Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education (DIISRTE)

DIISRTE is responsible for implementing and administering the Fund. DIISRTE will be required to:

- Enter into a legally binding agreement with the ISC with regard to the Fund
- In conjunction with ISCs assess and prioritise proposals for funding against the Assessment Criteria outlined in these guidelines
- Conduct an independent moderation of applications to ensure the overall assessment process of each ISC is fair, meets the priorities of the Fund and is in accordance with these guidelines
- Prepare funding recommendations for the Minister's consideration
- Manage Funding Agreements with ISCs and the distribution of Australian Government Funding
- Evaluate program outcomes and monitor the performance of ISCs and POs in relation to the Fund

Who Can Apply?

Organisations eligible to participate in the program include:

- Enterprises
- Professional associations, industry bodies and other lead agents representing a consortia of enterprises
- Employment Service Providers

Professional associations and industry bodies may submit an application to the relevant ISC to coordinate on behalf of smaller enterprises seeking to participate in the program. This approach is encouraged so that proposals meet localised training needs.

Where a consortium of enterprises (two or more) seeks to make a single application to an ISC, one of the members must act as a lead organisation to coordinate and submit the application to the relevant ISC for assessment. The lead organisation must have the authority to act on behalf of all members and to enter into contracts which are binding on them. DIISRTE may require all consortia members to confirm in writing that the lead organisation has the authority to bind other members, in a form specified by DIISRTE. All consortium members, and the lead member, must be clearly identified in the application.

ESPs may submit an application to the relevant ISC on behalf of one or more new workers that meet the eligibility criteria.

Who is Eligible to Receive Training?

Under the Fund, training will be provided to existing workers and new workers. To be eligible for training, an individual must:

- Not have previously completed the qualification they are applying for under the Fund
- Be an Australian citizen, a permanent resident of Australia or a humanitarian refugee
- Be 17 years of age or over
- Satisfy course pre-requisites (such as adequate literacy and numeracy) to effectively undertake the training
- Meet any licensing requirements for relevant qualifications
- Be an existing worker, or a new worker, which includes job seekers. Each application should include a written commitment from the employer stating that each new worker that completes the required training will be employed
- Hold a pre-existing qualification at the Certificate III level or above if the application is for skills sets

Individuals must not be receiving funds under any other Commonwealth or State and Territory Government program in relation to the training that will be covered by the Fund. If the proposed training would normally be funded from other sources, evidence from the relevant authority that normal funding for training is not available must be provided with the application.

Organisations wishing to have workers with pre-existing qualifications undertake training will need to make a case to the relevant ISC for the inclusion of the individual worker in the required course of training. For example, an application for funding may support bridging training to update the skills set of employees to meet current skill requirements.

Volunteers and those employed in the general government sector in Australian, State and Territory Government Departments are not eligible to receive training under the Fund unless specifically approved by DIISRTE. Under this definition Australian, State and Territory government employees working in policy and program management areas (that are only a function of government) would not be eligible. Those who work in service delivery/business areas that are delivered by both government and non-government providers would be eligible.

Licensing Requirements

RTOs and ISCs must check trainees can meet licensing requirements (for relevant qualifications) prior to participating in training under the Fund. DIISRTE recognises some requirements, for example, an applicant's health, and meeting fit and proper person tests (e.g. police checks) cannot be assessed by RTOs and ISCs, but intend participants should be made aware of all licensing requirements prior to enrolment and the consequences of a negative licence prerequisite assessment.

What Training will be Funded?

Eligible Qualifications

Training undertaken through the Fund must be for an Eligible Qualification (a nationally endorsed qualification or a Training Package Skills Set recognised under the Australian Qualifications Framework) that addresses the identified training and skills development needs of the PO. For new workers these qualifications include Certificate II, III, IV, Diploma, Advanced Diploma, Vocational Graduate Certificate and Vocational Graduate Diploma for new workers. For existing workers these qualifications include Certificate III, IV, Diploma, Advanced Diploma, Vocational Graduate Certificate and Vocational Graduate Diploma.

Qualifications eligible for funding are those that map to occupations listed on the Priority Occupations List (POL), which can be found on the Fund website at www.deewr.gov.au/nwdf.

