

GOING FURTHER TO SUPPORT OUR YOUTH AND SKILLS PRACTITIONERS

A look into the impact of the WorldSkills
Australia Skills Excellence Forum 2022,
an inaugural event held in July 2022

Acknowledgements

WorldSkills Australia acknowledges the traditional custodians of Country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea, and community. We pay our respect to Elders past, present and emerging and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.

We would also like to recognise and acknowledge the Queensland Government via the Department of Employment, Small Business and Training who partnered with us to make the inaugural Australian Skills Excellence Forum a reality. Coupled with the continuous and enormous support from TAFE Queensland who supplied venues, equipment and their peoples' time, this event was an outstanding success and a testament to all those who were involved.

We are grateful to all participants- Youth and Skills Leads who attended the WorldSkills Australia Skills Excellence Forum 2022, for taking the time to provide their thoughts, opinions, and feedback to support continuous improvement in our drive to raise the profile of Skills Excellence and support our youth and skills practitioners through ongoing personal and professional development with WorldSkill

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Message from the CEO



WorldSkills Australia believe that it is our responsibility, indeed privilege, to support our youth through their career and life journeys, enabling them to achieve their goals and become strong contributors to the Australian economy. Our focus is not only on ensuring that we consistently and continuously promote skills development, but also to take our youth's aspirations beyond qualifications, building a mindset that supports them to strive for skills excellence in their chosen field and supporting them to attain greater success in their careers and lives.

Our core partners in enabling the youth of Australia are passionate skills practitioners from across the country who come together to make WorldSkills Australia's vision come alive, supporting our youth through training, and mentoring to rise to higher levels of performance and achievement. Our focus is also on supporting and growing these core

enablers to raise their own capability, build further expertise and skills to in turn achieve greater career and life enrichment.

In line with our vision, strategic objectives, drive to enhance domestic value proposition, continuous improvement agenda and as per feedback gained from our stakeholders through the WorldSkills Australia Impact Project, we took the opportunity, in July 2022, to launch the inaugural WorldSkills Australia Skills Excellence Forum, to provide even greater value to youth and skills practitioners. The WorldSkills Australia Skills Excellence Forum format was to develop greater oversight in participants through intensive Skills Excellence sessions to promote innovation and cross-skill collaboration, targeted



sessions with guest presenters to accelerate personal and professional development in relation to career development tools as well as networking opportunities.

This report provides clear evidence of value gained from the WorldSkills Australia Skills Excellence Forum through the voice of our youth and skills practitioner participants.

We are grateful to all who engaged in this process, making the time and effort to contribute valuable feedback.

Our aim is to continue to build on these insights continuously over coming months and years which will support continuous improvement across the entire skills development ecosystem.

We look forward to working even more closely together with key players in the ecosystem across education, industry, and government to produce greater outcomes for our youth. We invite you, yet again, to join us in amplifying the skills excellence conversation to keep our society and economy growing.



Trevor Schwenke
Chief Executive Officer
WorldSkills Australia



About The Worldskills Australia Skills Excellence Forum

The WorldSkills Australia Skills Excellence Forum was launched in July 2022 and held in Queensland. The Forum saw 120+ participants (Youth and Skills Leads) come together from across Australia to learn, practice, innovate, network, and grow in an intimate setting.

KEY OBJECTIVES

- To provide additional upskilling to those who are interested in pursuing skills excellence
- To provide a platform to create awareness and assist in building personal capabilities required to become skill leaders
- To widen WorldSkills Australia's domestic programs to increase the impact on skills development in Australia
- To provide additional pathways to those who do not get an opportunity to be involved in our international experiences
- To provide further professional development opportunities to skills practitioners and provide information as to the areas of involvement within the organisation including the national and international arena as chief judges and international experts.

