



Australian Government

# A U S T R A L I A N A P P R E N T I C E S H I P S

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# Australian Apprenticeships Mentoring Program

December 2011



The Australian Apprenticeships Mentoring Program is a grants program which forms part of the Australian Apprenticeships Mentoring Package. It was announced by the Australian Government in the 2011 Budget as part of Apprenticeship Reform element of the Australian Government's *Building Australia's Future Workforce* package.

The Mentoring Program is also part of the Australian Government Skills Connect initiative. The Australian Government Skills Connect seeks to enable applicants wishing to access funding under a range of skills programs (e.g. National Workforce Develop Fund, Accelerated Australian Apprenticeships, Workplace English Language Literacy program) to meet their workforce development and training needs through a single, streamlined arrangement.

Under the Mentoring Program, funding will support targeted mentoring to help Australian Apprentices successfully progress through their apprenticeship. Mentoring projects may also involve support for employers and supervisors in order to better support Australian Apprentices. The Mentoring Program is targeted to Australian Apprentices in industries or occupations with a current or emerging skills need, particularly those employed in small to medium enterprises and who may face additional barriers to participation. The Mentoring Program includes a focus on support for the first year of training when Australian Apprentices are most at risk of withdrawing.

## What is the aim of the Mentoring Program?

The Mentoring Program forms part of the Government's initial direction setting response to the findings and recommendations of the *Apprenticeships for the 21st Century* Expert Panel report. The overarching aim of the Mentoring Program is to increase the retention rates of Australian Apprentices in order to improve completion rates and support the supply of skilled workers in sectors and occupations where there is a current or emerging skills need.

## What are the target groups under the Mentoring Program

The Mentoring Program is targeted at Australian Apprentices:

- In industries or occupations with demonstrated skills need, particularly those employed in small to medium enterprises; and
- Who may face additional barriers to participation.

Australian Apprentices who may face additional barriers to participation include one or more of the following priority groups:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australian Apprentices
- Australian Apprentices from regional and remote areas
- Australian Apprentices with disability



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- Australian School-based Apprentices (i.e. an Australian Apprenticeship which is undertaken part-time while the Australian Apprentice is at school)
- Female and male Australian Apprentices in non-traditional occupations
- Australian Apprentices who have experienced long term unemployment (e.g. stream 4 under Job Services Australia classification)
- Australian Apprentices who are mature workers (e.g. those aged 45 years and older)
- Australian Apprentices who are considered vulnerable youth (e.g. young people 25 years and under with identified barriers to participation)
- Australian Apprentices who have been impacted by industry/sector structural change and may need additional support as they undertake their training.

## How can funding be accessed?

The Australian Apprenticeships Mentoring Program Guidelines have now been released and the Program is open to receive applications for funding.

Organisations wishing to apply for funding under the Mentoring Program are encouraged to consult [www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au](http://www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au) for up to date information and to access the Program Guidelines and application form. The streamlined application process under Skills Connect is accessible online at [www.skills.gov.au/skillsconnect](http://www.skills.gov.au/skillsconnect).

Under the Mentoring Program, industry-led proposals are encouraged. Where individual employers are seeking funding, they may benefit from partnering with a peak industry organisation to deliver effective mentoring projects.

## What funding is allocated for the Mentoring Program?

Approximately \$80 million over four years (2011–12 until 2014–15), with around \$15 million of this funding is available in 2011-12 through Skills Connect.

## Want to know more?

All enquiries for the Mentoring Program can be directed to [mentoringpackage@deewr.gov.au](mailto:mentoringpackage@deewr.gov.au)

