

SUPPORTING OUR YOUTH TO THRIVE

AN EVIDENCE-BASED CONVERSATION
ABOUT THE IMPACT OF WORLDSKILLS
AUSTRALIA ON SKILLS EXCELLENCE

Acknowledgement of Country

WorldSkills Australia acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea and community. We pay our respect to Elders past, present and emerging and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.

Acknowledgements

We are grateful to all participants (competitors), their employers, volunteers (trainers, convenors and judges) who were involved in the 2021 WorldSkills Australia National Championships throughout Australia and to all the careers advisors, secondary school students, partners and sponsors, families and friends of competitors and general audience from the 2021 WorldSkills Australia National Championships event in Perth, who took the time to provide their thoughts, opinions, and feedback to support continuous improvement in our drive to raise the profile of skills excellence for the benefit of Australia.



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Message From The CEO



In an increasingly skills-driven economy, it is simply not enough to tick the skills box. Skills education pathways and competence in a skills area simply provides our youth with the opportunity to enter skills-based careers. It is the ongoing challenge-based learning, benchmarking personal skills against national and international standards, targeted experience in industry, continuing professional development supported by active mentoring from skills experts and more that will determine true career success.

Striving for excellence will not only support individual growth, but also organisational, industry and national growth.

It is with this fundamental principle in mind, that WorldSkills Australia develops, plans, and implements its programs within the skills development ecosystem, working with multiple and varied stakeholders.

Our stakeholders have been steadfast in their continued support, understanding the intrinsic value add that we bring to their organisations. Beginning with a need to clarify the extrinsic value we bring to the Australian skills development landscape, our impact project was born, commencing with this initial project, capturing the impacts we have on Australia's skills development environment, through the eyes of seven stakeholder groups who were associated with our main domestic program, the 2021 National Championships.

Confident in our strategic objectives, we are working towards capturing evidence which demonstrates, supports and validates stakeholder's investment in our organisation, clearly articulating our unique value propositions as well as illustrating our reach, both nationally and internationally.




Gathering feedback from our target audience groups about the value they gain from engaging with us and to understand, against the background of the changing environment, what we need to do more of, better and/or different to ensure even greater outcomes going forward. Research conducted through targeted surveys across various respondent groups we serve, was intended to enable us to develop some robust insights about what structures, systems, processes, and activities provide the largest gains and what we need to do to provide greater positive impacts on the Australian skills development landscape.

This report crystallises the voice of our youth and the voices of stakeholders who form a key part of the ecosystem supporting our youth to realise their potential through engagement with the skills excellence agenda. It not only reiterates our successes but also looks at opportunities that all of us, supporting our youth, can leverage together in coming months and years to grow skills excellence across various occupations. The results detailed in this report are strongly positive and constructive and will support the entire ecosystem to invest further into this agenda. We are grateful to all who engaged in this process—our competitors, skills practitioners, secondary school students, careers advisors, employers, partners and sponsors, families, friends, and general audience who took the time and effort to contribute valuable feedback.

Our aim is to build on these insights over the coming years to continue to develop and improve the skill ecosystem with the core focus of skills excellence.

We look forward to working even more closely together with key players in the ecosystem across education, industry, and government to produce greater outcomes for our youth. We invite you to join us in amplifying the skills excellence conversation to keep our society and economy growing.



Trevor Schwenke
Chief Executive Officer, WorldSkills Australia



About This Report

In line with WorldSkills Australia's strategic objectives 2021/2022, WorldSkills Australia has set out to measure and evaluate business performance with clear focus on:

- Deriving evidence of core value delivered to WorldSkills Australia customers and stakeholders
- Further understanding business strengths and areas of opportunity for future growth and sustainability
- Supporting key stakeholder partners in the skills ecosystem in their continuous improvement strategies to support and challenge our youth to realise their full potential; and
- Innovation.

This report summarises key findings from online surveys conducted with multiple respondent groups at the WorldSkills Australia National Skills Championships held in person in Western Australia and remotely in New South Wales, Queensland, Australian Capital Territory, South Australia and Victoria in the third and fourth quarter of 2021.

WorldSkills Australia intends to continue collecting data from regional, national and international competitions in coming months and years, which will add to WorldSkills Australia's growing database and enable comparison of results from one iteration to the next. This comparison will provide further inputs to analyse the efficacy of WorldSkills Australia's continuous improvement activities and new initiatives, while providing valuable feedback to others in the skills ecosystem.

It is also intended to have an open survey, in future, which will enable ongoing real time feedback from any and all interactions from various customer groups of WorldSkills Australia.

About The Research

WorldSkills Australia commissioned Playmakers Consulting Services Pty Ltd (PCS) to conduct online surveys of its key customer/stakeholder groups.

The WorldSkills Australia team participated in an introductory workshop to confirm context, expectations, and key objectives. Key stakeholders were integrally involved in all aspects of the project, including design, development, and delivery.

Research Purpose

To determine the following:

- To identify and quantify the positive impacts WorldSkills Australia has on Australia's skill development ecosystem via its programs being fundamentally about skills excellence
- The influence WorldSkills Australia has on choices about the employment pathways and career decisions of youth who participant in a WorldSkills Australia program.
- The impact on a person's employability skill's development by being part of the WorldSkills Australia programs
- How WorldSkills Australia influences career progression
- The impact of participation in WorldSkills Australia program on influencing career-based decisions made within families and communities

- How WorldSkills Australia inspires, influences, and enables educators and careers advisors
- The contribution WorldSkills Australia has in increasing the expertise and capability of educators and their workplace practices with respect to delivery of training and assessments

Methodology

Research was conducted through online surveys deployed to multiple respondent groups as per below.

In Western Australia, qualitative data was also collected through observations and individual discussions with attendees conducted during event by Playmakers consultants in place at Worldskills Australia National Championships.

Desktop research was also conducted to provide context. The literature review involved reading and analysing various research reports, articles, statistical analyses, industry papers, news reports and editorials.

