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Department of Training  
and Workforce Development

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# Harvesting Opportunities: Labour Market Trends, Challenges and Strategies for a Thriving Wheatbelt

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Director State Workforce Planning  
Department of Training and Workforce Development



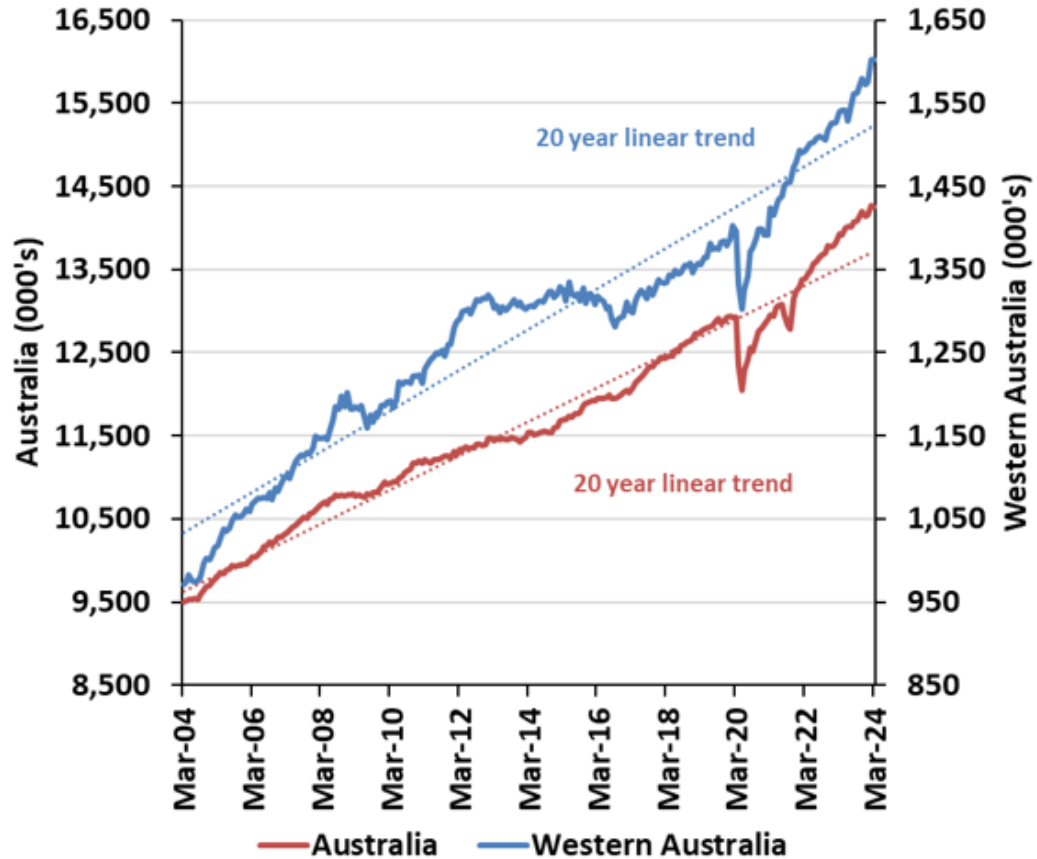
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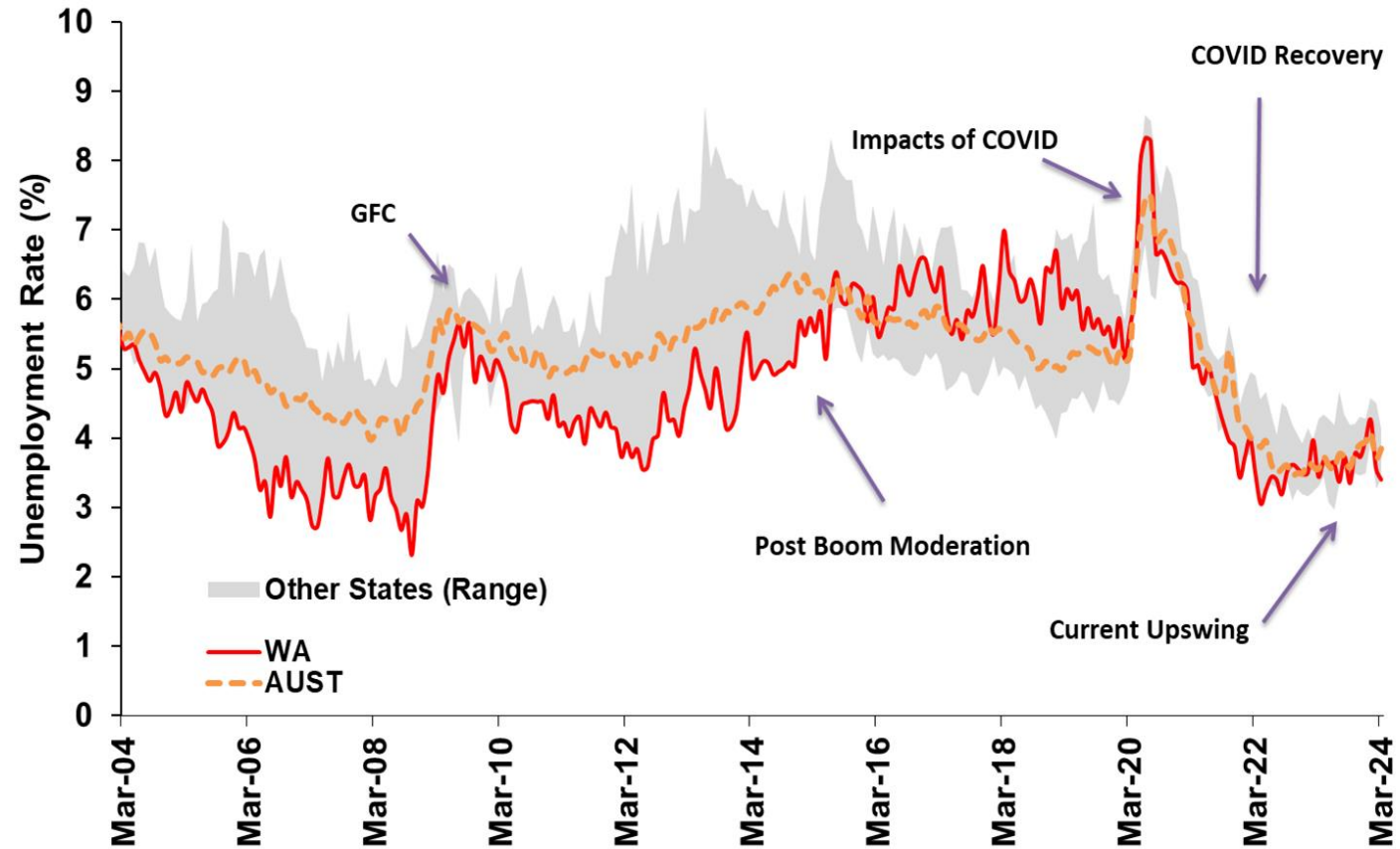
# Labour Force and Employment Trends

