

'Building back better': A post-COVID outlook and opportunities for our mature-aged workforce

2nd GAP Virtual Business Roundtable • Thursday, 4 June 2020

Government measures to support mature-aged Australians

- The NSW Government has created a **\$1 billion Working for NSW fund** to support direct employment opportunities and retraining; <https://www.treasury.nsw.gov.au/Covid-19Stimulus>
- TAFE NSW, in conjunction with the NSW Government, is offering several **fee-free online short courses** offering practical skills and experiences across a range of industries. It is also offering:
 - **Mature Age Scholarships** for people who are 35 years or older who are looking for work and willing to retrain or upgrade their skills;
 - **Women in Business** fully subsidised online program for women who are looking to establish a micro business, a small business, or who are already operating a business; <https://www.tafensw.edu.au/fee-free-short-courses>
- Tech Savvy Seniors gives older people, particularly those in regional and remote areas of New South Wales, Queensland and South Australia, the opportunity to develop the skills and confidence to use technology for socialising, accessing important services or conducting personal business. **Tech Savvy Seniors NSW** is a partnership between the NSW Government and Telstra and a key initiative of the NSW Ageing Strategy; <https://www.telstra.com.au/tech-savvy-seniors/about-tech-savvy-seniors>
- The NSW Department of Communities and Justice has provided \$200,000 to the Australian Human Rights Commission in 2019 and 2020 to develop training and an awareness campaign to encourage employers to retain older workers as part of the '**Upholding the Rights of Older Workers**' project. This project is a key initiative of the NSW Ageing Strategy.
- The NSW Public Service Commission is encouraging government agencies to increase the participation of under-employed groups, including mature workers. Agencies will also need to develop strategies for knowledge capture and transfer in response to the changing scale and timing of retirements from the government sector; <https://www.psc.nsw.gov.au/workplace-culture---diversity/equity---diversity/mature-workers>
- The Australian Government's **Restart** program is a financial incentive of up to \$10,000 inclusive to encourage businesses to hire and retain mature age employees who are 50 years or older; <https://www.employment.gov.au/restart-help-employ-mature-workers-0>
- In 2018, the Australian Government established the **Collaborative Partnership on Mature Age Employment** to encourage employers to create more mature age friendly workplaces and reduce age discrimination; <https://www.employment.gov.au/collaborative-partnership-mature-age-employment>
- The Australian Government's **Career Transition Assistance** program is designed to help mature-age job seekers build their confidence and skills to become more competitive in their local labour market through a short intensive course. It helps people 45 years or older to increase their job readiness by identifying their transferable skills and better targeting their job search to local industries and available jobs; <https://www.employment.gov.au/career-transition-assistance>

'Building back better': A post-COVID outlook and opportunities for our mature-aged workforce

2nd GAP Virtual Business Roundtable • Thursday, 4 June 2020

- **Pathway to Work** is a small-scale Australian Government initiative to trial a variety of activities aimed at stimulating demand for mature age workers. Regionally based activities, including pilot projects, will commence progressively from 1 July 2018 and will take place on a rolling basis until 30 June 2021. Activities and pilot projects will be of varying duration depending on the location, industry and participants; <https://www.employment.gov.au/pathway-work>
- The Australian Government has increased support for older Australians to upskill or transition into new careers through the **Skills Checkpoint for Older Workers Program** and the **Skills and Training Incentive**. The \$17.4 million Skills Checkpoint Program was announced as part of the 2018-19 Budget and provides eligible Australians aged 45 to 70 years with advice and guidance on transitioning into new roles within their current industry or pathways to a new career, including referral to relevant education and training options. The Skills Checkpoint Program will support up to 20,000 older Australians over four years by providing targeted support to help them stay in or get into the workforce; <https://www.employment.gov.au/skillscheckpointprogram>
- **The Skills and Training Incentive** is available from 1 January 2019 to 31 December 2020 for up to 3,600 participants per year. The Incentive will provide eligible participants with up to \$2,000 to fund suitable training to help build skills to remain in the workforce longer. The funding must be matched by either the person or their employer. To be eligible for the Incentive, individuals must have completed a Skills Checkpoint assessment that identified training linked to their current job (e.g. upgrading skills), a future job opportunity, or an industry, occupation or skill in demand; <https://www.employment.gov.au/skillscheckpointprogram>
- The Australian Government introduced a **JobKeeper payment** to help keep more Australians in jobs and support businesses affected by the significant economic impact caused by the Coronavirus; <https://treasury.gov.au/coronavirus/jobkeeper>
 - Around 3.5 million workers will receive a fortnightly payment of \$1,500 (before tax) through their employer.
 - The payment ensures eligible employers remain connected to their workforce and will help businesses restart quickly when the crisis is over.
- Some companies in the private sector, such as Bunnings, are discovering the benefits of retaining and hiring older workers. Bunnings has recruited about 2,000 team members aged over 55 in the past five years, making it one of the biggest employers of older Australians; <https://olderworkers.com.au/news/bunnings-nails-down-older-workers/>