

Tuesday, 17 November 2020

BUDGET BOOST FOR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

A \$2.9 billion investment in vocational education and training will be delivered as part of the 2020-21 NSW Budget, which includes more than \$280 million in infrastructure, designed to drive prosperity and productivity across the State.

Minister for Skills and Tertiary Education Geoff Lee said this year's Budget would support the reskilling, retraining and redeployment of the state's workforce.

"The pandemic has challenged our State in an unprecedented way, and it has never been more important to have high quality education and training regardless of where you live in NSW," Mr Lee said.

"Getting people back to work is vital and today's announcements are about supporting that. This funding in vocational education and training will ensure a pipeline of skilled workers continue to drive the economy in the right direction.

"The reality is the job you had before the pandemic may be quite different to the opportunities available now, and education and training must reflect that."

Fee-free training places, a Trades Skills Pathway Centre, asset replacement and maintenance funding for TAFE NSW and a Business Case for an aged care Centre of Excellence are key focus areas of the Budget.

"We remain committed to TAFE NSW as a public training provider, with these investments looking to the future of vocational education and training in NSW," Mr Lee said.

The Budget highlights include:

- **Almost \$319 million** over two years for the Skilling for Recovery initiative to help job seekers retrain or upskill, and support school leavers to find meaningful work;
- **More than \$57 million** over four years for a Trades Skills Pathways Centre to assist workers have their trade skills recognised and establish new pathways to help women and mature workers enter trades;
- **\$100 million** for asset replacement and maintenance at TAFE NSW campuses;
- **\$20 million** to deliver new connected learning teaching spaces and upgrade specialist teaching facilities in at least 26 TAFE NSW campuses. These campuses include Albury, Dubbo and Griffith; and
- Up to 20,000 training places to skill people working in aged care to support the growing needs of the sector and **more than \$2 million** to develop a strategic business case for a dedicated TAFE NSW Aged Care Centre of Excellence facility.

MEDIA: Leigh van den Broeke | Minister Lee | 0417 268 209