# Employment in Western Australia

## Employment Levels – Seasonally Adjusted

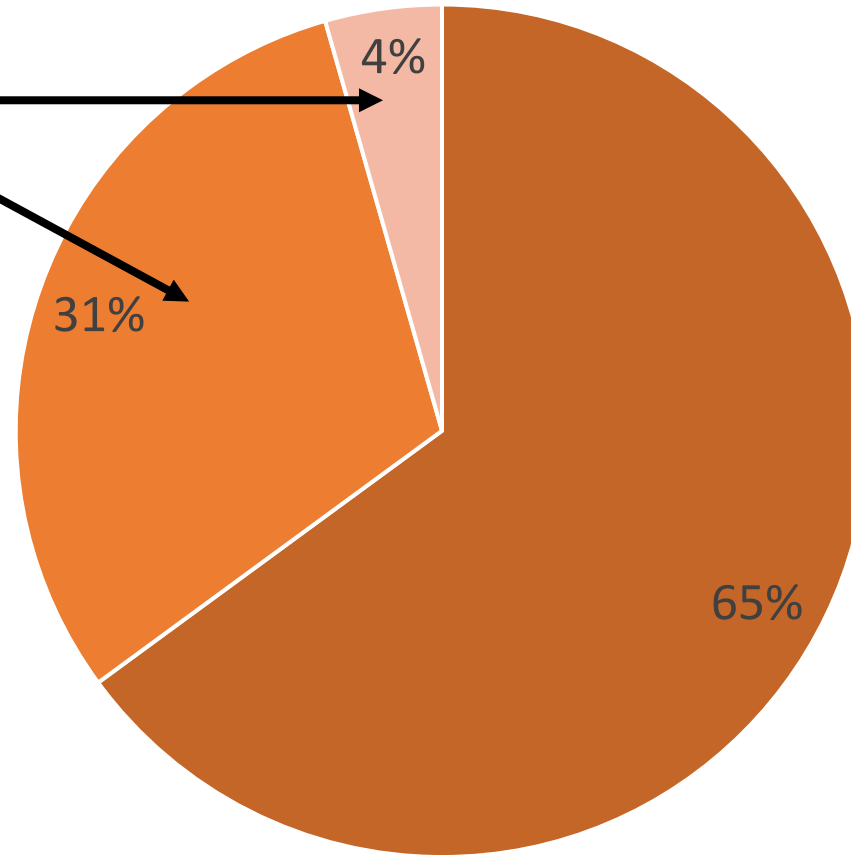


## Unemployment Rates – Seasonally Adjusted



# Persons by labour force status Wheatbelt

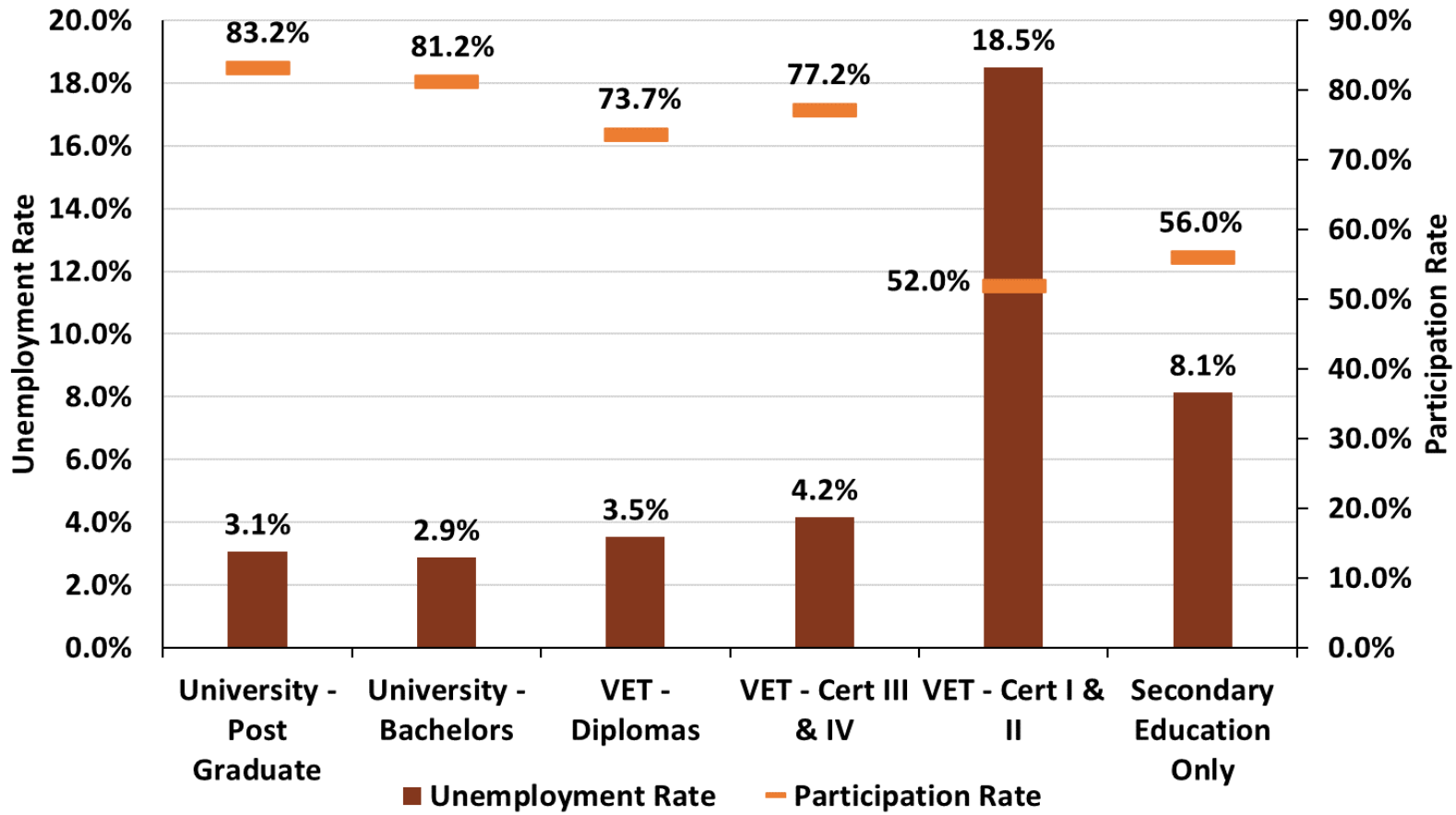
Currently around **23,000** persons not in the labour force



