

# Invest in TAFE NSW for our Future

The TAFE Community Alliance (TCA) was established almost ten years ago to advocate for the central role of the VET public provider in the building of social, cultural and economic capacity of Australian communities.

The TCA asks for your commitment to substantial new funding to ensure that TAFE NSW is again Australia's leading quality provider of vocational education and training. The NSW Government needs to work closely with Federal Government initiatives ensuring that Jobs and Skills Australia meets the needs of NSW communities. This includes re-investing in TAFE teachers and education support staff to prevent further loss of education and industry expertise. There is a need to rebuild TAFE NSW in physical, human and online terms, with centres for access, equity and excellence. TAFE colleges need to be revitalized as continuous connected learning centres, engaging community, commercial and technical interests.

TAFE enrolments have fallen markedly because of State government policies which have given preference to private providers and driven up student fees, even for the most disadvantaged. TAFE needs to be accessible for all students, not just those entitled to a fee-free place. State funding for vocational education and training (VET) has declined over many years. NSW needs a commitment to TAFE as a public institution serving student access and support, and delivering skilled workers for employment in local and regional communities and industries. It is important that TAFE is funded to make equity and access to educational opportunities a key part of its role.

TCA considers the following issues critical in this election:

- \* increased ongoing funding from the State government, matching and enhancing Federal government contributions;
- \* an end to efficiency dividends that reduce funding for TAFE each year, and a re-consideration of the asset management ROI rules that focus only on whether an asset is making a profit. Such policies are inappropriate for public education institutions as they do not include the public interest in terms of equitable access to VET and future investment in people;
- \* the refocusing of state VET policies, including Smart and Skilled NSW, to prioritise TAFE NSW and move NSW away from a marketised VET system;
- \* the restoration of TAFE NSW's commitment to access and equity, and ensuring that all students are provided with the best support to succeed in post-school pathways;
- \* the recognition that TAFE teachers and educational staff are highly qualified and professional educators with the primary responsibility for the development and maintenance of TAFE curriculum and training products. TAFE NSW should end its out-sourcing of this work and rebuild its internal capability;
- \* affordable and accessible training for all students, not just those able to access a fee-free TAFE place;
- \* policies and programs to increase investment in the quality of TAFE teachers as both educational and industry experts, and in the scholarship of teaching and learning.

Please contact Linda Simon or one of the other spokespersons for the TAFE Community Alliance for further information. [www.tafecommunityalliance.org](http://www.tafecommunityalliance.org)

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