Target Respondent Groups

- Competitors in National Championships 2021
- Trainers/Mentors/Convenors/Judges at the 2021 National Championships
- Secondary School Students who attended the event in Perth, WA
- Secondary School Careers Advisors and Teachers who attended the event in Perth, WA
- Visitors/Audience (Parents, Friends, Community) who attended the event in Perth, WA
- Employers of 2021 National Championship competitors
- WorldSkills Australia Partners and Sponsors at the 2021 National Championships

Holistic Areas Explored

- MOTIVATORS- IMPETUS FOR ENTRY/ENGAGEMENT
- EXPERIENCE UPON ENGAGEMENT
- BENEFITS APPLIED- DEMONSTRABLE SKILLS/BEHAVIOURS & THE VALUE YOU PROVIDE TO OTHERS
- BRAND AMBASSADORSHIP & YOUR VIEWS

Questions were designed to evaluate and validate assumptions, explore areas to gain new information, test and understand causal relations between cause and effect to gain further insights.

Please note:

Survey findings provide the baseline to:

- *Establish causation to conduct regression analysis in future*
- *Establish driver, control, and dependent variables for analysis in the future*
- *Link causes to effects - provide predictive capability.*



Executive Summary

The survey had 447 participants representing 7 respondent groups.

It is evident from the comments made, as well as the scores given by respondents, that competitors, mentors, experts, judges, partners and sponsors and employers are all extremely proud to be involved with WorldSkills Australia.

Competitors gain immense value on multiple fronts through their engagement with WorldSkills Australia. Volunteers enjoy performing meaningful work and feel they make a strong contribution to the community through their involvement and engagement with WorldSkills Australia. Mentors, Experts and Judges enjoy providing value to competitors and peers through the WorldSkills Australia programs and indeed, being part of the WorldSkills Australia community. Many use the WorldSkills Australia forum as a continuing professional development opportunity, taking away key learnings to implement back in their work context. Retired teachers and industry experts who come back to contribute as mentors value the continued human connection, many commenting on the “WorldSkills family” and their increased sense of purpose.

Secondary school students who have the privilege of attending WorldSkills Australia events are inspired and motivated to further consider VET pathways. Careers advisors are impressed and take away valuable information to support their work in advising their wards. Family and friends are proud to witness competitor achievements. Partners and sponsors gain valuable networking opportunities along with the opportunity to showcase their own products and services anew to existing customers while laying the foundation to attract their future customers. Employers are supportive and have clear expectations for raised levels of performance and continuous improvement post employee involvement in WorldSkills Australia competitions.

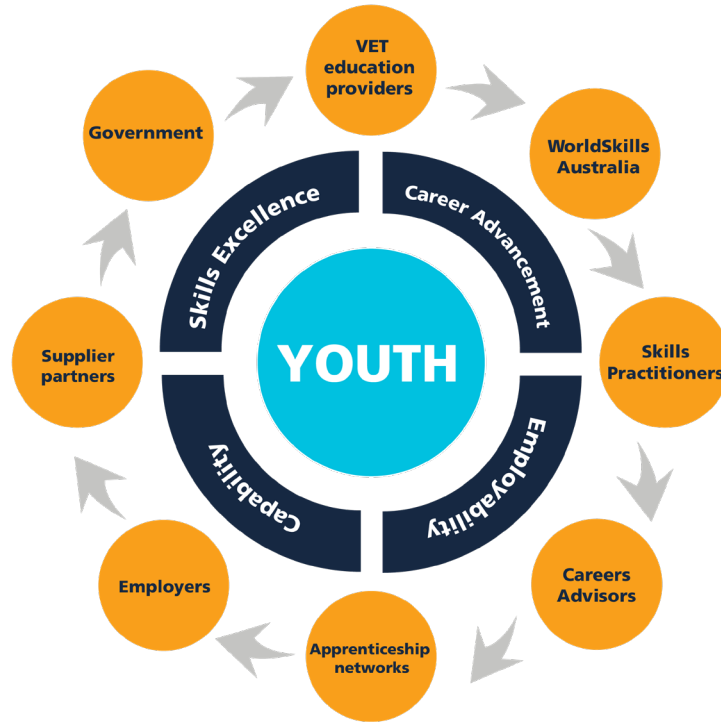
Survey results paint a solid picture of passion, contribution, strong sense of purpose and achievement and strong engagement. They also highlight areas of opportunity for WorldSkills Australia to “do more, do better and do different” in some areas to capitalise on, furthering the movement to raise the profile of Skills and VET, holistically.

Following analysis of the results, several recommendations have been formulated to leverage the considerable strengths of the organisation.

As a final note, this survey had a good response rate, and what appears to be very honest feedback from respondents. Respondents are evidently highly engaged, and very willing to contribute to the betterment of the organisation. This is a wonderful position of strength from which to embark on for continued success in the future.

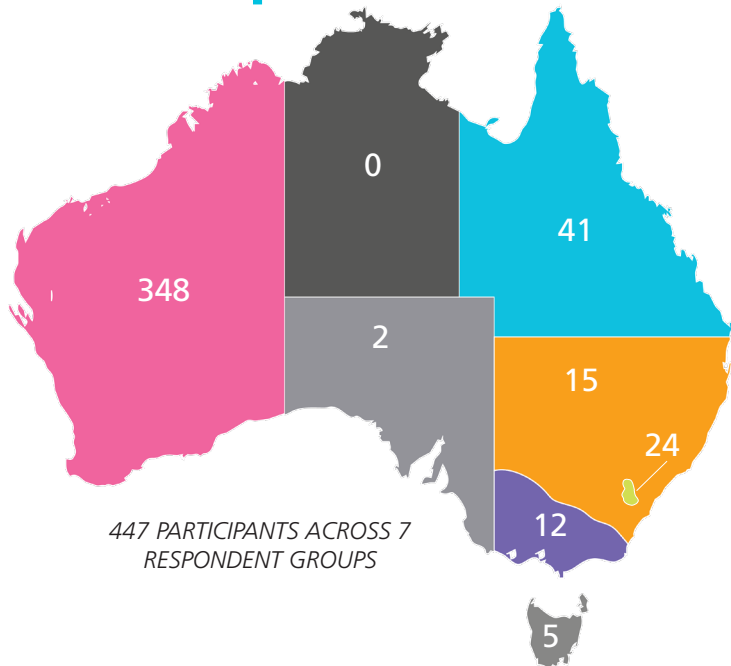
An Aligned And Cohesive Ecosystem

All of us know that it takes a village to support our youth. There are many diverse bodies that need to come together effectively and collaboratively, aligning products, services, systems, structures, and processes to provide a strong value proposition that supports our youth to move forward in their education and careers to become strong contributors to the Australian economy.