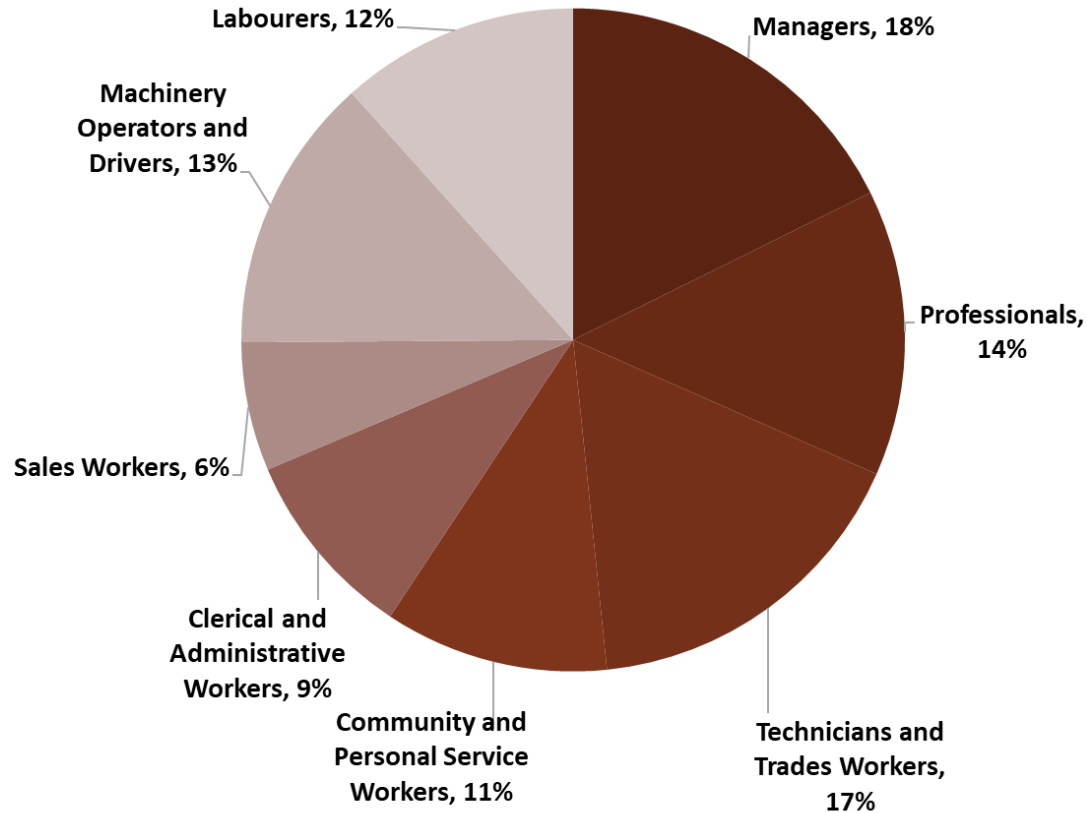
Approximately **42,600** persons currently employed in Wheatbelt

■ Employed   ■ Not in labour force   ■ Unemployed

# Unemployment/Participation Rate by Qualification Level - Western Australia



# Key Occupations in the Wheatbelt



Occupation Unit Group	Persons
Mixed Crop and Livestock Farmer	2,290
Grain, Oilseed or Pasture Grower	1,210
Sales Assistant (General)	910
Truck Driver (General)	850
General Clerk	710
Commercial Cleaner	520
Sheep Farmer	500
Fitter (General)	490
Miner	460
Primary School Teacher	440
Total of all other Occupations	19,940



