

New South Wales Adult and Community Education (ACE) Pre-Budget Submission on Infrastructure Maintenance

Community Colleges Australia (CCA) has proposed that the NSW Government implement a 2022/23 adult and community education (ACE) infrastructure maintenance program of **\$250,000 per ACE provider**, a **total of \$8 million state-wide**. CCA delivered this proposal to the NSW Minister for Skills and NSW Treasury as a Pre-Budget Submission to support local training and help prepare ACE facilities and campuses with a COVID-19 economic resiliency plans.

If this proposal is implemented, New South Wales ACE students will gain relevant skills for a post-pandemic economic recovery in modern, fit-for-purpose and COVID-safe facilities *within* their communities. Infrastructure investment for not-for-profit community education providers is an investment in the viability and vibrancy of local communities. **It provides direct employment for local tradespeople and businesses.** Two thirds of NSW ACE providers are located outside metro areas, and they play a crucial yet often underestimated role in the delivery of skills to the people of regional NSW, supporting improved employability prospects for employers and employment for job seekers in NSW.

NSW ACE providers have identified practical and “shovel ready” projects that will enhance their ability to provide better quality training to their communities while simultaneously delivering the economic injection into local economies. These projects will build on the very successful 2019/20 (\$2.3 million) and 2021/22 (\$1 million) NSW Government-funded ACE infrastructure maintenance programs projects, which demonstrated how targeted investment delivers quality learning and supports local businesses.

The CCA infrastructure maintenance project will:

- support the [NSW Productivity White Paper](#) recommendation to “continue to provide targeted workforce support to promote economic recovery, the 2016 [NSW Direction Statement for Vocational Education and Training](#), the 2021 [NSW VET Review](#) (Gonski-Shergold report), the NSW [2018-2038 State Infrastructure Strategy](#) and the [NSW 2040 Economic Blueprint: Investing in the State’s Future](#);
- align with almost every one of the [Premier’s policy priorities](#), especially ensuring a strong economy, highest quality education and breaking the cycle of disadvantage;
- enable NSW ACE providers to implement COVID-19 economic resiliency plans through targeted improvements in ventilation and air filtration, as well important IT upgrades & connectivity; and
- ensure a substantial return on investment (ROI) to the NSW Government.

The program will also underpin the operational continuity of the state-wide ACE provider network, so their training capacity will survive now to thrive in the future. This is especially so now that the current Omicron wave threatens to devastate vocational education and training in the first quarter of 2022.

Further information

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20 January 2022