TARGET AUDIENCE

- Youth Participants (previous competitors who wish to have more upskilling opportunities in an intimate setting) (approx. 100). Initially the opportunity was open to those who have competed in the Nationals; however, this was widened to include those who are interested in engaging with WorldSkills Australia Competitions and have shown a level of focus on attaining skills excellence. Some have competed regionally, and others were planning to compete regionally in 2022.
- Skills Leads (previous WorldSkills Australia volunteers who have judged but are most likely not chief judges and have not been international experts but have aspirations to be) (approx. 35).

THE FORMAT OF THE WORLDSKILLS AUSTRALIA SKILLS EXCELLENCE FORUM

- Tours to and practice in key locations showcasing skills areas and Centres of Skills Excellence, notably SkillsTech (TAFE Queensland).
- A focused day of skills excellence-based mentoring with the Skills Leads developing programs working with participants for targeted upskilling in skill areas honing in on developing new and improved techniques, effective usage of new technologies and cross-collaboration with other skills areas leveraging complementarity. Not only was this day focused on innovation and even better practice, it also presented a great opportunity for reflection and peer learning, building further employability skills.
- A conference-style day of personal and professional development, with panel discussions and small group workshops, delving into value-add learning with particular focus on enhancing career opportunities through developing and growing personal brand equity, perfecting marketing techniques, effective use of digital badging, superannuation and insurance. Leaders in skills-based

small businesses led discussions and offered pointers on venturing into owning one's own small business, opening up about their journeys, the challenges they faced and the opportunities they seized. Skills Leads participated in personal brand and marketing workshops as well as working in a peer learning forum developing competition packs and evaluating best practice domestically and internationally.





About this report

In line with WorldSkills Australia's strategic objectives 2021/2022, WorldSkills Australia has set out to measure and evaluate business performance with clear focus on:

- Deriving evidence of core value delivered to WorldSkills Australia customers and stakeholders
- Further understanding business strengths and areas of opportunity for future growth and sustainability
- Supporting key stakeholder partners in the skills ecosystem in their continuous improvement strategies to support and challenge our youth to realise their full potential; and
- Innovation.

This report summarises key findings from on-line surveys conducted with two respondent groups (Youth participants and Skills Practitioners) at the WorldSkills Australia Skills Excellence Forum held in Queensland Q3 2022.

Building on the WorldSkills Australia Nationals Survey 2021, surveys conducted at the Skills Excellence Forum further tested causal relations between key WorldSkills Australia actions and results. Focus of new data collected was squarely on the value gained by participants (Youth and Skills Leads) from the WorldSkills Australia Skills Excellence Forum to gauge efficacy of new inaugural initiative for future iterations.

WorldSkills Australia intends to continue collecting data from regional, national and international competitions and professional development forums in coming months and years, which will enable comparison of results from one iteration to the next. This comparison will provide further inputs to analyse the efficacy of WorldSkills Australia's continuous improvement activities and new initiatives, while providing valuable feedback to others in the skills ecosystem.

About the research

WorldSkills Australia commissioned Playmakers Consulting Services Pty Ltd (PCS) to conduct online surveys of its key customer/stakeholder groups participating in the Skills Excellence Forum.

WorldSkills Australia team participated in introductory discussions to confirm context, expectations, and key objectives and were integrally involved in all aspects of the project, include design, development, and delivery.

Research Purpose

To determine the following, building on from the WorldSkills Australia Nationals Survey 2021:

- Impact of engagement with WorldSkills Australia on Youth Participants (Competitors and potential competitors)
- Impact of engagement with WorldSkills Australia on Skills Practitioners (Skills Leads)
- Specific value gained through the WorldSkills Australia Skills Excellence Forum (Participants and Skills Leads)
- What Youth Participants and Skills Leads would like more of, less of in future, similar engagements

Methodology

Research was conducted through on-line surveys deployed to multiple respondent groups as per below.

Target respondent areas

- Competitors in National Championships 2021
- Competitors from Regionals 2022
- Potential competitors going into Regional 2022
- Skills Leads who have been judges at regional and national levels and have aspirations to become international experts.