# Estimated Employment by Industry-Wheatbelt





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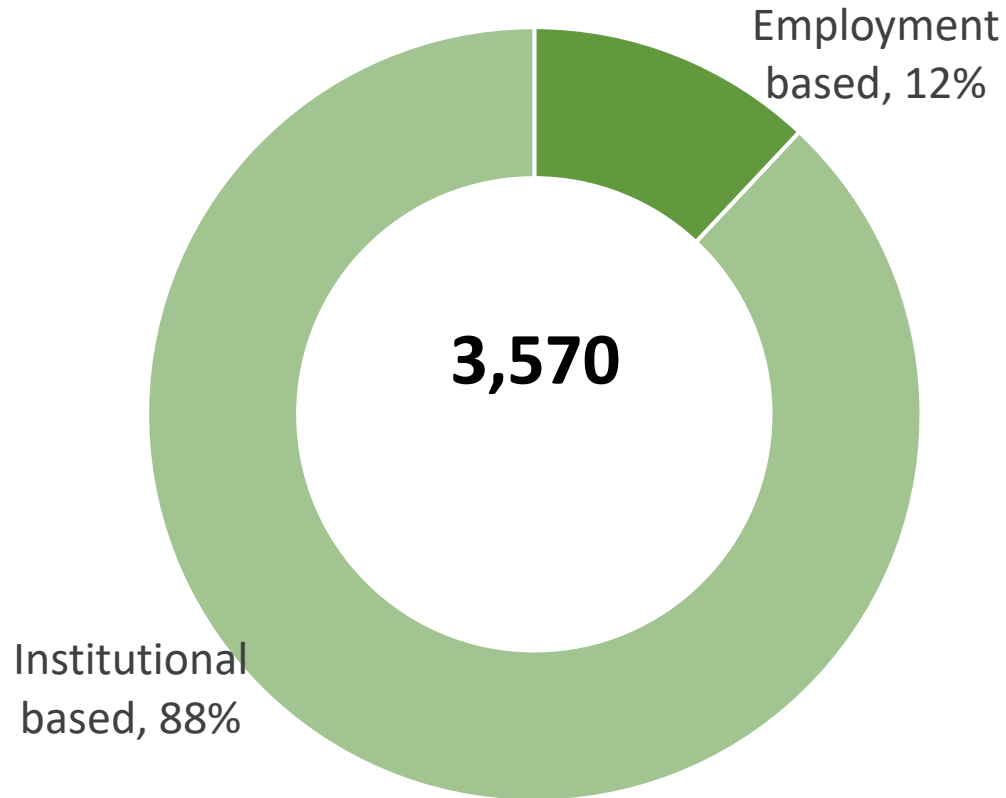
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# Wheatbelt Training Activity



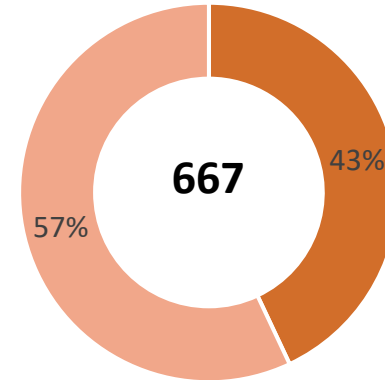
# Training Data - Wheatbelt

## Publicly funded VET course enrolments



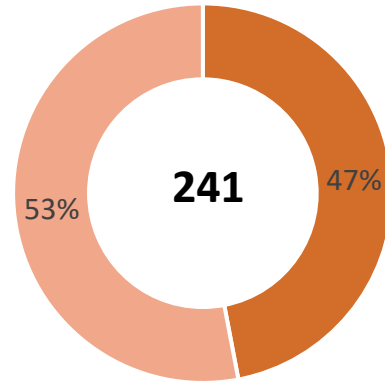
Department of Training and Workforce Development (2023)

## Commencements



■ Apprenticeships ■ Traineeships

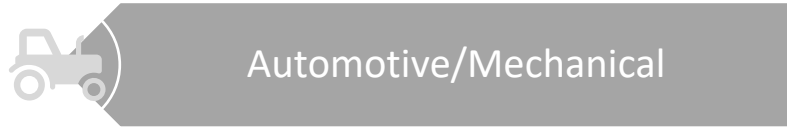
## Completions



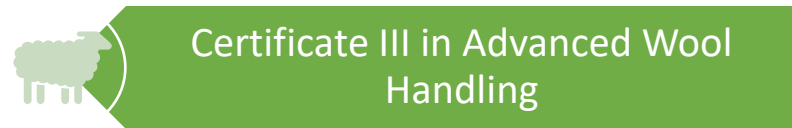
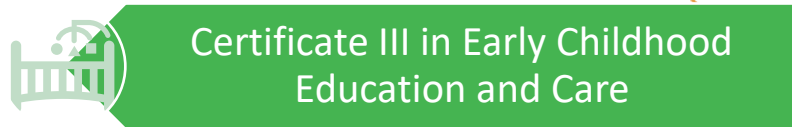
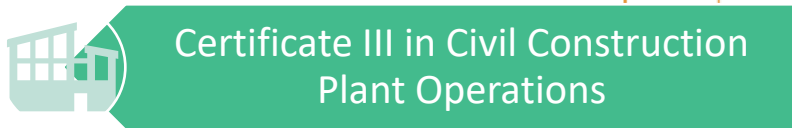
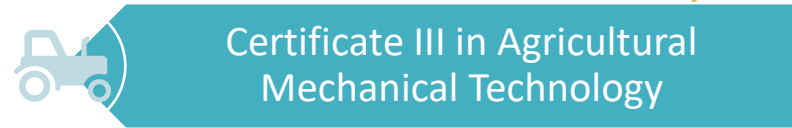
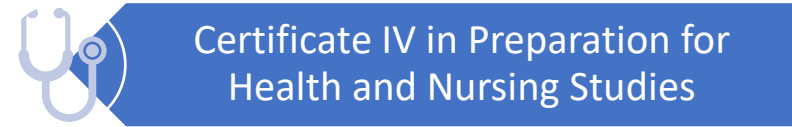
■ Apprenticeships ■ Traineeships

# What are Wheatbelt students studying?

## Employment based training



## Top qualifications





GOVERNMENT OF  
WESTERN AUSTRALIA



Central  
Regional

# Wheatbelt Training Initiatives with Industry

- AUR30420 Certificate III in Agricultural Mechanical Technology (AFGRI and AGMECHS Apprentices being delivered at Muresk)
- AE871 Heavy Vehicle Driving Operations Skill Set





# Strategic Partnerships

- Central Regional TAFE is exploring the impacts of the green energy transformation as well as rapid technological advancements in the region's workforce, to map emerging local skills requirements with a focus on agriculture, mining and health industries.
- Central Regional TAFE is partnering with local organisations and businesses to deliver courses that respond to the local community and environmental context, recently establishing a partnership with Ballardong Aboriginal Corporation to train their new rangers starting later this year.





