

TextileWorks, a part of ForestWorks, is providing support for the management of this JSC project as part of their collaborative partnership with Skills Insight.

Strategy for Data Collection and Consultation: Textiles, Clothing and Footwear Skills Mapping Project

1.0 Introduction

This Consultation Strategy for the TCF Occupation and Skills Mapping Project outlines:

- A project overview
- The consultation activities aimed at gathering information and perspectives on the current and emerging occupation and skills framework within the Australian TCF industry.
- The primary target groups to be engaged during the consultation process
- The communication channels and tools to keep stakeholders informed about the project's purpose, progress, and outcomes.

2.0 Project overview

2.1 Project purpose

This project focuses on creating an occupation and skills map of the Australian Textile, Clothing and Footwear (TCF) industry. The main aim is to support workforce development by establishing a strong, future-oriented framework that identifies occupational roles, skill sets, and career pathways aligned with current and emerging industry requirements.

2.2 Project duration

13 months

2.3 Timeline

The project comprises five key stages. These are:

1. Project start-up: September – October 2025
2. Scoping, literature review and framework design: October – December 2025
3. Data collection and consultation: January – May 2026
4. Analysis, validation and reporting: June - August 2026
5. Submission: August – November 2026.

2.4 Scope/expected outcomes:

This project aims to:

- Develop an evidence-based framework of occupational roles, skill sets, career pathways, and training alignment across the TCF sector.
- Map current and future career pathways to address classification inconsistencies across the following TCF sub-sectors:
 - Textile manufacturing (natural and synthetic)
 - Fashion and apparel manufacturing
 - Leather manufacturing
 - Footwear production
 - Dry cleaning and laundry services
 - Clothing and footwear repairs and alterations
- Following consultation with the Project Governance Group it was agreed that an additional industry sub-sector would be added to the occupation and skills mapping exercise. This is:
 - Textile recycling and remanufacturing sector¹
- Provide data and stakeholder insights to inform updates to the MST Training Package and broader workforce policy mechanisms, including:
 - Skilled migration
 - Occupational licensing
 - Training funding
 - Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

Note: Activities related to retail and warehousing functions are outside the scope of this project to maintain a clear focus and accurate portrayal of production and related services in the TCF sector.

A project webpage has been set up on the Skills Insight website. It currently offers detailed information about the project plan, scope, and consultation process. The webpage is titled: TCF Skills Mapping - Skills Insight.

3.0 Consultation activities

The development of the TCF Occupation and Skills Map is being undertaken in close collaboration with key industry stakeholders. The two primary consultative mechanisms are:

- The Project Governance Group
- The National Data Collection and Consultation Strategy

¹ For the purposes of this project, the Textile Recycling and Remanufacturing sub-sector focuses on turning textile waste into new materials or products at fibre or fabric level, while the Clothing Repair and Alteration sub-sector focuses on extending the life and fit of existing garments at item level. Both sit in the TCF circular economy, but they occupy different stages of the value chain, use different technologies and business models, and rely on different occupational profiles.

To ensure the relevance of the consultation strategy and to allow as many stakeholders as possible the opportunity to contribute input into the project, the strategy is supported by:

- A feedback loop
- An evaluation and review mechanism.

3.1 The Project Governance Group [PGG]

A Project Governance Group, comprising representatives from industry, trade unions, Registered Training Organisations, and relevant policy stakeholders, has been formed. This group provides strategic oversight and expert guidance throughout the project. Members ensure the materials reflect current industry practices, meet industry needs, and align with national VET standards and policies. The Terms of Reference for the PGG have been agreed upon; these outline the main responsibilities of the PGG as:

- Attending meetings and workshops (either online or face-to-face) to share input and contribute expertise
- Reviewing draft materials and providing feedback via feedback hub, email, phone, or at face-to-face meetings, workshops, and webinars
- Sharing project materials with other experts in their networks for additional input and feedback when needed
- Helping to promote the work through their networks so other interested parties can get involved and stay informed
- Confirming the guidance materials before they are submitted for endorsement
- Recommending key stakeholders and consultation methods tailored to the project's needs.

