

Aide-Memoire: Update on Workforce Development Council (WDC)/Transitional Industry Training Organisation (TITO) COVID-19 Response Projects Fund

To:	Hon Chris Hipkins, Minister of Education
From:	Gillian Dudgeon, Deputy Chief Executive, Delivery
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Purpose

1. This aide-memoire provides you with an update on the Workforce Development Council (WDC)/Transitional Industry Training Organisation (TITO) COVID-19 Response Projects Fund (the Fund). Specifically, it outlines how the funding has been used so far, the content of the projects currently being undertaken by TITOs, and plans to allocate the remaining funding.
2. We recommend that this aide-memoire is proactively released in full.

Background

3. The WDC/TITO COVID-19 Response Projects Fund was established in July 2020 to enable TITOs and WDCs to lead COVID-19 response projects that support the recovery of their industries from the impacts of COVID-19. A total of \$16 million was appropriated to the fund; \$13 million in the 2020/21 fiscal year, and \$3 million in the 2021/22 fiscal year.
4. Funding is granted through application rounds, which enables TITOs and WDCs to undertake projects through a three phase process:

Phase	Details
P1 Scoping	- Project scoping and planning in collaboration with industry and providers to determine projects.
P2 Investigation	- Understand, determine and prioritise the necessary skills responses, training and pathways. This includes reviewing existing industry skills standards and programme components.
P3 Design	- Design work related to proposals determined through project scoping, planning and investigation phases.

5. TITOs are funded for one phase at a time, and are required to submit an updated application once they are ready to progress to the next phase of their project. This phased approach ensures that projects are well developed, have on-going industry support, and continue to meet the purpose of the fund, before being implemented as part of Phase 3. Once completed, it is expected that the project outputs will be of immediate benefit to the relevant WDCs, once they are established.

We are currently funding 13 projects across eight TITOs for approximately \$9.5 million

6. In 2020, the Fund received applications for 51 projects from 10 TITOs. Of these applications, 15 projects across 10 TITOs were approved for funding. A summary of each funded project is provided below, and an overview of all funded projects, including their status, current funding and expected funding, is attached as Appendix 1.
7. As of May 2021, two projects have concluded following Phase 1 (Scoping), after finding that there was no industry demand or need to progress the proposed projects further. Of the 13 active projects, nine are currently in Phase 2 (Investigation), with the remaining four implementing their proposals as part of Phase 3 (Design).
8. It is expected that all of the current TITO projects will be concluded by early 2022. Should all of these be funded through to completion, the TEC will have invested **approximately \$9.5 million in TITO projects.**

Due to their delayed establishment, we have not yet invested funding in WDC projects

9. Along with supporting TITOs, the intention of the Fund is to support WDCs lead COVID-19 response projects; however, due to delays in their establishment, no funding has yet been provided to WDC projects. Once the WDCs are established, and they are in a position to undertake COVID-19 response projects, **we intend to make the remaining \$6.5 million of funding available for the WDCs to use.** How this funding will be allocated has not yet been determined but will follow an application process similar to the existing TITO allocation process.

The 15 TITO projects cover a wide group of industries and are producing a range of outputs to support COVID-19 recovery

Building and Construction Industry Training Organisation (BCITO) is funded for four projects

Trade Secrets for Your Business

10. The objective of this project is to investigate why construction firms do not participate in training, and to design intervention strategies that will lead to greater support of apprentices and trainees.
11. Currently reaching the end of Phase 2 (Investigation), this project has identified regional 'employer events' as a potential strategy for improving employer engagement in training. The objective of these events is to connect employers to a local network of construction experts, employers, and training providers, with the aim of demonstrating the value of on-going training. A pilot event for this project was held in May in Palmerston North, which will inform a nationwide roll-out of events as part of Phase 3 (Design). The findings from this project will also be provided to the Construction and Infrastructure WDC.

National Construction Workforce Forecasting

12. BCITO is currently in the final stages of developing a National Construction Workforce Forecasting tool. This tool analyses supply and demand data to provide a detailed forecast on workforce supply and demand over the next 15 years for the wider construction sector including civil infrastructure, residential and commercial construction.

13. Alongside developing the tool, the project is working with Regional Skills Leadership Groups (RSLGs) to provide tailored regional workforce reports. These reports are designed to identify local construction workforce issues, which will help inform local solutions to make sure the construction industry has access to the right people, with the right skills, in the right place, at the right time.
14. Very positive feedback has been received from regional groups who have had the opportunity to see and use the Forecasting tool as part of its development. Opportunities to leverage this approach across other sectors will be included in conversations with WDCs once they are operational.