Holistic areas explored

- **Motivators- Impetus for entry/engagement**
- **Experience upon Engagement**
- **WorldSkills Australia Brand Value Proposition**

Questions were designed to evaluate and validate assumptions, explore areas to gain new information, test and understand causal relations between actions and results to gain further insights.

Please note:

Survey findings provide the baseline to:

- *Establish causation to conduct regression analysis in future*
- *Establish driver, control, and dependent variables for analysis in the future*
- *Link actions to results- Provide predictive capability.*



Executive Summary

The survey had 111 participants representing 2 respondent groups. It is evident from the comments made, as well as the scores given by respondents, that previous competitors, potential competitors, and Skills Leads were all highly appreciative of the additional value-add opportunity, presented by the WorldSkills Australia Skills Excellence Forum.

Respondents reiterated the value gained through their engagement with WorldSkills Australia, supporting survey findings from the WorldSkills Australia Nationals Survey 2021.

Skills Leads enjoy performing meaningful work in providing value to youth and peers and feel they make a strong contribution to the entire community through their involvement and engagement with WorldSkills Australia.

Many use the WorldSkills Australia environment as a continuing professional development opportunity, taking away key learnings to implement back in their work context. The WorldSkills Australia Skills Excellence Forum gave participants (Youth and Skills Leads) additional and diverse learning opportunities, while concurrently enhancing learning provided in other WorldSkills Australia forums.

Survey results paint a solid picture of strong engagement and value gained. In this instance, it was valuable to gain feedback on the alignment between WorldSkills Australia Competitions and WorldSkills Australia Skills Excellence Forum, with the latter inspiring many to further their intention to compete.

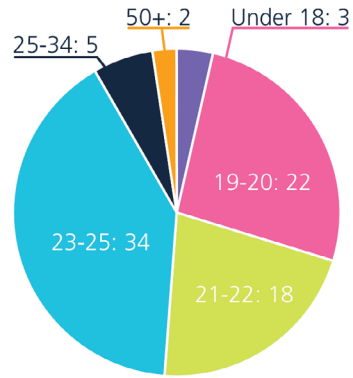
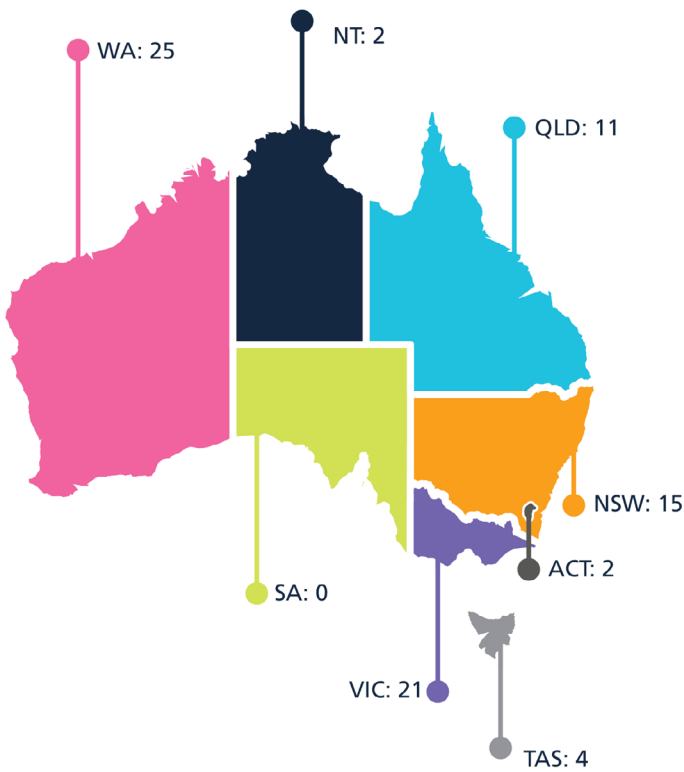
In addition, it is clear that the WorldSkills Australia Skills Excellence Forum has created a complementary space for value-add impact and influence, with innovation in skills with excellence at the forefront, targeted sessions aimed at personal and professional development and greater networking opportunities.