# The Career Taster Program

The **Year 9 Career Taster Program** inspires secondary school students to become 'career curious' about further study options and potential careers.

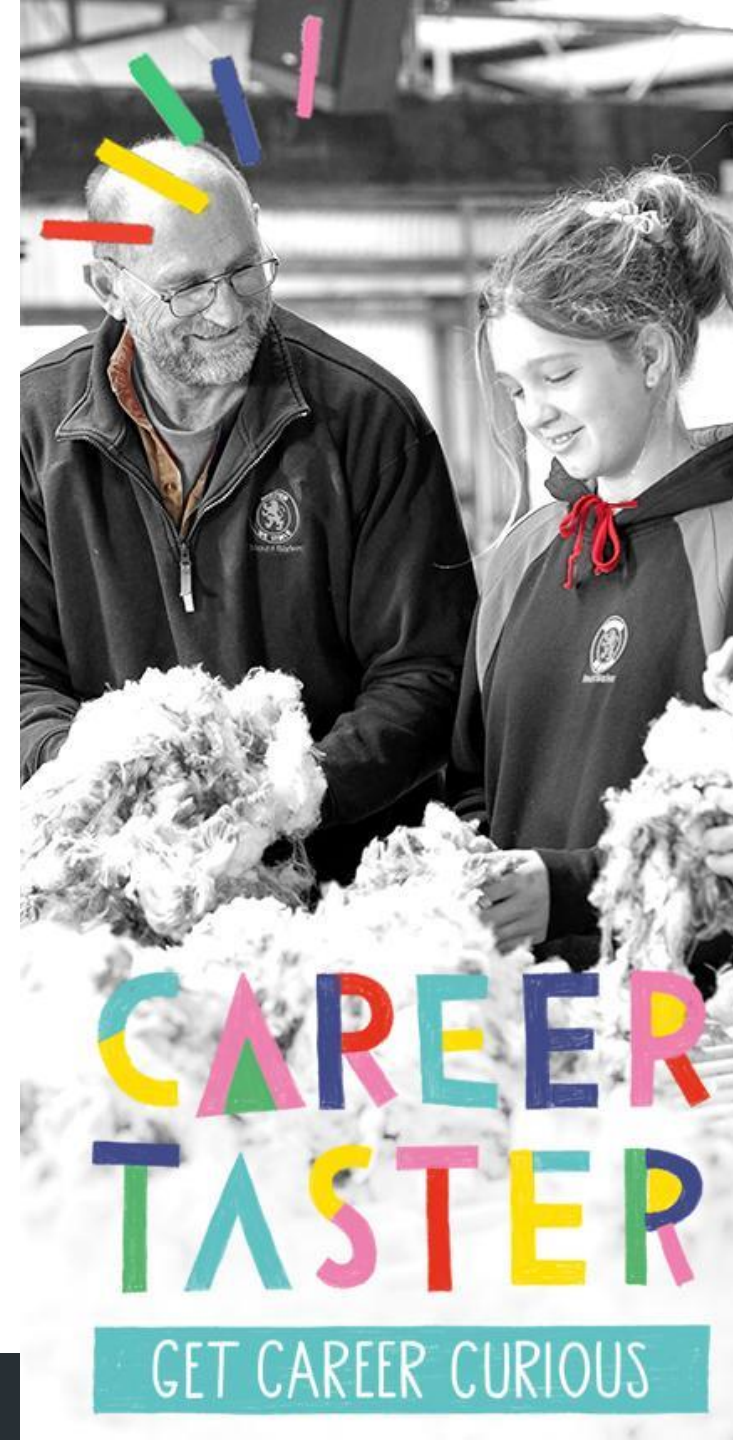
Flexible program that supports schools to tailor the program to students' needs and interests and regional opportunities.

Showcase career pathways in local region.

**All schools (public and private)** have access to funding to participate in the Career Taster Program.

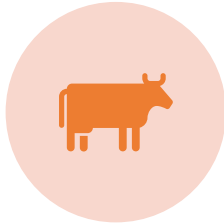
**TAFE Colleges** have coordinators at main campuses and provide career taster experiences in collaboration with local industry and other stakeholders.

**Industry partners** provide experiences directly to a school or in collaboration with a TAFE college.



# Wheatbelt Career Taster experiences in 2023

684 students from  
31 schools



ANIMAL CARE



AUTOMOTIVE



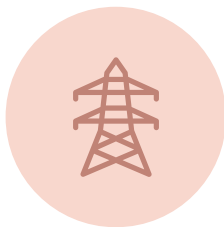
BUILDING AND  
CONSTRUCTION



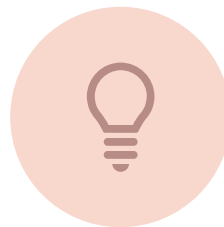
COMMUNITY SERVICES  
AND SOCIAL ASSISTANCE



CREATIVE INDUSTRIES



ELECTRICITY, GAS, WATER  
AND WASTE SERVICES



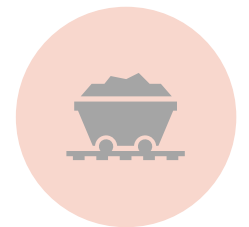
ENGINEERING



ICT AND DIGITAL  
TECHNOLOGIES



HEALTHCARE



MINING



# The Career Taster Program

The Career Taster Portal is a one-stop –shop for schools and industry

Schools can search for experiences in their region, including:

- facility tours and activities
- school incursions
- information sessions
- Mentoring and career speed-dating and camps

## Interested – what's next?

Contact your local school to discuss ideas and opportunities

Nominate and experience via the Career Taster Portal.