Construction Industry Recovery Packages

15. The objective of the Construction Industry Recovery Packages project is to develop a suite of 10 microcredentials and supporting materials that recognise key skills in the Construction Industry. These are focused on short term skills shortages that have been created by COVID-19. They are designed for delivery in a range of contexts including the workplace and provider-based environments, and work preparation, experience and transition programmes. These microcredentials will also incorporate key transferable work skills that provide a clear pathway to apprenticeship programmes in the future.
16. The learning support materials are being developed from a 'Digital First' principle. This will enable employees, learners and employers to engage with the materials irrespective of the levels of lockdown, and no matter their employment status.

Project Retrain

17. This project is investigating how the construction industry can best attract and transition the women who have lost their jobs due to the impacts of COVID-19 into careers within the infrastructure, building, and construction industries.
18. In mid-April the project launched a nationwide campaign focused on understanding why women were not considering a career in the trades, and why employers were not hiring women. The results from the campaign surveys will inform Phase 3 of the project, which will design solutions to support the transition of female job seekers into construction and infrastructure apprenticeships.

Careerforce is funded for two projects

Life Changing Careers

19. The objective of this project is to attract a more diverse range of workers to the disability and support sector, which experienced a large degree of attrition during COVID-19. By attracting a more diverse range of workers, the disability and support sector will have greater resilience to future pandemics, and will be able to better reflect the diversity of those it supports.
20. In mid-May, Phase 3 of the project launched the Life Changing Careers campaign, which highlighted not only the financial benefits of a career in the disability and support workforce, but also the fulfilment that comes from connecting with people and helping them lead their best lives.

Modes of Learning Project

21. During the COVID-19 lockdown, there was a significant drop in trainee engagement with workplace-only models of training in the disability and support sector. The objective of this project is to understand what mode of training best serves the disability and support workforce

in a post COVID-19 environment, and how skill requirements have changed following the pandemic.

22. The output of this project will be recommendations for programme redevelopment that would help build training resilience in the sector, and ensure that the disability and support workforce is well prepared for future emergency situations.

Competenz Trust is funded for one project

Increasing the Number of Qualified Staff in MEL (Manufacturing, Engineering and Logistics) Sectors

23. The objective of this project was to investigate whether foundation qualifications could be mapped to business process in the MEL sectors, with the aim of creating a pathway for staff to have their skills and knowledge formally recognised. This would provide employees with formal qualifications, and enable them to seek re-employment should they be displaced due to the economic impact of COVID-19 on their industries.

24. Following the completion of Phase 1 (Scoping), Competenz have stated that they do not wish to continue the project and have proposed that it be revisited by the new MEL WDC once operational.

Infrastructure Industry Training Organisation (Connexis) is funded for two projects

Electricity Supply Industry Technical Workforce Development Strategy

25. The project will provide the electricity supply industry and Construction and Infrastructure WDC with a 10 year Workforce Development Strategy for the whole of the electricity supply industry. The Strategy will address what skills are needed, how training provision and support can be improved, and identify pathways for those looking to train or retrain in electricity supply industry careers, particularly for Māori and women.

Civil Infrastructure Workforce Development Strategy focusing on the 3 Waters Sector

26. The project will provide a 5-10 year Workforce Development Strategy for the 3 Waters sector and Construction and Infrastructure WDC. The Strategy will address labour shortages due to border closures, the need to diversify the workforce, enhancing career pathways, and improving training support and outcomes for all learners.

Hair and Beauty Industry Training Organisation (HITO) is funded for one project

Ensuring Hairdressing Skills and Qualifications are Responsive to the Impact of COVID-19 and the Future Needs of the WDC

27. The objective of this project was to provide an opportunity for the hairdressing industry to determine how hairdressing qualifications needed to change to make them more responsive to the impact of COVID-19 and future needs of the industry.

28. The project was completed following Phase 1 (Scoping) as industry indicated that current hairdressing skills and qualifications were fit for the future environment.

Primary Industry Training Organisation (Primary ITO) is funded for two projects

Pathways into Primary Industries Project

29. The objective of the Pathways into Primary Industries (PiPi) project is to create a clear and concise learner pathway between school, lifelong learning and employment. The project brings

together the activities of a broad range of stakeholders into a clear direction for training and training pathways. This co-ordination and direction will help industry recover from the impacts of COVID-19 by ensuring that the needs of learners and employers are listened to and mapped against available resources. This will help identify what additional learning opportunities are required to meet skills shortages.

30. The project will design skills responses that avoid duplication, leveraging existing systems and processes across multiple tertiary education organisations. This will support rapid implementation following the completion of this project with the clear allocation of roles and responsibilities between industry, the WDCs, Te Pūkenga, Food and Fibre CoVE, and TITOs. It is expected as a result of the project the primary industries will have fewer barriers to entry, and higher retention rates leading to greater numbers of New Zealanders in sustained employment and training.