DIISRTE reserves the right to determine which vocational qualifications will be eligible for the program and may revoke approval at its discretion if the eligible qualification no longer meets the criteria for approval.

Priority Occupations List (POL) and Addition of Occupations in Local Demand

The POL is a national priority list of occupations in demand. A list of priority occupations has been developed by DIISRTE from labour market research including analysis of advertised job vacancies and employer surveys, and input from industry via ISCs. If an occupation is in demand locally but is not included on the POL an application for inclusion of the occupation on the POL can be made to DIISRTE as per the process outlined below.

Applying to add an occupation to the POL

- An application to add an occupation to the POL should be included as an attachment to the application for funding. ISCs will provide assistance in developing the case for inclusion on the POL
- Occupations may be included on the POL if there is both qualitative and quantitative evidence of a local need and a skills gap

Decisions on the addition of occupations to the POL will be provided at the same time as the provision of advice on the decision on the outcome of the application for funding.

Training Package Skills Sets

The Fund may be used to support delivery of skills sets identified within a Training Package recognised under the Australian Qualifications Framework. The Training Package Skills Sets have been identified according to the following National Quality Council definition:

'Those single units or combinations of units of competency from an endorsed Training Package, which link to a license or regulatory requirement, or defined industry need'.

Skills sets are not a substitution for qualifications. Australian Government funding may only be used to support the delivery of Training Package Skills Sets to trainees who already hold a qualification (at the Certificate III level or above) that requires bridging training to meet current skills requirements. In addition the skills set must meet an identified workforce development need of the enterprise in which the trainee is working or will be employed.

Where an application is for the proposed delivery of skills sets, evidence of qualifications must be attached for each trainee.

Skills sets eligible for funding are those that map to occupations listed on the POL, which can be found on the Fund website at www.deewr.gov.au/nwdf.

Applications that include delivery of Training Package Skills Sets must provide the Training Package Code Number and name the skills sets.

Recognition of Prior Learning

RTOs delivering training under the Fund must offer Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) or Recognition of Current Competencies (RCC) assessment for each participant in the program.

Any RPL/RCC process should identify the skills gaps of a trainee and enable training to be targeted to fill those gaps. Trainees may have gained prior skills through informal or formal training, experience in the workplace, voluntary work, or social or domestic activities. RTOs must maintain detailed records of this assessment as part of the trainee's file.

Where trainees have undertaken an RPL/RCC assessment and their current competencies have been recognised for some or all components of their study, they will be considered to have enrolled in the full eligible qualification. The full cost of the eligible qualification will be provided as payment for the RPL/RCC assessment and the balance of the eligible qualification costs.

Credit Transfer

Credit Transfer occurs where a trainee has previously completed some units of an eligible qualification but not the full qualification.

If a trainee is entitled to a credit transfer in an eligible qualification, DIISRTE will provide an amount to cover the approved costs of the remaining units required to complete the eligible qualification. The percentage of the qualification already completed by trainees should be notified to DIISRTE by the ISC so that the appropriate percentage of costs for required training can be established and funded appropriately.

Australian Government payments for commencement, mid-point and completion milestones will be paid on a pro-rata basis for the remaining percentage of the qualification to be delivered. RTOs must maintain detailed records of the credit transfer assessment as part of the trainee's file.

Support Services

A key objective of the Fund is to assist enterprises to increase their productivity as well as the skill levels and mobility of workers by providing existing workers and new workers with opportunities to increase their qualifications. The focus of the Fund is therefore on achieving formal qualifications.

Some participants may need additional support to achieve this outcome, for example, mentoring, literacy and numeracy training. Some support services are available through other Australian Government programs such as the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP), Language Literacy and Numeracy Program (LLNP) and Workplace English Language Literacy Program (WELL). Where support services are not provided through other government programs, POs may seek funding for the support services through their applications to the Fund. The project proposal should identify what additional support services will be provided by the organisation and how the support service will contribute to achieving the training outcome.

The cost of support services should be identified in the costing justification that forms part of the application. This justification should identify any other support that is being provided directly by the enterprise or through other government programs.

Exit from Eligible Qualification Prior to Completion

Where a participant exits a course prior to completion, they will not be able to enrol in another course as part of the Fund. Where exceptional circumstances exist, the PO may seek a waiver from DIISRTE which would allow a participant to enrol in another course. Each decision will depend on the circumstances of the individual worker and be at DIISRTE's absolute discretion.