We hope this report will assist all players in the ecosystem to evaluate their current individual and collective contributions to support Australian youth and work on what we can all do together to raise the bar.

Participant Profile



AGE	RESPONDENTS	GENDER OF RESPONDENTS			
BELOW 18	209				
19-20 YRS	27	207	233	2	5
21-22 YRS	27				
23-25 YRS	22				
26-34 YRS	31				
35-49 YRS	57				
ABOVE 50	75				
		ABORIGINAL OR TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER		YES	NO
				08	433

				COMPETITORS 81	ABORIGINAL OR TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER
49	31	0	0		4
<hr/>					
				TRAINERS/MENTORS/EXPERTS/JUDGES 64	ABORIGINAL OR TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER
45	18	0	1		0
<hr/>					
				SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS 182	ABORIGINAL OR TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER
89	89	2	2		4
<hr/>					
				CAREERS ADVISORS 25	ABORIGINAL OR TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER
17	8	0	0		0
<hr/>					
				EMPLOYERS 24	ABORIGINAL OR TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER
9	15	0	0		0
<hr/>					
				PARTNERS/SPONSORS 17	ABORIGINAL OR TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER
9	7	0	0		0
<hr/>					
				FAMILY/FRIENDS/GENERAL AUDIENCE 55	ABORIGINAL OR TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER
34	20	0	0		0

Our Value To The Youth Of Australia- The Voice Of Our Competitors

OUR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE:

INCREASE THE PARTICIPATION OF YOUTH IN HIGH QUALITY SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

OUR FOCUS IS ON INCREASING THE:

- Number of young people more likely to consider technical skills employment pathways after participating at a WorldSkills Australia event
- Number of young people reporting a better knowledge and understanding (of their options) around technical routes and apprenticeships after participating in a WorldSkills Australia event
- Number of young people reporting raised aspirations after participating in a WorldSkills Australia event.
- Number of female competitors in Australian industry under-represented sectors participating at WorldSkills Australia regional, WorldSkills Australia national and/or WorldSkills International events.
- Number of Indigenous competitors participating at WorldSkills Australia regional, WorldSkills Australia national and/or WorldSkills International events.
- Number of WorldSkills Australia competitors citing improvement in career progression from competition experience
- Number of WorldSkills Australia competitors reporting improved technical skills following their participation at WorldSkills Australia regional, WorldSkills Australia national and/or WorldSkills International events
- Number of WorldSkills Australia competitors reporting improved personal and employability skills at WorldSkills Australia regional, WorldSkills Australia national and/or WorldSkills International events

Without application, there is only memory of a great experience.

Application of value gained through demonstrable skills and behaviours unleashes WorldSkills Australia's mission and purpose through its stakeholder groups, truly making a difference in the lives of the youth of Australia, their families, their employers, and the economy as a whole.



Through this survey, we not only sought to gain feedback on engagement and experience in WorldSkills Australia events, but also looked further into how this experience translates into real value in competitors' work and life.

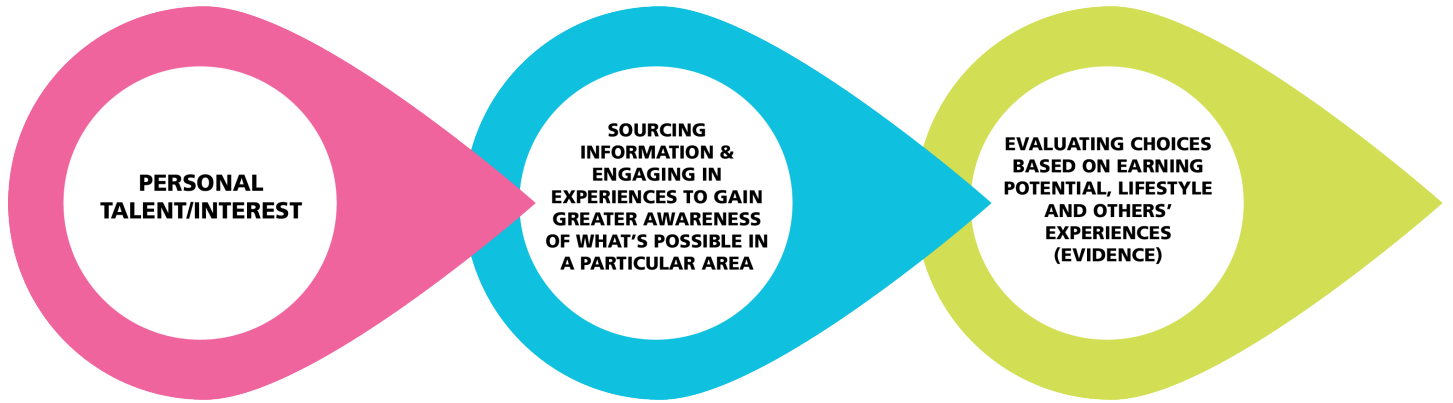
WHAT OUR COMPETITORS SAID

Where it all starts

Competitor motivation to undertake skills-based education was fuelled through many sources which include:

- Exposure to VET in Schools (28.4%)
- Advice from teachers, careers advisors, family and friends and
- Inspiration from attending a WorldSkills Australia competition event and being inspired by peers (Collective 61.7%)

KEY CONNECTORS INFLUENCING CHOICE OF SKILLS-BASED OCCUPATIONS AND RESULTING EMPLOYMENT



Crowning Achievement For Worldskills Australia

87.5%

of respondents attributed their motivation to finishing their current education to their involvement in WorldSkills Australia!