The results also highlight further areas of opportunity for WorldSkills Australia to “do more, do better and do different” in some areas to capitalise on, progressing the movement to raise the profile of Skills and VET, holistically.

Following analysis of the results, recommendations have been formulated to leverage the considerable strengths of the organisation.

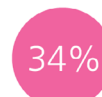
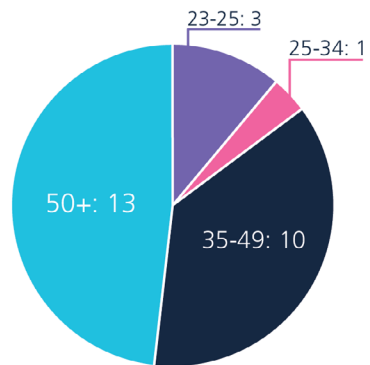
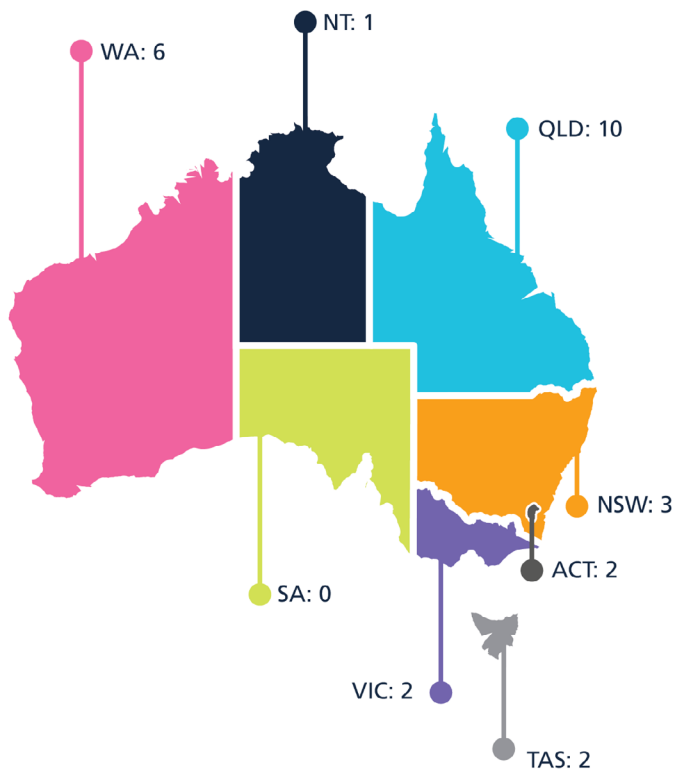
As a final note, this survey had a good response rate, and what appears to be very honest feedback from respondents. Respondents are evidently highly engaged, and very willing to contribute to the betterment of the organisation. This continues to build on WorldSkills Australia’s wonderful position of strength for continued success in the future.

PROFILE OF SKILL PARTICIPANTS



0 out of 84 participants surveyed identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander

PROFILE OF SKILL LEADS



0 out of 27 participants surveyed identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander

Our Value To The Youth Of Australia- The Voice Of Our Competitors And Potential Competitors

OUR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE:

INCREASE THE PARTICIPATION OF YOUTH IN HIGH QUALITY SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

OUR FOCUS IS ON INCREASING THE:

- Number of young people more likely to consider technical skills employment pathways after participating at a WorldSkills Australia event
- Number of young people reporting a better knowledge and understanding (of their options) around technical routes and apprenticeships after participating in a WorldSkills Australia event
- Number of young people reporting raised aspirations after participating in a WorldSkills Australia event.
- Number of female competitors in Australian Industry under-represented sectors participating at WorldSkills Australia regional, WorldSkills Australia national and/or WS international events.
- Number of Indigenous competitors participating at WorldSkills Australia regional, WorldSkills Australia national and/or WS international events.
- Number of WorldSkills Australia competitors citing improvement in career progression from competition experience
- Number of WorldSkills Australia competitors reporting improved technical skills following their participation at WorldSkills Australia regional, WorldSkills Australia national and/or WS international events
- Number of WorldSkills Australia competitors reporting improved personal and employability skills at WorldSkills Australia regional, WorldSkills Australia national and/or WS international events

Through this survey, as per previous initiatives, we not only sought to gain feedback on engagement and experience in WorldSkills Australia events, but also looked further into how this experience translated into real value in competitors' work and life.

WHAT OUR COMPETITORS SAID

Where it all starts

Competitor and Potential Competitor Motivation to participate in the WorldSkills Australia Skills Excellence Forum was fuelled by:

- Desire to gain further personal and professional development
- Desire to build on skills gained through competitions
- Desire to be part of another WorldSkills Australia experience
- Desire to network with like-minded people
- Desire to be mentored
- Desire to close the gap caused by inability to attend Nationals due to COVID-19 related challenges
- Desire to learn new things and gain new experiences
- Desire to get insights into competitions to come

ANECDOTAL COMMENTS

Key Motivator Descriptors for choosing to participate in the WorldSkills Australia Skills Excellence Forum:

- To open the door to opportunity & to further my skills in my area
- I would like to represent my country in a trade that I absolutely love working in and this would help me gain better insight into the WorldSkills competitions
- To better my skills
- I was excited to come to Brisbane and meet likeminded people in my trade.
- For networking and skill/professional development.
- To practice and learn new skills as well as meet others that share the same interests and passions as myself.
- I feel most motivated when I am learning and developing new skills, so personal development such as this event is very important to me
- I did not get to compete in Nationals due to COVID. I was disappointed. The opportunity to work with the leads and other young professionals was exciting, I love learning with and from others, so I applied (to participate in the Skills Excellence Forum)!
- To challenge myself and broaden my knowledge of my chosen trade
- To expand my networks, to meet people from my own and other skills, and develop my professional abilities It was a fantastic opportunity to develop my business knowledge and skills in more personal, one-on-one sessions with my experienced Skills Lead and I felt it would be a great networking opportunity. It has proved to be both these, and I am so grateful for the training and new friendships I now have.
- Prove my capability (to myself and others)- see how far I have come, since starting my study
- Showcase my skills and advance career
- I wanted to get some insight into starting my business
- I chose to compete not only for an amazing experience but also for the array of potential opportunities that could arise for my future career
- Personally, I love the opportunities that WorldSkills provides and the stepping stones. Furthering in your trade, learning new skills, speaking to industry professionals, self-development, new friendships and just the chance to show case our talents and passions. I love being involved and one day, I hope I can be a skill leader and a judge so I can give back to my profession.

THE INFLUENCE OF WORLDSKILLS AUSTRALIA- EXPERIENCE UPON ENGAGEMENT

Clear evidence of WorldSkills Australia's positive guiding influence on youth was reiterated by respondents, with those that have competed in WorldSkills Competitions previously rating the influence of competitions and also the reinforcing/complementary influence of the WorldSkills Australia Skills Excellence Forum.

Key Feedback

About being involved in WorldSkills Competitions, here is what our youth said:

90.5% "It has inspired me to strive for excellence in my chosen skill"

85.7% "It has given me access to a larger network of peers and mentors"

81.0% "It has inspired me to aim higher in life and work"

78.6% "It has given me more confidence in my skills"