Delivery of Training

RTOs will deliver training required by organisations participating in the Fund. RTOs may explore a full range of flexible delivery options to ensure the needs of the PO and trainee are met.

The PO is responsible for selecting a RTO that meets their needs and will have the flexibility to decide the mode of delivery of training (e.g. onsite, offsite, or e-learning). DIISRTE will agree to the participation of the RTO in the project, provided they meet the minimum requirements which may include scope of registration, financial sustainability, insurance coverage, and no significant deficiencies in performance of any substantive requirement or obligation under a prior contract with DIISRTE.

How to Apply

Organisations seeking to participate in the program must work with the relevant ISC to submit an application to DIISRTE. Those wishing to participate need to contact an ISC prior to the submission of an application.

Role of ISCs

During the application stage ISCs will assist organisations interested in participating to develop enterprise based training proposals, including:

- Advice on the Fund, including eligibility and training options
- Assistance in developing an application that is compliant with these guidelines
- Advice on undertaking training needs analysis and developing a workforce development plan
- Assistance in developing a business case for the addition of a occupation to the Priority Occupation List (POL)

Required Documentation

Applications must include the following documentation to be considered for funding:

1. **A completed application form:** The form must not be altered in any way without first seeking written approval from DIISRTE.

To obtain an application form, a lead organisation or an enterprise needs to access <https://tedonline.deewr.gov.au> register as a TED Online user and download the application form for the Fund. An Australian Business Number (ABN) is required to download the form. Once downloaded, the form may be completed offline. Once completed, the form will need to upload to the site and be submitted.

If you are unable to access the site contact the ISC operating in your sector who can download the form on your behalf.

2. **Evidence of support from Participating Organisations:**
 - a. A signed letter of commitment to co-fund the cost of training places
 - b. In the case of new workers, the organisation must provide a **written statement of commitment to provide employment for each new worker** that has completed the required training
3. **Evidence of costing of training from RTOs and justification of the cost:** This should identify the number of trainees, the cost of delivering each qualification, the cost of any support services, the mode of delivery of training, and justification of the cost of training. A justification of the cost of training may cover why the particular RTO(s) and delivery options have been selected and why the proposed training costs for each qualification vary from local market prices for delivering similar training.
4. **Evidence of targeting to Priority Groups:** Projects that include training for new workers must identify the priority groups that are being targeted and how each group will be attracted and supported during training and after placement into work.

Supporting Evidence

Applicants are encouraged to submit a workforce development plan/training or skills analysis with their proposal to add to the strength of their application in a competitive funding process. This should illustrate the labour and skills needs in the enterprise and the training solutions and recruitment actions that will be implemented to address this need. While it is recognised that some organisations may not have the capacity to conduct one, a workforce

development plan or skills analysis forms part of the assessment criteria used during the selection process (see **Selection Process** below).

Submitting Applications

Applications and associated information detailed above must be submitted to an ISC using the on-line application form available from TED Online at <https://tedonline.deewr.gov.au>.

Selection Process

DIISRTE and each ISC will work together to assess applications and agree on the priorities for funding. This assessment will be based on the Assessment Criteria listed below. DIISRTE will undertake an independent moderation of assessments of priorities for funding to achieve consistency of assessment across applications submitted and to ensure the assessment of applications is in accordance with these guidelines.

The Assessment Criteria are:

- The training extent to which the proposed project relates to an identified priority sector, region, occupation or skills need
- The organisations and individuals that will receive training under the Fund meet the eligibility criteria set out in these guidelines
- Where an application is for a skills set, the trainee must have a pre-existing qualification at the Certificate III level or above (see **Training Package Skills Sets** under **What Training Will Be Funded** above) and the skill set must relate to a workforce development need identified by the enterprise
- The RTO(s) proposed to deliver the training have had no significant performance issues of any substantive requirement or obligation under a prior contract with government
- Capacity to benefit. The rationale for the proposal will be used to make an assessment of the capacity of the organisation and its employees to benefit from the proposed project. Applicants are encouraged to submit a training needs analysis or a workforce development plan in support of the rationale for the proposal. Applicants are also encouraged to demonstrate that the proposed training is in addition to existing training efforts, or training that would otherwise not be provided. This will also be taken into account in the assessment of capacity to benefit
- Value for money. The justification of the cost of training will be used to make an assessment of value for money. (Note: value for money takes into consideration a range of factors unique to a proposal)
- Targeting of priority groups and sectors. Where a proposal is focused on new workers preference will be provided to applications that target the priority groups and sectors for the program (see **Priority Groups** below)