- 84%** reported improved technical skills as a result of WorldSkills Australia involvement
- 72%** inspired to strive for excellence in chosen skill
- 91%** believe that the WorldSkills Australia experience has helped their career
- 63%** consistently apply new and improved skills at workplace, raising effectiveness

From responses received, it is clear that the experience of engaging with WorldSkills Australia has given competitors strong intrinsic and extrinsic value. It is clear that the WorldSkills Australia experience supports our youth to not only gain greater technical skills, but also build key soft skills essential for success in their careers and life, in general. Responses, indeed, paint a story of inspiration.

71.6%	believed that they now have improved time management skills
64.2%	have developed greater problem-solving skills
61.7%	cite improved resilience under pressure, greater planning and organising skills and greater capability for self-management
60.5%	believed that they have developed their decision-making skills

Other skills gained included multi-tasking, communication, teamwork and collaboration, taking initiative, development of a winning mindset, presentation skills, networking skills, negotiation skills and developing stronger results' focus.

ANECDOTAL COMMENTS

Key Motivator Descriptors for choosing to compete:

- Reach my potential
- To be the best of the best
- Prove my capability (to myself and others)- see how far I have come, since starting my study
- Showcase my skills and advance career
- I chose to compete not only for an amazing experience but also for the array of potential opportunities that could arise for my future career
- Make my family and teachers proud.

THE POWER OF BENCHMARKING IN DRIVING ASPIRATIONS

When asked *"By benchmarking your skills against others in the WorldSkills Competitions, what do you believe you have gained? What will you do different as a result of the benchmarking?"*, this is what respondents said:

- A better understanding of the industries
- The ability to work in a pressure cooker environment, work to a time limit and communicate better with my colleagues
- How to improve in different areas in ways new to me
- I have gained more information for my future
- Confidence that I can do anything if I put my mind to it
- It made me realize the areas that I was lacking in, and it allowed me to focus on closing those gaps in knowledge and practical skills.
- I realised my potential and what I can achieve in a short period of time
- Keep on learning
- I will see other people's differences as a good thing for a team than all being the same
- I will strive to go the distance in my field when up against someone else or myself
- By reviewing my results, I will be able to assess my strengths and weaknesses so I can focus on what I'm weaker in along with continuing to further learn new skills and technologies
- I have definitely gained some confidence approaching a job. Along with a good speed/accuracy ratio.
- I hope to be ready to step up and into that leadership role after showing everyone that I can do it.

Benchmarking their skills against others in the competition appears to have truly opened up competitor minds to what's possible and raised true self-awareness. For some it has been an immense confidence-booster, while it has made others work harder and strive to raise their own standards. It has reinforced the development of a winning mindset with skills excellence in chosen field at the forefront of their focus. Wanting to be the best of the best, continually learning, and improving is a real skill many believe they have gained as a result of their WorldSkills Australia experience.

WORLDSKILLS AUSTRALIA INVOLVEMENT SUPPORTING CAREER PROGRESSION AND OPENING UP CAREER/LIFE OPTIONS

Not only has the experience influenced competitors to do more, do better and do different in their workplaces and life in general, the demonstration of this strong achievement and continuous improvement orientation has clearly supported career growth and progression. **91.1% of respondents agree that the experience has helped their career.**

Many cite growth in career aspirations and having a clear career plan now. They believe that not only are they currently more effective and demonstrating high performance, demonstration of key skills is also helping them gain more visibility at work and being truly appreciated by their employers. This group talks about taking others on the journey with them and supporting their team members, showing true growth in teamwork, collaboration, and leadership skills.



OUR JOINT OPPORTUNITY

The information gathered is valuable on multiple fronts. Key points to note:

Respondents have given us key information about how they enter VET education and skills-based career pathways- what information they deem valuable and where they go to get the information. *This gives us the opportunity to augment the knowledge that support groups have within their armouries to provide the right level of support for potential new entrants into the VET system.*

With attrition in apprenticeships/traineeships still high across the nation, any mechanisms that serve to support our youth to stay and complete their courses and apprenticeship/traineeship programs are valuable. With feedback clearly showing that the WorldSkills experience gives our youth firstly the motivation to continue on their chosen education and career paths and builds aspiration to do better in the same, *it is a great opportunity for us to do more in this*

space by actively promoting engagement with WorldSkills Australia at all levels across VET education providers, increasing numbers of youth participating in competitions YoY.

Hence, not only does the feedback serve to validate WorldSkills Australia's Vision, Mission and Purpose, but it can also be leveraged to support more youth to raise their level of engagement with **VET-based education and career pathways**. It will serve to open the door for those, not yet engaged with WorldSkills Australia, to take a peek at what's possible. This information is also valuable to **help employers understand** what they can expect from their investment with WorldSkills Australia. This data will also **support mentors** to look at what they have achieved through their mentees and to focus on areas of continuous improvement.

Our Value To The Youth Of Australia- The Voice Of Secondary School Students

OUR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE:

INCREASE THE PARTICIPATION OF YOUTH IN HIGH QUALITY SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

OUR FOCUS IS ON INCREASING THE:

- Number of young people more likely to consider technical skills employment pathways after participating at a WorldSkills Australia event
- Number of young people reporting a better knowledge and understanding (of their options) around technical routes and apprenticeships after participating in a WorldSkills Australia event
- Number of young people reporting raised aspirations after participating in a WorldSkills Australia event.

We know that we have to build the pipeline of potential new entrants into VET-based education and career pathways in secondary schools. While we do this to some extent collectively, it is clear from feedback that for many, the WorldSkills Australia events are an impactful source of information and inspiration.