The members of the PGG are drawn from the following organisations:

- Specialised Textiles Association
- Carpet Institute of Australia
- Drycleaning Institute of Australia
- Assembled Threads
- R.M. Williams
- Timber, Furnishing and Textiles Union
- Kent Saddlery
- Laundry Association Australia
- Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT)
- Australian Fashion Council
- Stewart & Heaton

The PGG is an advisory rather than a decision-making group and is not responsible for:

1. day-to-day operational project management,
2. final sign-off or approval of deliverables,
3. line management of project staff, and
4. budget allocation or financial approvals.

Considering the decision to expand the project to include the Textile Recycling and Remanufacturing sub-sector, a representative from this sub-sector will likely be invited to join the PGG. Until this appointment is made, the PGG membership currently consists of members from national and State/Territory-based organisations. The geographic distribution of the PGG membership is illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1: PGG membership by jurisdiction*

Stakeholder Type	National	ACT	NSW	NT	QLD	SA	TAS	VIC	WA
RTOs								✓	
Industry employer	✓				✓	✓		✓	
Trade Unions	✓								
Industry Associations	✓								

Note: Some PGG members are active at both national and State/Territory levels, and while based in one jurisdiction, they are active across multiple jurisdictions.

The PGG plans to meet four times during the project. The first meeting was held on 10 November 2025. The following meetings are scheduled for 3 December 2025, 22 May 2026, and 14 August 2026. Records of all PGG meetings will be documented and shared with members.

3.2 The National Data Collection and Consultation Strategy

A key element of the National Data Collection and Consultation Strategy is a series of stakeholder consultations during Stage 3 of the project (January–May 2026), specifically aimed at developing a comprehensive understanding of occupations and skills within the Australian textiles, clothing, and footwear (TCF) industry. These consultations will include:

- **Key respondent interviews:** One-on-one, semi-structured conversations with industry associations, union representatives, business owners, production managers, experienced workers and RTO personnel that probe the actual tasks performed, tools and technologies used, and emerging skill needs in specific TCF occupations, as well as gaps in training and qualifications.
- **Site visits:** On-site visits to TCF workplaces (such as manufacturing plants, design studios and specialist services) where the Project Team can directly observe production processes, job roles, workflow and use of technology, supplemented by informal conversations and document reviews to capture how occupations are organised and which skills are applied in real operating conditions.
- **Stakeholder focus groups:** Facilitated group discussions bringing together employers, workers, unions, RTOs, industry organisations and other stakeholders from different parts of the TCF value chain to collectively map key job roles, discuss changing skill requirements, and identify priority areas for workforce development and training

products. In some cases, these focus groups will centre on a specific industry sub-sector, whereas in others, they will include a range of sub-sectors.

At this stage, it is planned that these data collection and consultation activities will be rolled out according to the schedule below.

Figure 2: Consultation schedule

TCF Industry Sub-sector	State	Date	Key respondent interviews	Site visits	Focus Groups
Textile recycling and remanufacturing	NSW VIC	12 – 23 January 2026	Yes	Yes	Sector specific
Dry cleaning and laundry services	VIC QLD	2-13 February 2026	Yes	Yes	Sector specific
Fashion and apparel	VIC NSW QLD	16 February – 6 March 2026	Yes	Yes	Sector specific
Clothing repairs and alterations	QLD VIC	16 February – 6 March 2026	Yes	Yes	Sector specific
Textile manufacturing	VIC NSW	9 March – 27 March 2026	Yes	Yes	Sector specific
Leather and Footwear	SA NSW	9 March – 27 March 2026	Yes	Yes	Sector specific
Multi-sector consultation	WA	25 March – 27 March 2026	Yes	Yes	Cross sector
	TAS	19 April – 21 April 2026	Yes	Yes	Cross sector
	NT	26 April – 28 April 2026	Yes	Yes	Cross sector