Consideration will also be given to the:

- Overall capacity of the proposed organisation to implement the proposed projects. This may include an assessment of the financial viability of POs and RTOs
- Spread of applications across industry sectors
- Spread of applications across various enterprise sizes
- Spread of applications across regions impacted by economic restructuring and growth areas.
- Equitable distribution of available Funds

Applications that satisfactorily meet the Assessment Criteria will be forwarded to DIISRTE by an ISC for final assessment and approval. ISCs will need to include the following:

1. **A completed DIISRTE application form and Assessment Form:** There should be one application and one assessment form per organisation or consortium
2. **A Covering Sheet:** Listing all individual applications recommended for funding, the cost of each application, the total amount of Government funding required, the total enterprise contribution, any labour market segments that have been targeted and the type of organisations (peak body, industry association etc)
3. **A completed Application for Funding:** This includes the ISC risk management plan, project management plan and timeline for delivery under the Fund

DIISRTE will conduct an independent moderation of the assessment of priorities for funding using the same assessment criteria listed above. The key purpose of the DIISRTE process is to moderate assessments to ensure

fairness in the overall process. DIISRTE will make recommendations to the Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills, Jobs and Workplace Relations who will approve or decline applications for funding.

DIISRTE will advise the relevant ISC of the outcome. ISCs will advise organisations of the outcome of their application.

Applications will be accepted on an on-going basis until all funding available for the financial year has been allocated.

Priority Groups

To meet current and emerging labour demands, it will be necessary to attract, train and retain workers in priority sectors and occupations. Particular demographic groups that are currently underrepresented in the workforce include Indigenous Australians, people with a disability, people from a non-English speaking background, parents on return to work, mature age people and young people. Projects that support an increase in the participation of these groups in the workforce are encouraged.

Projects that support the participation of women in non-traditional female occupations and men in non-traditional male occupations are encouraged.

Priority may also be given to sectors experiencing high growth and development as well as those sectors in decline and facing structural adjustment challenges.

In addition, projects that aim to increase the skills and workforce participation of individuals living in regional areas are encouraged. A fair proportion of funding will be available to support the delivery of training in regional areas.

Funding Arrangements

The program is a partnership between POs, the ISC and the Australian Government. The Government will fund a proportion of the qualification cost not exceeding the proportion specified in the table below.

Size of Participating Organisation's Workforce (Full Time Equivalent)	Australian Government Contribution (%)	Participating Organisation Contribution (%)
1 -99 (small)	67	33
100 – 199 (medium)	50	50
200 and above (large)	34	66

Funding for Administration

Each participating ISC will be paid an administrative fee of five per cent of the cost of projects managed by the ISC with a minimum of \$200,000 per ISC and a maximum of five per cent of Government funding. Administration fees will be paid to ISCs upon execution of the Funding Agreement.

Payment of Funds to Participating Organisations and Registered Training Organisations

Out of the funding received from DIISRTE, ISCs or in some instances a PO (i.e. where the ISC has an agreement to fund a PO directly), will pay RTOs for the cost of training to be delivered, as per approved proposals and agreement between the ISC, RTO and participating organisation.

RTOs will be paid according to the milestones below:

- 40 per cent of the Australian Government's contribution of course costs for the total number of trainees who commence training
- 30 per cent of the Australian Government's contribution of course costs for the total number of continuing trainees to be paid half way through the expected duration of the training (trainees who have withdrawn before this point in time will not attract payment)
- 30 per cent of the Australian Government's contribution of course costs for the total number of completing trainees on completion of training by the last continuing trainee

Where an ISC enters into an arrangement with a PO to directly provide it with the Australian Government's contribution to the cost of the training delivery, the PO will be paid on the same basis as RTOs (whether the PO is an RTO or not).