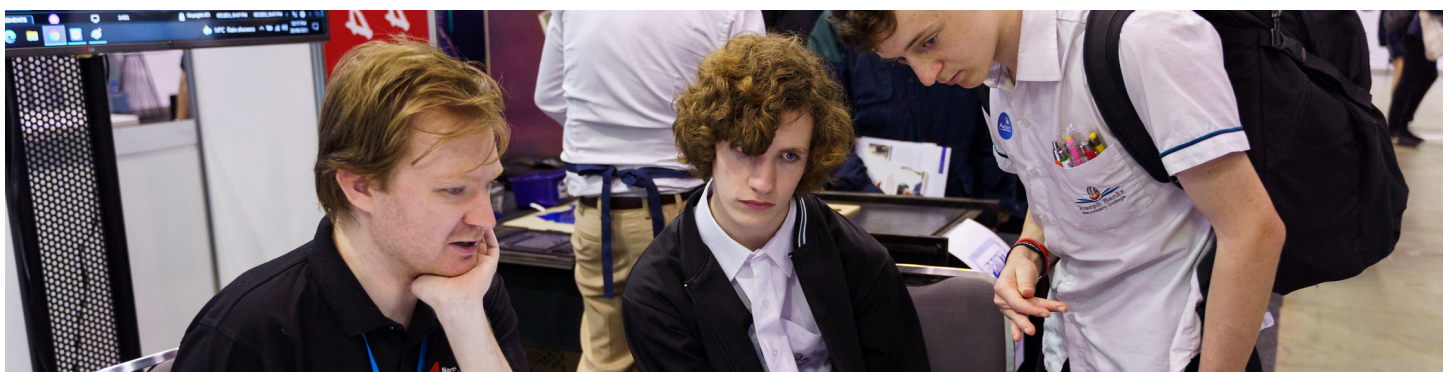
Anecdotal evidence gained clearly shows that students were amazed at what VET and skills-based education looked like and what it could offer, in terms of career options. Many called the event eye-opening, insightful, informative, educational, and inspiring. They loved interacting with competitors and mentors during the event. It was clear that the event was instrumental in raising awareness of VET and Skills-based education and options, which gives WorldSkills Australia a big tick.

72.4% of students indicated that the WorldSkills Australia experience has influenced them to consider a skill-based career

89.5% of students surveyed thought that being at this WorldSkills event has increased knowledge of how many different skills there are to choose from, as a career option

82.8% indicated that they have a greater understanding of skills' careers pathways as a result of attending the WorldSkills Australia event

55.1% suggested that they are inspired to look further into TAFE-based education options after school as a result of their WorldSkills Australia experience



ANECDOTAL COMMENTS

Key motivator descriptors for engaging with WorldSkills Australia

- Trying out new things
- Learning about all the industries
- Asking questions
- Having conversations with different types of tradies
- Seeing what cool jobs there are and opening up opportunities for myself
- Seeing people do what they love the most
- Finding things out about different careers
- Seeing new career and job opportunities for me in the future
- I really enjoyed the fact that I have knowledge and I have security about what I might want to go into do in the near future

OUR JOINT OPPORTUNITY

There is a clear opportunity for WorldSkills Australia to promote skills excellence in schools directly to students and also through careers advisors and teachers. It will also be valuable to look at how the WorldSkills Australia events and other sessions lead to real conversion, by measuring actual uptake of VETDSS and VET-based educational pathways post-secondary school.

We invite our partners in VET and careers advocacy to work with us actively to raise the bar in this area.

Our Value To Youth Support Groups- The Voice Of Families, Friends And General Audience

OUR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE:

INCREASE THE PARTICIPATION OF YOUTH IN HIGH QUALITY SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

OUR FOCUS IS ON INCREASING THE:

- Number of young people more likely to consider technical skills employment pathways after participating at a WorldSkills Australia event
- Number of young people reporting a better knowledge and understanding (of their options) around technical routes and apprenticeships after participating in a WorldSkills Australia event
- Number of young people reporting raised aspirations after participating in a WorldSkills Australia event.

The impact of family and friends of youth in influencing education and career decisions cannot be underestimated.

Family/Friends/General Audience commented strongly on how impressed they were with the event, with many pleasantly surprised about the diversity and the array of career possibilities offered by VET/ Skills-based education pathways. Many had come in, simply out of interest or extended their visit to the Careers Expos by attending the WorldSkills Australia National Championships.

There was a clear sense of amazement at how much was involved with VET and skills, many not having considered VET education pathways for their children.

92.7% indicated that they have a greater understanding of skills' education pathways

92.0% believe that they have a greater understanding of skills' careers pathways

89.1% said that witnessing the event has changed their perception of VET with comments such as "As good or better than University training"

92.7% said they were inspired to tell others about the power of VET

ANECDOTAL COMMENTS

What respondents commented on about the WorldSkills experience influencing perception of Vocational Education and Training

- There is a whole array of careers on offer and one person doesn't have to be placed in one box
- It has taught me how it is a much more efficient way of entering the work force.
- I will advise all younger people to attend the next event
- I have been provided with lots of information
- There are a lot more options than I thought
- Yes, it definitely showed me the importance of it, and how it is a lot more involved than I thought
- That there are so many opportunities and skills to learn
- Understanding of the incredible diversity and career pathways!
- It has given me greater insight into the world of vocational training, and how these skills can work together with academic knowledge
- Came to know about many opportunities in various fields, especially employment opportunities for women
- As good as or better than university training

OUR JOINT OPPORTUNITY

There is a real opportunity for all of us to collectively do more in complementing, adding to, and enhancing current information and education resources, bringing together all stakeholders to work concertedly and collaboratively together, sharing and innovating to provide a streamlined experience for our secondary school audience.

It will also be valuable for WorldSkills Australia to explore the opportunity to conduct community information sessions in conjunction with ACFE (Adult, Community and Further Education) and VET providers to further connect with, educate and influence youth support networks.

We invite our partners in VET and careers advocacy to work with us actively to raise the bar in this area.