Contact the CTP Coordinator at Central Regional TAFE – Northam Campus  
– Deanna Willis [deanna.willis@crtafe.wa.edu.au](mailto:deanna.willis@crtafe.wa.edu.au)

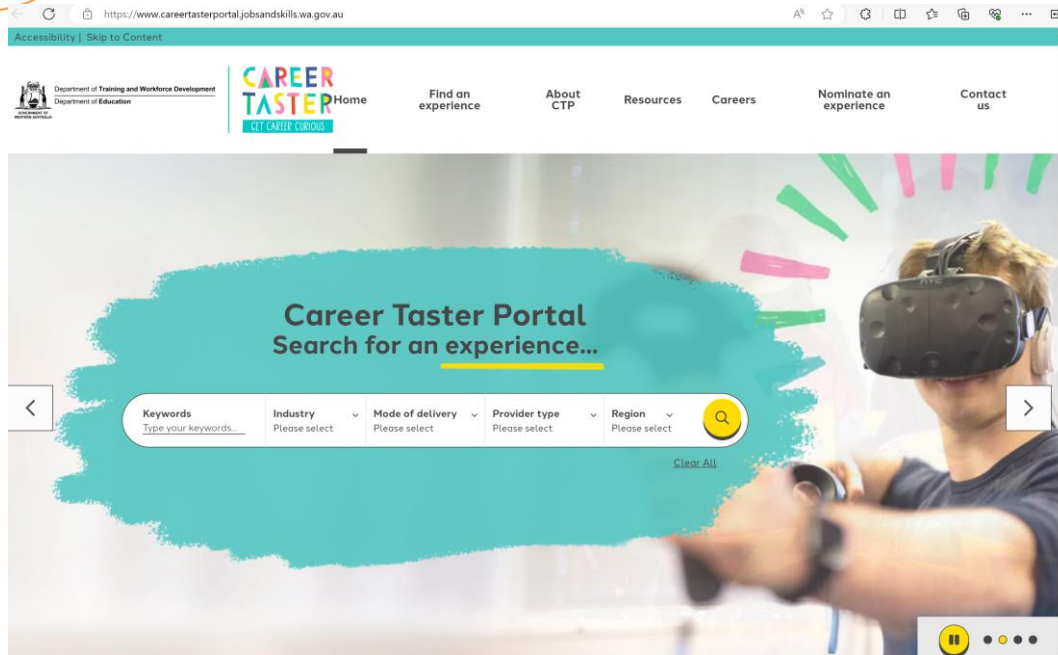
## What to discuss these options further?

Contact the CTP team at DTWD or visit the Career Taster Portal:

**T:** 6551 5084

**E:** [Career.TasterProgram@dtwd.wa.gov.au](mailto:Career.TasterProgram@dtwd.wa.gov.au)

**W:** [jobsandskills.wa.gov.au/careertaster](https://jobsandskills.wa.gov.au/careertaster)

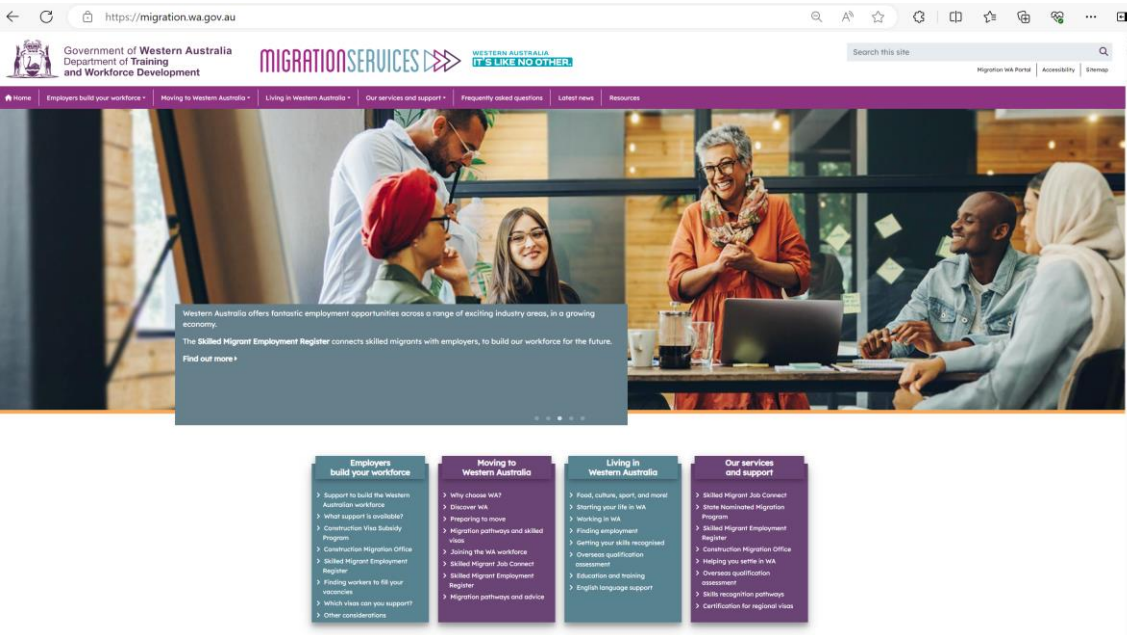


# Migration Services

Our team at WA Migration Services offers a range of services to support migrants to Western Australia, and to support WA employers to build their workforce through skilled migration.

