# The role of Regional Councils

Regional Councils are part of the adult, community and further education system which helps adult Victorians access education and training to participate in and contribute to their communities both economically and socially.

Regional Councils are established under the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*. The legislation requires that there is a council in each administrative region of adult, community and further education. There are currently eight regions:

* Barwon South West
* Eastern Metropolitan
* Gippsland
* Grampians
* Hume
* Loddon Mallee
* North Western Metropolitan
* Southern Metropolitan

Each Council has a minimum of five voluntary members appointed by the Minister for Training and Skills for up to three years. They are people with different expertise and diverse local knowledge able to advise the Adult, Community and Further Education (ACFE) Board on the needs of adult education in their region.

Regional Councils draw together different expertise and aspects of local knowledge about their communities to advise the ACFE Board on the needs of adult education across their regions. In particular, the Regional Councils play a key role in:

* providing strategic advice and local intelligence to the ACFE Board.
* promotion and advocacy of adult community and further education and fostering collaboration and partnerships between Learn Locals and key regional stakeholders.

The Act sets out the functions of Regional Councils in relation to adult, community and further education as follows:

* Develop processes to enable learners and providers to advise Regional Councils and the ACFE Board of needs in their region.
* Provide advice and prepare reports for the ACFE Board.
* Provide information and contribute to planning.
* Advise the ACFE Board regarding the effectiveness of activities in their region including those funded by the ACFE Board.
* Support and promote provision, networks between providers, and diversity and flexibility of provision.
* Participate in recommending to the ACFE Board state-wide priorities and policies.

In carrying out its functions, the Act specifies that Regional Councils need to consult with learners, providers, and other education and training organisations in their region including local TAFEs and adult education institutions.

Staff from the Department of Education and Training support the work of each Regional Council.

## Providing strategic advice and local intelligence

This is the primary role of the Regional Council. As people who live and/or work in the communities in the region, Regional Council members can bring unique and current perspectives and diverse information to the discussions the Regional Council has on the learning needs of those communities, including how well they are currently being met. This knowledge adds depth and richness to the information that the ACFE Board has from other sources to make decisions about how best to resource the delivery of adult education across the state.

## Promotion and advocacy of adult community and further education

Members of Regional Councils can support and promote adult, community and further education in their communities and networks in a range of ways including:

* sharing information on the value and achievements of adult, community and further education within their social and professional networks,
* promoting the pre-accredited training option to adults in their communities expressing an interest in returning to education and training or seeking assistance with language, literacy, numeracy, employability and digital skills,
* supporting the work of Learn Local providers through promotion to the broader community.