Our Value To Skills Practitioners- The Voice Of Our Trainers/Mentors/Judges

OUR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE: INCREASE THE EXPERTISE OF SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PRACTITIONERS TO WORLD BEST STANDARD

OUR FOCUS IS ON INCREASING THE:

- Number of educators /careers advisors following their participation in WorldSkills Australia events reporting improvement in their expertise and capability to advise young people about technical skills pathways
- Number of vocational education and training practitioners engaged with WorldSkills Australia reporting improvement in their expertise and capability.
- Number of Australian workplace and Institutional training and education providers who have embedded WSA Skills Competitions standards into their development and assessment practices

WorldSkills Australia volunteer workforce comprising of mentors, trainers, convenors and judges, from education sector and industry are highly engaged and indeed, the cornerstone for the organisation’s success. WorldSkills Australia’s purpose resonates strongly with this group. As champions of WorldSkills Australia, VET and skills excellence, this group has strong influence in defining the brand and the brand experience for all stakeholders involved.

Through this survey, we delved into the mentors/trainers/convenors/judges’ purpose and drive- why do they do what they do, what value they get out of being involved in the skills’ benchmarking competition forum, what value they believe they provide and what value they receive from their involvement.

It is clear from responses that this group enjoy providing value to competitors and peers through the WorldSkills Australia programs and indeed, being part of the WorldSkills Australia community. Many use the WorldSkills Australia as a platform for continuing professional development, taking away key learnings to implement back in their work context. Retired teachers and industry experts who come back to contribute as mentors value the continued human connection commented on the “WorldSkills family” and their increased sense of purpose.

71.9%	engage with WorldSkills Australia to make a positive impact on today’s youth & 64.1% are involved to do more to promote the value of skills excellence
87.1%	indicated that the new/enhanced knowledge and practices gained through WorldSkills engagement have positively influenced teaching/industry practice
87.1%	believe that the WorldSkills agenda supports them to stay current and understand new/emerging trends in their chosen field
65.6%	think that WorldSkills Australia delivers value by continuing to promote skills excellence and reiterated its importance in developing pride in VET in all forums to various stakeholders
68.8%	believe that it is beneficial to embed WorldSkills Competition Standards into all National Training Packages.

This influential group, as can be seen through the snapshot have strong personal fulfillment, job enrichment, recognition of greater value of self and the value they can add to others, gain true satisfaction from realising others’ potential, obtain strong human connection through networks and are

intrinsically motivated to learn and grow through continuing to engage with WorldSkills Australia. With what WorldSkills Australia does now, the organisation serves to grow the capability of this group in various ways. Engagement with WorldSkills Australia has propelled this group to raise the bar for themselves, understanding the privilege and responsibility of their key role with WorldSkills Australia with a high percentage of respondents striving to hold themselves to higher standards through continual learning and development with the courage to pro-actively seek feedback from others on how they can do more, do better, do different.

Mentors consider this mentoring relationship as a life-long one and competitors have also cited having a “mentor for life”. This is a massive gift to both parties who gain equal value from this relationship, in most cases. It also keeps the skills excellence and winning mindset alive with the mentors continuing to challenge their mentees to be the best they can be, taking pride in their achievements and supporting them to realise their potential.

WorldSkills Australia is achieving its key strategic objective of enabling skills development practitioners who are clearly reporting an increase in their expertise and capability, directly related to their WorldSkills Australia engagement.

ANECDOTAL COMMENTS

When asked, *“As an Educator/Trainer, how you have embedded WorldSkills Skills Competition Standards in your course development and assessment practices, supporting the drive for excellence in your student cohorts?”*, here’s what respondents said:

- Through current and emerging tech and skills, and best practices
- Setting higher standards, not accepting, or allowing my students to accept just competence, encouraging them to strive for excellence. Showcasing through my classes what is possible.
- Regional Competition is more strongly promoted on campus to the students directly. Discussing the depth of the marking scheme encourages richer project development.
- Embedded drawing /set out development skills into training as well as higher standards of finish to all projects
- Through showing enthusiasm for all aspects and sharing ideas and techniques
- Our regional competition is part of our training assessment for all competencies listed in WorldSkills documents for our trade
- I will be looking to integrate skills into my delivery and assessment
- I follow the strict standards of judging and learn from other judges and industry people to perform to the next level
- Connection across national colleges has moderated training and course content within my unit development.
- Other educators mentoring their students can see the standard and skills that industry expects to see professionals in this field.
- By implementing and aligning similar standards in my delivery.
- I have used the mapping practices of the International WorldSkills guidelines to ensure these technical measures are met in my VET Sector assessments and training practices.
- In my Compatriot International Expert role, I helped develop the descriptors of the criteria and the Toolbox list for Floristry. I now use this in writing national training units
- By identifying any new industry currency in competition projects developed by new people & implementing it in my courses
- Promoting the competition across our student cohorts and the benefits to their future employment opportunities
- Attention to detail and passion for industry through inspiration

When asked to comment on the value seen in benchmarking skills nationally and internationally, here's what respondents had to say:

- Higher skills standard across the country/world- It raises the standard for all
- Great opportunity for collaboration
- Best practices' development
- Gives young people a reason to learn and improve themselves
- Prevents stagnation
- Leadership
- Recognition
- Encourages and promotes skills excellence
- Motivation
- Ensuring training is being delivered consistently across the country
- Setting standards across the industry
- Consistency in Industry expectations
- Improved Technologies
- Better quality work
- Provides incentive to continually review your skill set
- Sets performance expectations and boosts performance
- Keeps Australia's workforce up to date with the rest of the world and ensures Australian standards are comparable or better than the rest of the world
- Gives people the chance to measure their performance against the best in their trade
- Offers knowledge sharing and encourages up-skilling
- Promotion of personal pride in work
- Professionalism
- Passion
- Value in personal and professional nourishment, high satisfaction
- Professional development



OUR JOINT OPPORTUNITY

The combination of passion and purpose driving this respondent group is evidently a key success factor for WorldSkills Australia and not something to take for granted. Not only does their WorldSkills Australia engagement support their continued professional development, raising expertise and capability, but also aids in retention of this valued workforce within education and industry.

WorldSkills Australia will do well to build on this further, in collaboration with key VET and Industry partners, by providing more diversity of opportunity for mentors and experts to add value to youth and peers while engaging in specific events that provide value to them, such as continuous improvement forums, free seminars on topics such as leadership of social change, Understanding millennials etc. and also kicking off projects, that they may like to be involved in with outcomes recognised publicly at WorldSkills Australia forums and also at their workplaces, where relevant. Not only will this validate their contribution to the WorldSkills Australia cause, but also stimulate others to follow in their footsteps, creating strong succession of this crucial volunteer workforce.