The schedule of payments for the balance of the cost of the training (i.e. the participating organisation contribution) are a matter between each PO and their RTO. To receive funds, RTOs must enter into a legally binding arrangement with the relevant ISC (or the PO) with regard to the Fund. The progress payments to RTOs will be subject to agreement from the PO that the training has been provided to their employees in accordance with the agreement with the ISC (or the PO) and the RTO.

Record Keeping Requirements

RTOs must maintain records of information collected from, and provided to, all participants, including a separate file for each participant who is issued with a Confirmation of Enrolment. Further detail of documentation requirements and required evidence for payment claims are outlined in the Funding Agreement. ISCs must ensure that RTOs maintain records.

Reallocation of Funding

A PO must notify the ISC immediately in relation to any changes to or withdrawals from training delivered under the Fund. The ISC must notify DIISRTE immediately of the change. In the case of unspent funds, ISCs must determine whether the amount remaining can be reallocated to an alternate PO in accordance with the Fund guidelines or via another course of action as preferred or agreed by DIISRTE in writing. Any new proposals that seek to utilise unspent funds must be approved by the Minister or a delegate of the Minister. DIISRTE may approve changes to a project once it has been approved by the Minister.

Performance Management, Reporting and Data Collection

During the life of the program, DIISRTE will undertake performance monitoring of ISCs and POs in relation to the Fund. This may include:

- on-site monitoring
- targeted monitoring
- system monitoring
- desk-top monitoring

This will ensure Australian Government funds are used appropriately and ISCs are meeting their contractual responsibilities. Monitoring also provides the opportunity to identify policy and delivery issues early.

For projects approved during 2011-12, ISCs are required to submit data to DIISRTE on the training activity funded under the program in a format specified in the Funding Agreement. DIISRTE may request student level data that covers the individual progress of training and socio-demographic characteristics of participants. Data is to be supplied at the commencement of training and then at three monthly intervals, with a final report at completion of the project or no later than February 2015. ISCs are also required to submit an evaluation of the Approved Projects in a manner and frequency agreed under the Funding Agreement with DIISRTE.

RTOs and POs will be required to maintain and manage records and submit data to ISCs as requested. ISCs will then quality assure the data and provide it to DIISRTE as per reporting requirements specified in Funding Agreements.

POs are required to provide written advice to their ISC at the half way point of their Approved Project and on completion of the Approved Project about their satisfaction with the training delivered. They will report to the ISC on the impact of the training delivered under the Fund and on any changes to the productivity, performance, staff retention or any other relevant issues at the enterprise.

DIISRTE will review the results of the ISC reports and evaluate the program against the objectives of individual projects and the Fund more generally. A key aspect of the evaluation will include measuring the impact of the Fund in relation to increasing industry skill levels and meeting the needs of individual enterprises.

Additional Governance Information

Compliance with Relevant Laws

In administering the Fund, DIISRTE is bound by the provision of the:

- *Privacy Act 1988*
- *Freedom of Information Act 1982*
- *Racial Discrimination Act 1975*
- *Sex Discrimination Act 1984*
- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*
- *Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986*
- *Ombudsman Act 1976*

Working with Children

All personnel at POs who are working with children as part of the program are required to undergo an Australian Federal Police (AFP) National Police Check that provides full disclosure of any charges or convictions (an AFP check). Information on the National Police Check is at http://www.afp.gov.au/business/national_police_checks.

In addition, POs must comply with any relevant state or territory legislation requiring screening for persons who work with children.

Organisations should familiarise themselves with these Acts and seek their own legal advice to ensure compliance. Further information regarding the legislative requirements of participating in the Fund are available on the website www.deewr.gov.au/nwdf.

Complaints Handling Process

Any person may lodge a complaint or provide feedback directly to DIISRTE in relation to the Fund by contacting DIISRTE's free-call number: 13 38 73.

DIISRTE will aim to resolve a complaint within 30 days of its receipt. Where it is not possible to resolve a complaint within 30 days, concerned parties will be kept informed of progress. DIISRTE may be required to contact Fund recipients, students, employers or other relevant parties in investigating a complaint. Where a complaint involves an allegation of fraud, criminal activity or the misappropriation of funds, the matter must be reported directly to the Contract Manager:

Branch Manager
Industry Workforce Branch
DIISRTE (C50MA7)
GPO Box 9880
CANBERRA ACT 2601

If a Fund applicant or recipient, or any person, is dissatisfied with DIISRTE's administration of the Fund, they can raise their concerns with the Commonwealth Ombudsman. The Ombudsman will generally prefer that DIISRTE be given an opportunity to deal with the complaint in the first instance.

