



Sector Support update

27 October 2022

Dear colleagues,

The Board realises that many of you in some areas of the state have been affected by the current floods. We know that on both a personal level and in your work, you are facing some tough times. We wish to acknowledge that and say we have been thinking of you all. We realise that for many Learn Locals, training delivery and other planned work has been impacted and that many of you, as part of broader community organisations, are undertaking some wonderful work supporting people in your communities during this time. Thank you.

Since my last communique where I outlined actions that addressed some areas of need and concern following our consultation with the sector, the Board has been giving careful consideration as to how it can further support the sector in response to ongoing engagement and delivery challenges experienced this year. We have listened to your feedback and considered the Board's capacity to provide further support. At its October meeting the Board made some important decisions that will be positive news for the entire sector. I am pleased to announce that at the meeting the Board decided to extend further support to the sector in two ways.

The ACFE Board will provide a once-off \$8,000 Local Innovation grant in 2023 for all contracted Learn Local providers to support activities aligned with the Board's strategy and the Ministerial Statement. The main purpose of this grant is to focus on activities that best suit your local needs and will improve pre-accredited learning experiences, the attraction and retention of learners and improve learner outcomes. The Local Innovation grant will focus on innovative strategies to strengthen delivery in one or more of the four areas of learner need that is most relevant for your learners and community:

- Improving engagement and building confidence and skills for participation in education and training
- Achieving success in further education and training
- Building confidence and skills for participation in work
- Upskilling and reskilling vulnerable workers

We believe the grant will assist your planning and initiatives for 2023 so you can continue to support many Victorians and make a difference to their lives. There will be guidance provided for its use and acquittal. The department will be distributing this information regarding this innovation grant in November. The second decision by the Board is to provide further business continuity support through 2022 by the application of a 15 per cent tolerance to pre-accredited training delivery. This means that Learn Local providers who deliver 85 per cent or more of their allocated pre-accredited student contact hours will be paid 100 per cent of their training allocation. The Board's commitment to continue the business continuity support aims to address some of the impacts experienced by providers due to the unpredictable training delivery demand over this year.

You have also been advised by the department that there is a 2.8 per cent increase from \$9.10 to \$9.35 per student contact hour, effective from 2023 for pre-accredited training delivery. This is consistent with the increase in the accredited training subsidy rate and recognises that costs associated with training have increased.

Taken together, the Board believes that this package of support will assist Learn Locals and allow you to approach 2023 with confidence and make the impact you do for individuals and your communities through your important work. We are proud of the sector for retaining a strong focus on delivering on the Minister's aspirations for learners outlined in the Ministerial Statement on the Future of Adult Community Education in Victoria and supporting the strategic directions of the Board through the unprecedented challenges over the last few years.

The Board was disappointed, in response to the recent rain and flood and people's safety and wellbeing, to have to cancel the gala event to celebrate the 2022 Learn Local Awards that had been planned for Friday 14 October. I would like to again congratulate all the finalists. Being a Learn Local Award finalist is a wonderful achievement. Each and every finalist should feel proud of their accomplishments. The Board is being advised of options for rescheduling the event and advice will be provided once a date and time is set. It is likely to be early next year in the second half of February.

I wish to inform you of changes to the Board's membership as May Lam has finished her time on the ACFE Board and Sally Brennan will finish her time on the Board on 4 November.

Though only on the Board for a short time, May was a valued and hardworking Board member and in recent times was the Deputy Chair. She made a significant contribution to the Board through its meetings, committees and working groups, through her Regional Champion role with Northwest Metro Regional Council and with the sector through visits and attending events. May brought a commitment to community and learners, skills in policy, data and research work and a significant knowledge of employment services, youth and community strengthening.

Sally has been on the Board for eight years and, given her background and contribution over such a long time, she will be such a great loss. Sally has a strong work ethic and has made a significant impact through her leadership and contribution at Board and committee level, as a Regional Champion for a number of Regional Councils and has given her time without question to judge awards, attend events or work tirelessly to support the Board's work. Sally has also played a key role in driving Board projects and strategic areas of focus to ensure they meet learner, sector, and strategic needs. Because of this passion for learners and her unwavering belief in and commitment to the sector Sally will be so missed.

On behalf of the Board, I thank both May and Sally for their commitment, contribution as colleagues and members of the ACFE Board and, on behalf of us all, wish them the very best for the future.



Maria Peters
Chairperson

Adult, Community and Further Education Board