- Job Connect
- Skilled Migrant Employment Register
- Settlement Services
- Construction Migration Office
- Construction Visa Subsidy Program
- State Nominated Migration Program
- Regional Certifying Body for regional visas
- Overseas Qualifications Unit – free assessment services to have tertiary or higher education qualifications recognised.
- Settlement Services

Visit our website to find out more: [www.migration.wa.gov.au](http://www.migration.wa.gov.au)



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MIGRATION SERVICES

WESTERN AUSTRALIA  
IT'S LIKE NO OTHER.



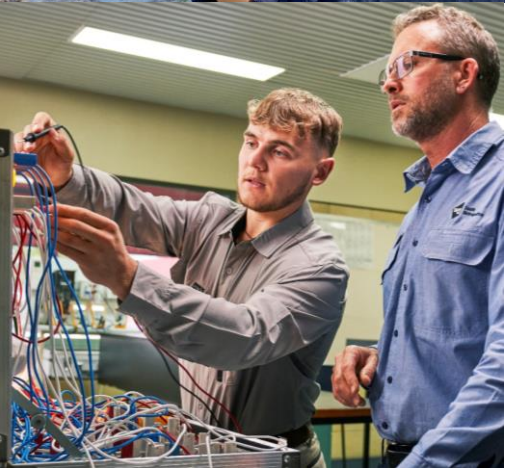
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# The Future Opportunities Western Australia and the Wheatbelt

# Economic Diversification

- **Primary industries, Agrifood and Agribusiness**
  - WA agrifood and beverage enterprises pitch at Singapore trade expo
- **Tourism, events and creative industries**
  - WA Visitor Economy Strategy
  - \$1.15 million to 65 regional events across Western Australia
  - Screen Industry Strategy
  - Working Holiday Maker campaign
- **International education**
  - \$5000 bursary to support international students to regional TAFE colleges
- **Defence industries**
- **Mining and METS**
  - Critical minerals
  - Electrification of mines
- **Space industries**
- **Health and medical life sciences**
- **Energy**





# CLEAN ENERGY WORKFORCE CHALLENGE

## Objective

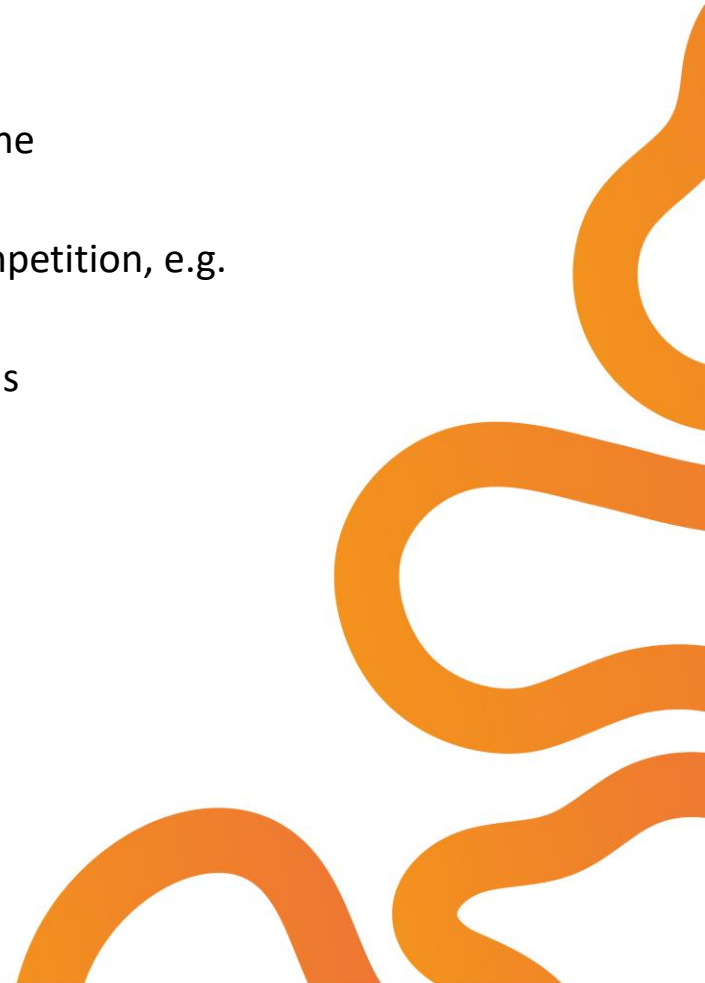
- To develop the pipeline of suitably skilled workers needed to support the transition to net zero emissions by 2050
- To minimise workforce disruption and maximise opportunities for workers