Technology-enabled Lessons from Lockdown

31. Historically, most vocational education in the primary sector has been delivered face-to-face, in a class setting or in the field. Connectivity issues, assumptions about learning styles and the hands-on nature of work in the primary industries have limited innovations in delivery using technology.
32. Based on the lessons during the first transition to online learning, this project aims to identify good practice principles to be used in the delivery of online and technology-enabled vocational training, with a particular focus on the primary industries. The project will codify and share these learnings with industry, and will propose new solutions to improve online delivery, both for the primary sector, and wider vocational education.

Service IQ is funded for one project

Service Sector COVID-19 Recovery Workforce Strategy/Plan

33. This project is conducting evidence-based research on the supply of skills and resources needed to help stimulate the recovery of the service sector economy. The aim of the project is to generate Sector Skills Summaries for 16 service sectors (including Hospitality, Tourism, Travel, Aviation and Retail) as well as a Service Sector Workforce Strategy/Plan for the Services WDC.

Skills Active is funded for one project

To Rise by Lifting Others Project

34. Skills Active are currently in Phase 2 of their 'To Rise by Lifting Others' project, that aims to deliver a Creative, Cultural, Recreation and Technology (CCRT) Workforce Development Strategy and Action Plan, for the CCRT WDC. There is strong support from the CCRT Interim Establishment Board for this project.
35. This workforce development strategy is being developed in close collaboration with industry to investigate employment trends and forecasts, and labour demand and supply data across the CCRT industries, with a particular focus on developing frameworks for the Māori and Pacific workforce. This will help WDC members rapidly improve their understanding of CCRT workforce stakeholders, COVID-19 impacts on the sectors, and workforce training, supply, and demand issues.

Skills Org is funded for one project

Apprentice Assist Innovations

36. The project aims to support displaced apprentices from the construction and infrastructure industries get back into meaningful employment by creating a mobile learning platform. This platform will provide learning packages related to adjustment, job search preparation, and progressing to employment. Through these learning packages, apprentices will build self-confidence and improve resilience in a disrupted employment environment.

We will publish a list of funded TITO projects on the TEC website shortly

37. Under the funding delegation, the TEC is required to publish a list of projects funded under the Fund, including a short description of the project, who is leading it, and the industries involved.

38. As the outputs of the TITO projects are now well defined, the TEC is proposing to publish the required information on its website in the near future.



Gillian Dudgeon

Deputy Chief Executive, Delivery,
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2 June 2021



Hon Chris Hipkins

Minister of Education

12 / 06 / 21

Appendix 1: Status of TITO projects

Organisation	Short Title	Project Phase	Funding Committed to Date	Expected Total Value of Project ¹
BCITO	<i>Trade Secrets for Your Business</i>	2	\$120,000	\$220,000
BCITO	<i>National Construction Workforce</i>	3	\$1,419,750	\$1,419,750
BCITO	<i>Construction Industry Recovery</i>	3	\$1,437,500	\$1,437,500
BCITO led	<i>Project Retrain</i>	2	\$475,700	\$975,700
Careerforce	<i>Life Changing Careers</i>	3	\$595,000	\$595,000
Careerforce	<i>What mode of training best serves Careerforce employers in a post Covid-19 setting?</i>	2	\$28,000	\$236,000
Competenz Trust	<i>Increasing the number of qualified staff in MEL sectors</i>	1 (Project completed)	\$20,000	\$20,000
Connexis	<i>Electricity Supply Industry Engineering & Technical Workforce Skills Strategy</i>	2	\$402,680	\$602,680
Connexis	<i>Civil Infrastructure Workforce Development Strategy (3 Waters)</i>	2	\$476,000	\$726,000
HITO	<i>Ensuring hairdressing skills and qualifications are responsive to the impact of COVID19 and the future needs of the WDC</i>	1 (Project completed)	\$34,800	\$34,800
Primary ITO	<i>Pathways into Primary Industries</i>	2	\$342,000	\$614,000
Primary ITO	<i>Technology-enabled lessons from lockdown</i>	2	\$222,000	\$422,000
ServiceIQ	<i>Service Sector COVID-19 Recovery Workforce Strategy/Plan</i>	3	\$1,077,123	\$1,077,123
Skills Active	<i>To rise by lifting others</i>	2	\$455,000	\$625,000
Skills Org	<i>Apprentice Assist Innovations</i>	2	\$120,000	\$370,000
TOTAL			\$7,225,553	\$9,375,553

¹ Note: The expected total value of each project is an estimate of how much funding it would receive were it funded through to completion. As each project must submit an updated application form as it progresses through the three phases (Scoping, Investigation and Design), funding is gradually committed in stages.