



THE HON ANDREW GILES MP
Minister for Skills and Training



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Minister for Skills and TAFE

JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

Next generation of housing workforce to be trained at new TAFE Centre of Excellence

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The Albanese and Allan Labor Governments are investing a combined \$50 million to establish the Melbourne Polytechnic Future of Housing Construction Centre of Excellence – the first dedicated training facility in Australia focused exclusively on advanced construction courses.

This partnership will help provide a critical workforce productivity boost for the construction industry, to deliver our national housing needs.

The centre will be a driving force for nationwide growth in skills development for Modern Methods of Construction (MMC). Additionally, it will help address critical skills needs in the housing construction sector, by providing innovative training and creating an applied research hub.

The centre will focus on the design and delivery of new training practices; cutting-edge equipment will be a feature in the purpose-built facilities and digital technologies will be front and centre, with students having access to a holographic training suite.

With a goal of training and upskilling the next generation of the country's housing workforce, TAFEs across Australia will benefit from the centre's work as it explores better ways to support industry experts to transition into teaching roles and build MMC teaching capability.

Australia's peak MMC body, prefabAUS, will provide expertise in prefabrication and modular construction techniques. Industry partners will be co-located at the centre to further incorporate collaboration.

This announcement follows the commitment of the Albanese and Allan Governments to address critical skills shortages, with the recent announcement of 5,200 new Free TAFE places in housing and construction courses for Victorians, providing accessible training opportunities and supporting national housing priorities.

This forms part of the Australian Government's \$325 million investment under the five-year National Skills Agreement, to establish a network of up to 20 TAFE Centres of Excellence.

Each centre will focus on high skills needs to help deliver a skilled workforce for strategically important industries.

Quotes attributable to the Minister for Skills and Training, Andrew Giles:

"Partnerships like we are making today, between governments, training organisations and industry, are the best way to deliver the skills people need for good, secure work and careers.

"Owning a home is one of the quintessential Australian dreams, a place to call your own, to grow and build a future. Our government recognises that building more homes is the best way to address Australia's housing challenges. Delivering housing supply is a national priority under the National Skills Agreement. This investment will support and strengthen Australia's residential housing capability.

"We are investing in more housing construction Free TAFE places in 2025 to help build the workforce we need to build more houses for Australians. The work this Centre of Excellence will undertake will help train that workforce to take advantage of modern methods of construction and build houses faster.

“Increasing our capability to build houses in a more environmentally responsible and efficient way, will create a foundation for a sustainable future helping achieve our Future Made in Australia plan.”

Quotes attributable to the Minister for Skills and TAFE, Gayle Tierney:

“Free TAFE has opened doors to new training and career pathways for nearly 190,000 Victorians since 2019, including 33,300 students in construction courses – saving aspiring tradies over \$71 million in tuition fees and preparing them for jobs in the high-demand construction industry.”

“More homes mean more opportunities – that’s why we’re partnering with the Albanese Labor Government to deliver this world-class centre, providing workers with the advanced skills needed to meet the skills needs of the residential construction workforce and drive innovation across the industry.”

Quotes attributable to Simon Croft, HIA Chief Executive (Industry Policy):

“HIA welcomes the announcement of funding to establish a Future of Housing Construction Centre of Excellence which will provide an important platform for industry to learn and develop the skills that will shape the construction of our future homes.

“It is pleasing to see more new and innovative forms of construction being used in our homes and expect to see the uptake grow and evolve over the coming years.

“The Centre of Excellence will facilitate greater uptake of innovations in the sector and better equip the builders of the future with the skills to drive this forward.”

BACKGROUND

The centre will be located at Melbourne Polytechnic’s Heidelberg campus and builds on the work of its Advanced Manufacturing Centre of Excellence. It will also adopt the learnings from Melbourne Polytechnic’s Clean Economy Skills Lab for Residential Building and Skills Lab for Circular Design.

The centre will collaborate with industry, other TAFEs, universities, Jobs and Skills Councils and innovation partners, including the Building 4.0 Cooperative Research Centre, on applied research and real-world problem-solving programs in MMC and systems.

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