Contact Details

ISCs should use their DIISRTE Liaison Officer as a first point of contact.

Enterprises, Industry Associations, RTOs and others seeking to apply for funding should address all enquiries to the relevant ISC. Contact details for ISCs are available at: <http://www.isc.org.au/>.

For more information about the Fund see www.deewr.gov.au/nwdf.

If participants wish to speak to DIISRTE directly regarding the program, they should contact DIISRTE via email on nwdf@deewr.gov.au or call 13 38 73 (8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday).

Glossary of Terms

Applicant	An organisation applying to be a PO
Approved Project	A successful application that has been awarded funding under the Fund
Eligible Qualification	A qualification which is included on the POL and leads to an Australian Qualifications Framework vocational qualification
Enterprise	Profit and non-profit making organisations and government and non-government bodies, whether or not operating in more than one state/territory, and includes national professional associations and industry bodies.
Employment Service Providers	Employment Service Providers are government funded agencies that provide various kinds of support to Registered Job Seekers. Employment Service Providers includes Disability Employment Services and Job Services Australia, which also provides services for employers to help with their recruitment requirements. Employment Service Providers are able to be Lead Organisations under the Fund.
Existing Worker	Refers to an individual who in the previous week worked for one hour or more for more than nominal financial remuneration, whether or not on a casual basis or as a self employed person
Funds	Money provided by DIISRTE to ISCs under the funding agreement between DIISRTE and an ISC, including such money which is provided by ISCs to RTOs or Participating Organisations
General Government	Institutional sector comprising government units and non-profit institutions controlled and mainly financed by government as defined by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (Source: ABS 5514.0 Australian System of Government Finance Statistics Concepts, Sources and Methods.). Under this definition government employees working in policy and program management areas (that are only a function of government) would not be eligible. Those who work in service delivery/business areas that are delivered by both government and non-government providers would be eligible.
New Worker	A person who is aged 17 years or over and: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • registered with an ESP; or • an income support recipient who is not currently required to meet activity test or participation requirements; or • a participant in the Community Development Employment Projects scheme; or • a participant in the Australian Apprenticeships Access Program; or • not currently working and seeking or intending to seek paid employment or self employment after completing the qualification; or • currently working but seeking to change employment; or • was in one of the above categories before they entered into their Australian Apprenticeships arrangement (for commencements on or after 1 April 2008)
Industry Skills Councils	Not-for-profit companies governed by industry led boards that provide independent skills and training advice to industries and enterprises
Lead Organisation	A PO which coordinates, submits and manages an application to an ISC on behalf of a group of POs
Trainee	Refers to a new worker or existing worker who undertakes training supported by the Fund
Participating Organisation (PO)	Either an Enterprise or another eligible organisation that has been approved for funding under the program. A PO may not be an RTO.
POL	Priority Occupations List
Program	The National Workforce Development Fund (the Fund)
RTO	A registered training organisation

Attachment A: National Resources Sector Workforce Strategy Projects

1. National Resources Sector Workforce Strategy

The National Resources Sector Employment Taskforce (NRSET) was established in November 2009 to ensure that the expansion of the resources sector is efficient and supports job opportunities across the whole economy while avoiding the worst impact of skills shortages.

The Taskforce released their report '*Resourcing the Future*' on 17 July 2010. It contained recommendations focussing on seven key outcomes:

- creating a culture of workforce planning;
- increasing the number of skilled trades and professionals;
- graduating more engineers and geoscientists;
- providing temporary migration solutions for temporary shortages;
- strengthening workforce participation;
- creating partnerships between education and industry; and
- addressing infrastructure issues and housing shortages in resources communities.

All recommendations in *Resourcing the Future* were accepted and are being implemented as the National Resources Sector Workforce Strategy (NRSWS). Responsibility for implementing specific recommendations that form the Strategy is shared between industry, state and territory governments and the Australian Government.

Projects may be funded from the National Workforce Development Fund to address elements of the NRSWS, .