The key opportunity that exists for WorldSkills Australia with this group is to leverage the intrinsic motivation of this group to support achievement of further objectives to embed WorldSkills standards into training and assessment practices.

We invite our partners in VET and Industry to work with us actively to raise the bar in this area.



Our Value To Careers Advisors- The Voice Of Our Secondary School Educators/Careers Advisors

OUR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE: INCREASE THE EXPERTISE OF CAREERS ADVISORS TO WORLD BEST STANDARD

OUR FOCUS IS ON INCREASING THE:

- Number of (secondary school) educators/careers advisors following their participation in WorldSkills Australia events reporting improvement in their expertise and capability to advise young people about technical skills pathways

Research shows that careers advisors and secondary school teachers play a crucial role in supporting their students in choosing education and career pathways. With clear evidence of competitors entering skills-based education, employment, and career pathways as a result of key advice obtained through their careers advisors and teachers at school, engagement with this group is not just an option, but a business imperative for WorldSkills Australia.

76%	engage to be able to raise my capability and expertise to advise secondary school students about their post-secondary study and career options
88%	indicated that they were able to give better advice to youth about skills pathways due to their engagement with WorldSkills
100%	believe that by visiting a WorldSkills event, students are influenced to investigate a career in skills

These overwhelmingly positive responses from careers advisors clearly show the impact the National Championships' experience had on this group in Western Australia, 2021. This result serves to validate the inspiration offered by the event itself and reinforces the massive potential for greater value and impact in engaging with this group across Australia. True brand ambassadors in the making who are excited, energized and inspired by WorldSkills Australia.

OUR JOINT OPPORTUNITY

There is a clear opportunity for WorldSkills Australia to focus on specific programs to inform and educate careers advisors and secondary school teachers, along with other organisations in the VET ecosystem to further promote VET education and career pathways. Focussing on skills excellence will provide key inspiration necessary for this group and the recipients of this group's services.

With such resoundingly positive feedback from careers advisors, it is clear that WorldSkills made a huge impact and massive headway in influencing this group. Considering WorldSkills Australia's strategic objectives, there is an opportunity for WorldSkills Australia to expand engagement and experience of this group through multiple events with the National Championships providing a grand finale to consolidate influence and impact. Also, by initiating or even participating in existing forums where careers advisors congregate, WorldSkills Australia can ensure that knowledge-building in this group is consistent and constant, delivering benefits all year round.

We invite our partners in the careers advisory and advocacy ecosystem to work with us, concertedly and collaboratively in complementing, adding to, and enhancing current information and education resources and current professional development provided to careers advisors, sharing and innovating to provide a streamlined experience for all target audiences.

Our Value To Employers - The Employer Voice

Engaging Industry and ensuring strong experience upon engagement surely is the key for long-term sustainability of WorldSkills Australia operations. Education is being challenged to ensure relevance, currency, and greater outcomes for Industry. Ultimately, any enablers that support business growth and workforce growth will aid the economy and in current times, integrally contribute to economic recovery post COVID-19.

Engagement of employers is through multiple methods. Respondents told us how they are currently engaging with WorldSkills Australia. Through:

- Supporting apprentices/employees to compete (70.8%)
- Contributing tools and resources to be used in competitions (16.7%); and
- Contribution of expertise through key personnel working as experts/mentors/judges (12.5%).

Respondents who engaged with WorldSkills Australia for the first time were impressed with the skills excellence platform, many commenting on how much their employees learnt from others in the competition forum and how quickly some core skills were gained by their employees that they deem truly valuable back in the workplace. Those with a leadership and mentorship mindset talked more about the gratification of seeing their employee/apprentice achieve and gain confidence.

62.5%

of respondents believed that WorldSkills has helped their employees bring greater efficiency into the workplace. All respondents, many of whom have been involved with WorldSkills Australia previously, were unanimous in confirming that the WorldSkills experience has benefited their workplaces and business in various ways.

70.8%

of employers said that they engage with WorldSkills Australia to support their apprentices/employees to compete in WorldSkills Competitions with the objective to raise focus on skills excellence

62.5%

stipulated that the WorldSkills Australia has helped employees to improve practices and processes in the workplace for greater efficiency

OUR JOINT OPPORTUNITY

A key opportunity exists here for WorldSkills Australia and VET partners to integrally engage with employers through initiating joint education-industry projects which will support development of frameworks and strategies for greater efficiency and performance through upskilling, reskilling and continued development of workforce and development of supporting systems. Pilot initiatives within partner networks could also be developed aimed at skills excellence and validate career development related innovation and improvement.

Joint WorldSkills Australia and Industry projects which involve key training partners and others in the VET and skills ecosystem will serve to raise the skills excellence profile consistently.

Our Value To Partners And Sponsors - The Voice Of Our Supporting Partners And Sponsors

Partners and sponsors are crucial for the success of WorldSkills Australia and in many ways make the events possible through their core contribution of enabling tools and technologies to support competitions, physically and virtually. Sponsorships enable WorldSkills Australia to provide key value-add activities. WorldSkills Australia has strong engagement with partners and sponsors, fostering strong relationships with many, always focussed on providing ROI.

Partners/sponsors have strong, declared reasons for their continued engagement with WorldSkills Australia.

82.4% engage to be a part of the community that promotes the value of skills excellence and gives back to the youth of Australia

82.4% believe that the engagement with WorldSkills increases organisation's brand exposure and helps them connect with future customers

OUR JOINT OPPORTUNITY

It is clear that while partners/sponsors believe they have a clear reason to engage with WorldSkills Australia and believe their organisations get value out of this engagement and many will continue to engage with WorldSkills Australia in the future, this is a group to do more with. WorldSkills Australia looks forward to working with partners and sponsors on developing future engagement strategy with focus on providing value-add experiences and evidence-based return on investment.



