



# MEDIA RELEASE

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## **Victoria's Budget delivers vital new investment in TAFE capacity**

The strong focus on TAFE in today's announcement in the lead up to the Victorian State Budget has been welcomed by the peak national body, TAFE Directors Australia (TDA).

The measures include \$85.9 for a new Victorian Skills Authority (VSA) which was a central recommendation of the report, *Skills for Victoria's Growing Economy*, led by Jenny Macklin. The VSA will coordinate teaching and training across the VET sector and prepare the Victorian Skills Plan aimed at aligning skills priorities to the growth of industries and building opportunities for Victorians through vocational education.

TAFE Directors Australia CEO Craig Robertson said the VSA model is an exciting development that brings together skills deepening with industry development strategies for Victoria which is a central design feature in the Macklin report.

The Budget includes important new investment in TAFE campuses, facilities and services to students.

Mr Robertson said the focus on TAFE recognises the key part that TAFE institutes have played in rebuilding and developing new skills for so many people during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"TAFE institutes have worked closely with employers, industry, students and communities to ensure that training and education could be delivered and adapted to meet rapidly evolving needs.

"For people who were re-training, entering the workforce, or embarking on new areas of work forced by COVID lockdowns, TAFEs have been a pillar in helping people to sustain themselves and develop new capabilities," Mr Robertson said.

The Budget includes \$72.4 million for campus upgrades, including \$60 million to redevelop the Bendigo Kangan Institute Broadmeadows campus and \$10.7 million to redevelop the GOTAFE Archer Street Shepparton campus.

A further \$12 million will be invested in TAFE equipment such as mobile cranes and 3D metal printers.

Mr Robertson said measures such as Free TAFE in Victoria have provided an important lifeline and a valuable tool for many who may be entering post-secondary training for the first time, as well as those needing to acquire new skills.

"We have seen uptake of full qualifications and short courses as people have responded to the rising needs of certain sectors, particularly in areas like health, aged care, early childhood education and cyber security.

"This investment in skills represents a step change in our productive capacity and will be of lasting benefit to individuals, industry and the community".

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TAFE Directors Australia is the peak national body representing 28 TAFE institutes, including six dual sector universities with TAFE divisions and nine TAFEs that are also non-university higher education providers.