3.3 Feedback Loop

As part of the consultation strategy, the project activity plan includes opportunities to gather stakeholder feedback. This will be achieved through:

- PGG meetings have been scheduled to support the iterative development of the proposed TCF Occupation and Skills Map. The PGG meetings have been sequenced to enable members to:
 - PGG 1 – 10 November 2025: Provide input into the initial conceptualisation and scope of the TCF Occupation and Skills Map
 - PGG 2 – 3 December 2025: Review and provide comments on the mapping framework and national consultation and data collection strategy
 - PGG 3 – 22 May 2026: Provide feedback on the draft data collection and summary report, including draft mapping documents
 - PGG 4 – 14 August 2026: Provide feedback on the draft TCF Occupational and Skills Map.
- The project web page has been set up and will be regularly updated throughout the project to keep the wider group of stakeholders informed and to allow them to comment on developments. The web page will be refreshed regularly to keep all stakeholders informed about the project's progress.

3.4 Evaluation and Review

The consultation strategy will be periodically reviewed to ensure its effectiveness. Any suggestions for changes to the PGG membership or the national data collection and consultation strategy will be considered and acted on as appropriate.

4.0 Target groups for the consultation strategy

The consultation process will engage a broad cross-section of stakeholders to ensure that the TCF Occupation and Skills Map accurately reflects the full range of occupational roles, skills requirements and career pathways across the TCF sub-sectors in scope.

The focus will be on stakeholders who can provide detailed, practice-based insights into current work organisation, emerging technologies, and the alignment between jobs, skills and training.

Key target groups are:

- Employers and business owners operating across all covered TCF sub-sectors, including textile manufacturing, fashion and apparel, leather, footwear, dry cleaning and laundry services, clothing and footwear repairs and alterations, and textile recycling and remanufacturing.
- Workers in production, technical, design, supervisory, and management roles across TCF workplaces of various sizes in both metropolitan and regional areas, as well as across different jurisdictions.
- Industry associations and employer bodies representing specific TCF sub-sectors, including specialised textiles, carpets, laundry and dry cleaning, fashion and apparel, leather and footwear, and textile recycling and remanufacturing.

- Trade unions covering employees and contractors across the TCF value chain.
- Registered Training Organisations (RTOs), including private providers, TAFEs and dual-sector universities, that deliver MST qualifications and skill sets and State-accredited courses linked to TCF occupations.
- Government agencies and policy stakeholders involved in VET, industry development, employment, migration, product standards and related regulatory or funding settings that influence TCF workforce development.
- Relevant community organisations, social enterprises and circular economy initiatives working in areas such as textile reuse, recycling, repair and remanufacturing, where new or evolving occupational profiles are emerging.

5.0 Communications channels and tools

5.1 Skills Insight Website

The Skills Insight website will act as the primary information hub, where industry professionals can access all the details they require about the project and its initiatives. This dedicated webpage will remain available throughout the project.

5.2 Skills Insight Newsletter and News Alerts

The Skills Insight general newsletter, usually issued monthly, will update all subscribers on project activities and opportunities to get involved. Additionally, timely news alerts will be shared with project and sector-specific subscribers whenever there is a project update.

5.3 ForestWorks Website

The ForestWorks website will feature project updates and consultation opportunities to reach a broader industry audience.

5.4 TextileWorks Newsletter

The TextileWorks newsletter will share relevant information with its subscriber base, ensuring engagement across the textile sector.

5.5 Industry Media

A range of key stakeholder organisations with influential newsletters and mailing lists, such as Ethical Clothing Australia and the Australian Fashion Council, will be encouraged to share news of the project activities and consultation opportunities with their networks.

5.6 Email/Mail Merge

Targeted emails will notify specific stakeholder groups about project updates.

5.7 Social Media Posts

Project updates and consultation opportunities will be promoted through social media channels managed by both Skills Insight and ForestWorks. Posts will be tailored to engage industry professionals and encourage participation.