Summary Snapshot

“Thank you for having me on this exciting and challenging journey with WorldSkills, I hope I may potentially be allowed to be a further part of it. Without WorldSkills, I likely would not have been pushed to excellence and would have kept just doing the minimum. I am now inspired by the accomplishments of myself and others and will now do the best I can to be the best I can be.”

COMPETITOR

WORLDSKILLS AUSTRALIA EFFECTIVELY:

	RAISES THE PROFILE OF SKILLS	PROMOTES SKILLS EXCELLENCE	SHOWCASES SKILL-BASED EMPLOYMENT PATHWAYS	DEVELOPS PRIDE IN SKILL-BASED EMPLOYMENT PATHWAYS	PROMOTES GREATER EFFICIENCY & PRODUCTIVITY IN THE WORKFORCE
COMPETITORS	95.5%	97.2%	94.5%	95.9%	
TRAINERS/ MENTORS/JUDGES	79.0%	87.9%	93.5%	86.5%	86.5%
CAREERS ADVISORS	88.0%	96.0%	100%	-	-
PARTNERS/ SPONSORS	87.5%	100%	87.5%	100%	76.5%
FAMILY/FRIENDS/ GENERAL AUDIENCE	96.3%	96.4%	94.4%	-	-

“Great experience being part of WorldSkills. I will be growing participation of WorldSkills with my peers.”

TRAINER

“We would like to sponsor on a larger scale. We would also like to have our apprentices involved going forward.”

EMPLOYER/SPONSOR

“I have loved every moment so far competing in WorldSkills Australia, and I would highly recommend it to anyone thinking about entering! You’ve got nothing to lose but the world to gain!”

COMPETITOR

“WorldSkills gives our apprentices a platform to showcase their trade skills. It also builds their confidence and teaches them other great skills like time management, communication and teamwork.”

EMPLOYER

The Way Forward

As is clear in findings from the survey, there is no question that WorldSkills Australia is effectively achieving its strategic objectives. All respondent groups have been vocal in identifying what actions they value and providing feedback for continuous improvement where relevant. While we take a minute to recognise what has gone well, it is time to keep moving forward with strong purpose and drive.

There exist key areas of opportunity for improvement in WorldSkills Australia actively promoting diversity, engaging better with careers advisors, employers, partners/sponsors and working on influencing policy to effect greater change in VET nationally, through integration of the Skills Excellence framework and Competition standards as part of National Training Packages.

The evidence established gives a strong reference point to measure future improvement, growth, and success.

There exists a strong appetite amongst stakeholders for improvements to be made in the larger ecosystem for greater outcomes for our young people, with many considering WorldSkills Australia as a key champion to lead this charge. There is strong engagement from all stakeholder groups surveyed with WorldSkills Australia, strong intention to add further value and indeed, become brand ambassadors for the WorldSkills Australia cause.

We, at WorldSkills Australia, will continue to morph, grow, and provide strong outcomes, setting up Australia's youth for success, becoming a strong central point of real and relevant data and advice to support all stakeholders in the ecosystem including education, industry, government, and community.

We invite all of you in the skills ecosystem to collaborate with us in this movement to create an even better future for the youth of Australia and setting Australia up as an international leader, showcasing skills excellence.



About WorldSkills Australia

WorldSkills Australia is part of a global movement consisting of 85 member countries, which celebrates young people achieving world class standards in the biennial competitions likened to a 'Skills Olympics'.

With a purpose to identify, demonstrate, promote and grow the excellence of Australia's skills development, we are the only Australian skills organisation that can bring this global benchmarking back to Australia. We have unique assets, resources, and networks to help raise the training standards and improve young people's technical and soft skills set and resilient mindset to ever higher standards.

WorldSkills Australia joined WorldSkills International in 1981. The first regional competition was held at Bowral in June 1982 with Australia going onto host our first and only Skills Olympics to date in 1988 at Darling Harbour in Sydney.

Australia has a very strong and proud history of involvement in WorldSkills activities. This has only been achieved with the support of government, industry, employers, and the incredibly passionate and supportive volunteer network.

Some key achievements so far:

- 100,000+ young Australians participate in WorldSkills Australia events
- 20,000+ school students and their parents will attend a WorldSkills National Championship
- 4,000+ volunteers around Australia contribute to WSA programs
- Over 60 trades and skills are represented at WorldSkills competitions - from bricklaying to hairdressing, cloud computing to cyber security
- WorldSkills champions become industry leaders, mentors, business owners and contribute greatly to the economy and their local communities.

While we take a minute to celebrate our achievements, we are not ones to rest on our laurels. We exist to influence, challenge and support Australians to develop, recognise and promote skills excellence for a thriving economy. We will continue to strive for greater outcomes, making a true difference to the youth of Australia, always driven by the collective strong purpose and passion of our WorldSkills Australia Community.

Current Strategic Objectives are:

- To increase the participation of youth in high quality skills development
- To increase the expertise of skills development practitioners to world best standard
- Benchmark Australian skills excellence against global standards

About Playmakers Consulting

Playmakers Consulting Services Pty. Ltd (PCS) is a Melbourne-based consultancy working with independent experts in multiple sectors who come together to provide customised solutions for clients. Built with the future of work in mind, Playmakers brings together senior executives and managers from multiple sectors who are in varying stages of career transition, breaking down barriers to create a new world. These Playmakers have individually achieved great heights of success; now come together to collectively provide stronger outcomes to deliver results through collaboration, strategic and operational leadership, with equal input and individual accountability.

PCS core business areas include Business Strategy, Business Growth, Business Process Improvement, Change Management, Capability and Culture Strategy and Development, Workforce Skills and Training Solutions, Education Innovation, Education and Workforce Grants and Tenders, Work Readiness and Graduate Programs Development. Our robust research arm feeds into all business areas providing clients with added value on all projects.

Playmakers undertake and manage small, medium and large-scale projects across multiple areas and sectors with high-performing teams, comprising of individuals with value-add skills and expertise, working together to achieve client objectives.

AUTHENTICITY, INTEGRITY, PASSION

EXPERTISE, HIGH PERFORMANCE, SUSTAINABLE RESULTS





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