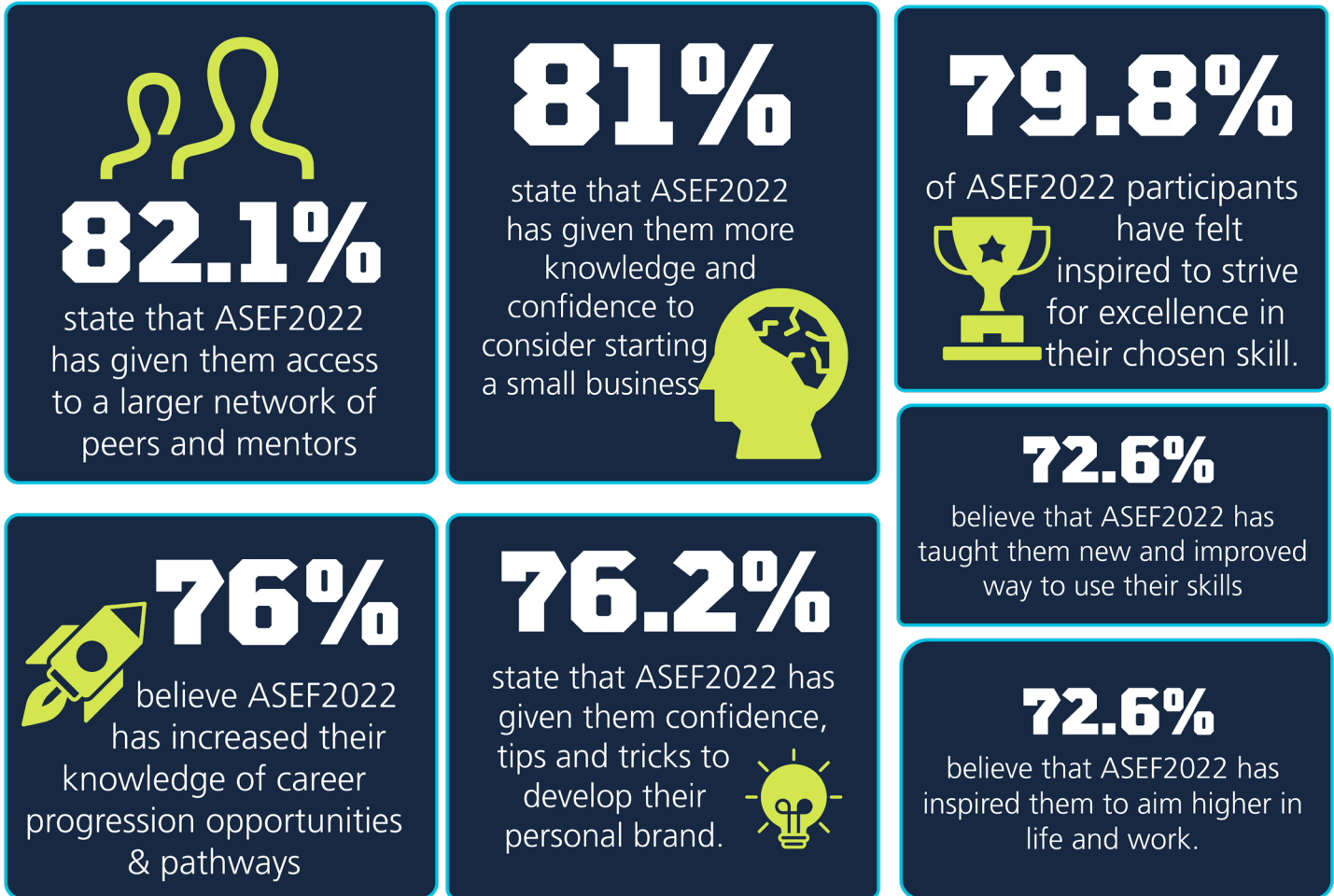
78.6% "It has inspired me to progress my career in my chosen skill"

76.2% "It has helped me to further improve my skills"

73.8% "It has helped me develop new skills"



About being involved in the WorldSkills Australian Skills Excellence Forum, here is what our youth said:



Feedback shows that The Australian Skills Excellence Forum has complemented the influence of WorldSkills Australia’s competitions. Not only has the inaugural event clearly inspired focused effort towards achieving skills excellence, but it has also increased knowledge overall about skills-based career pathways and progression opportunities and raised aspirations overall.