## Challenges

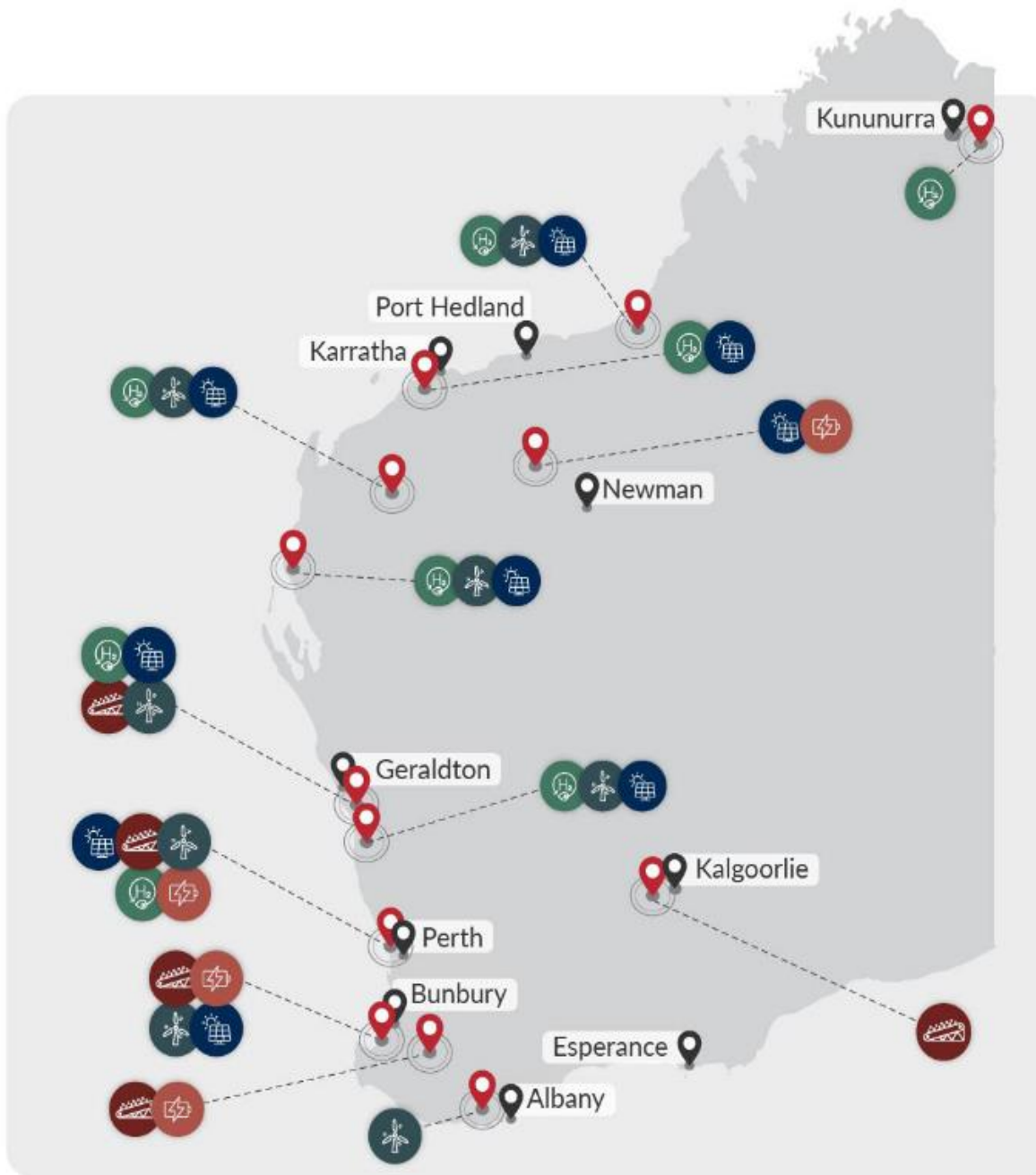
- Significant investment across a wide range of activities related to clean energy technology and the electrification of houses, vehicles, resources and industries
- Some of the technology is evolving rapidly, with time-limited global opportunities as well as competition, e.g. hydrogen and green steel
- Investment in relevant training facilities to develop the pipeline of workers on a just-in-time basis
- Integration of schools, STEM, hybrid articulation across VET / university
- Industry-led training / teachers / curriculum development
- Quality and scale of existing facilities already under pressure, especially electrical

## Opportunities

- Industry engagement
- Alignment of national and State economic diversification/clean energy strategies
- Explore how opportunities can be shared across regions
- Closing the Gap and Gender equity



# Clean energy



Up to **\$200 Billion** investment.



**351,000 jobs** in WA created between 2025 and 2050.



**28,000 jobs** in WA in 2030 in battery mineral mining and processing.



WA accounts for **55% of global lithium production**.

## LEGEND



Hydrogen



Battery



Solar



Energy minerals



Wind



# Clean Energy Projects in the Wheatbelt

## Current renewable energy projects

- Collgar Wind Farm, Burracoppin (206MW)
- Merredin Energy Peaking Plant, Merredin (82MW)
- Emu Downs Wind Farm, Cervantes (80MW)
- Emu Downs Solar Farm, Badgingarra (20MW)
- West Hills Wind Farm, Lancelin (5 MW)
- Karakin Wind Farm, Nilgen (5 MW)
- Badgingarra Wind Farm, Badgingarra (130MW)

## Proposed renewable generation projects

- Yandin Wind Farm, Dandaragan: Alinta Energy (338.4 MW)
- Waddi Wind Farm, Dandaragan: Tilt Renewables (145 MW)
- Merredin Solar PV Farm: Stellata Energy (120 MW)
- Joanna Plains Wind Peaker Project: Griffin Energy (106 MW dual fuel gas turbine power station)
- Nilgen Wind Farm, Lancelin: Pacific Hydro (104.5 MW)
- Cunderdin Solar PV Farm: Sun Brilliance (100 MW)
- Waddi Solar Farm, Dandaragan: Tilt Renewables (80 MW)
- Northam Solar PV Farm: Carnegie Clean Energy (10 MW) (in construction)
- Northam 10 MW hydrogen electrolyser (4 tonnes of hydrogen per day) – solar farm - Infinite Green
- Carbon Farming and BioEnergy opportunities

# NORTHAM-WHEATBELT REGIONAL COORDINATING COMMITTEE

## Objective

- Established in 2021 to support the Wheatbelt to implement practical, and place-based actions with a focus on developing local solutions for local challenges.
- Membership includes Central Regional TAFE, Wheatbelt Development Commission, Wheatbelt Business Network, Shire of Northam, Department of Education
- Reports to Minister for Training and Workforce Development through the Department of Training and Workforce Development.

## Actions for 2024

- **Working with industry to address the future skill needs for clean energy occupations in the Wheatbelt.**
- **Promoting career opportunities in clean energy through the schools.**
- **Increasing the delivery of Job Ready Programs in the Wheatbelt.**
- **Promoting the FEE FREE IN '24 to employers and jobseekers throughout the Wheatbelt.**
- **The ongoing provision of wraparound services at the Northam TAFE Campus to underrepresented jobseekers, including literacy and numeracy support.**