This attachment sets out the funding arrangements and assessment criteria for project proposals that address NRSWS actions. The funding arrangements, qualifications, eligibility, application processes and assessment criteria of the main Guidelines will not be applied to NRSET projects.

2. Applying for funding for a Project

DIISRTE will consult with the key stakeholders before calling for proposals for projects. The detailed application process may vary for each project, and will be advised on the NRSWS website at www.deewr.gov.au/resourcesworkforce.

The process for selecting an organisation(s) to deliver projects will be advised on the NRSWS website, for each project. Funding awarded under the Fund for implementation of NRSWS projects cannot be used for capital/infrastructure investment.

3. Evaluation of Proposals

All NRSWS proposals will be assessed by DIISRTE. Where relevant, advice may also be sought from other government agencies and/or expert bodies. Each proposal will be assessed on its merits against the criteria below.

3.1. Assessment Criteria

NRSWS proposals will be assessed by considering: How well the Applicant:

1. Addresses the advertised NRSWS action.
A business case outlining how the project will achieve the objectives and deliverables requested, what organisations and processes will be involved in the project, and what sustainable outcomes will be achieved.
2. Demonstrates their capacity to deliver the project.
Evidence of expertise in the issues being addressed; links to relevant stakeholders; proposed governance arrangements; and examples of previous similar projects that have been delivered on time and budget.

3. Demonstrates a strong rationale for the funding sought.

A detailed outline of the costs of delivering each project element, proposed funding milestones, and evidence that this represents value for money.

3.2. Notification

Successful Applicants will be notified by a letter from DIISRTE. A Funding Agreement will then be negotiated, to agree on the terms and conditions for the project. Once the Funding Agreement is executed, project details will be posted on the NRSWS website at www.deewr.gov.au/resourcesworkforce.

Unsuccessful Applicants will be notified in writing by DIISRTE. There is no appeal mechanism for unsuccessful Applicants, nor will unsuccessful Applications be reviewed. Feedback on unsuccessful Applications will be available on request. Feedback can be obtained by contacting resourcesworkforce@deewr.gov.au.

4. Funding

4.1. Conditions of Funding

Australian Government funding will be provided through a Funding Agreement in accordance with standard Australian Government requirements. The Funding Agreement is a legally enforceable document which defines the obligations of both parties. It will outline the objectives to be achieved, payment arrangements, financial and reporting requirements, and acquittal of grants processes required for all projects.

When the Department has received confirmation that a successful Applicant accepts an offer of funds, a Funding Agreement will be negotiated. Applicants wishing to receive funding must agree to the terms of the Funding Agreement, unless the Department agrees to accept any proposed changes to those terms. No contractual relationship will exist between the parties until both the Applicant and the Department have signed the Funding Agreement.

4.2. Payments

Funding Agreements will generally be structured to provide for:

- an initial payment upon receipt of the signed Funding Agreement and an Australian Taxation Office compliant tax invoice; and
- remaining funds will be paid incrementally depending upon achievement of negotiated milestones, satisfactory milestone reports, and receipt of compliant tax invoices.

Applicants require an Australian Business Number and must be registered with the Australian Taxation Office for GST. Action may be taken by the Australian Government to terminate a Funding Agreement where requirements have not been met.

The Department reserves the right to negotiate with Applicants or offer less than the amount for which they have applied. Funding is not available retrospectively. An Applicant must not begin project activities dependent on funding before a Funding Agreement has been signed between the Applicant and the Department.

5. Reporting, Performance and Promotion

5.1. Reports

Participating Organisations must submit milestone reports as specified in the Funding Agreement. At the conclusion of the project, Participating Organisations will be required to submit a final report, giving evidence that the project was completed in the specified manner, certifying the outcomes of the project, and an audited financial statement acquitting all funding received.

5.2. Project monitoring and evaluation

All projects will be evaluated against performance measures as specified in the Funding Agreement. It is expected that projects will achieve outcomes that are sustained beyond the period of project funding. The Department will monitor the progress of proposals through reports received under the Funding Agreement and through site visits.

5.3. Promotion

Participating Organisations should promote their project to stakeholders and the public. Applicants should ensure they do not bring the Department into disrepute. Applicants must show the Department any project-related information they intend to publish prior to publishing.