Feedback with reference to the WorldSkills Australia Skills Excellence forum shows that participants felt that they learnt new, innovative, and improved ways to use their skills and also gained new skills, building further on what they learnt through participating in regional and national competitions.

Through concentrated focus on innovation in achieving skills excellence and compatible cross-skill collaboration on the day devoted to Skills Excellence in the forum, participating Youth with the support of Skills Leads tried and tested new ways of working to achieve skills excellence.

What the WorldSkills Australia Skills Excellence Forum also achieved through its targeted personal and professional development sessions is raised awareness and understanding of personal brand, raised aspirations in participants to start their own small business, built greater confidence in participant skills and fostered confidence in moving forward in their careers.

Motivation To Complete Current Education

Connectors to the WorldSkills Australia Nationals Survey 2021:

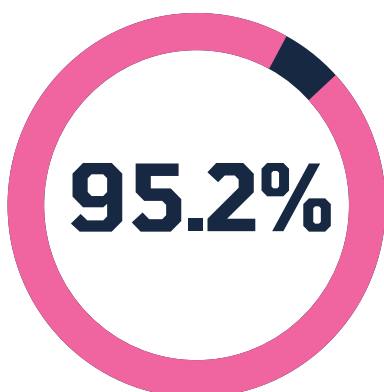
In the WorldSkills Australia National Survey 2021, a whopping 87.5% of respondents attributed their motivation to finishing their current skills-based education to their involvement in WorldSkills Australia. With the intent of further validating data gained, in the survey deployed at the WorldSkills Australia Skills Excellence Forum, respondents were questioned in the same vein.

95.2% of respondents said that being involved with WorldSkills Australia motivates them to complete their education!



Considering the fact that 34.5% of respondents had not yet participated in Regionals and 41.7% of respondents has not yet participated in Nationals, this response builds further on results achieved in the Nationals survey, validating evidence gained even further.

Improved Skills' Application In The Workplace – Attribution To Involvement In Worldskills Australia



95.2% of respondents said that being involved with WorldSkills Australia supports improvement in application of their skills in the workplace

Australian Skills Excellence Forum data showing clear connectors to feedback from the WorldSkills Australia National Championships Survey 2021:

The Competitor Voice

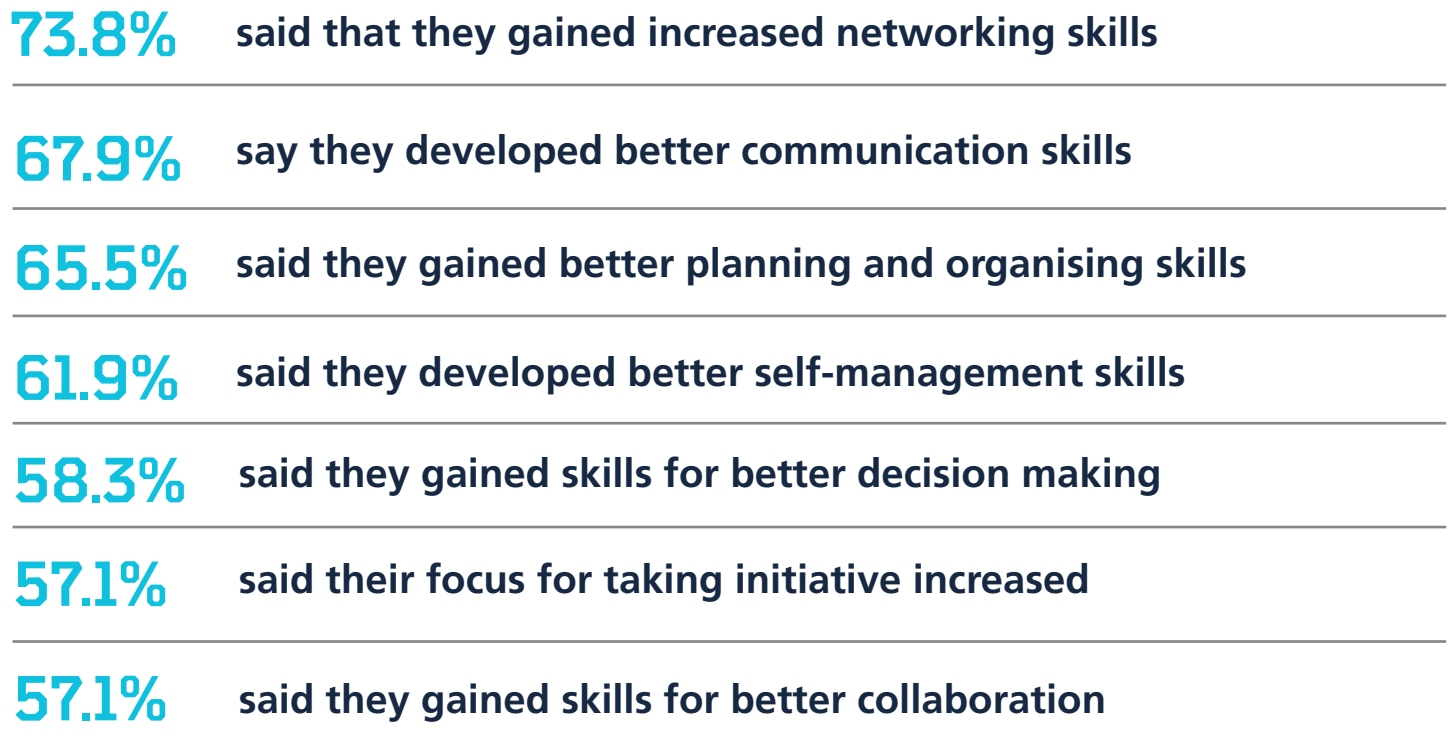
- 84% reported improved technical skills as a result of WorldSkills Australia involvement
- 72% Inspired to strive for excellence in chosen Skill
- 91.1% agree that the WorldSkills Australia experience has helped their career
- 63% Consistently apply new and improved skills at workplace, raising effectiveness

The Employer Voice

- 62.5% of respondents agreed that WorldSkills has helped their employees to bring greater efficiency into the workplace.
- 70.8% of employers said that they engage with WorldSkills Australia to support their apprentices/employees to compete in WorldSkills Competitions- objective to raise focus on skills excellence
- 62.5% Agree that the WorldSkills has helped employees to improve practices and processes in the workplace for greater efficiency.

IMPROVED EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS

In line with the WorldSkills Australia value proposition and evidence gathered from the Nationals Survey 2021, responses gathered through the Skills Excellence Forum also show clear evidence of participating youth gaining strong intrinsic and extrinsic value, with the Forum supporting them to not only gain greater technical skills, but also build key soft skills essential for success in their careers and life, in general.



EVIDENCE-BASED OPPORTUNITY

The information gathered is valuable on multiple fronts. Key points to note:

The Inaugural WorldSkills Australia Skills Excellence Forum served to reinforce WorldSkills Australia's Value Proposition delivered through competitions AND delivered new value through targeted personal and professional development sessions, including deliberate hands-on innovative skills practice.

Respondents have given us key information that suggests that their engagement with WorldSkills Australia inspires them to not only strive for Skills Excellence, but also motivates them to complete their education, pursue career opportunities and now, opportunities to also start their own small business.

With attrition in apprenticeships/traineeships still high across the nation, any mechanisms that serve to support our youth to stay and complete their courses and apprenticeship/traineeship programs are valuable.

This feedback clearly shows, in line with results gained from the Nationals Survey 2021 also, that it is a great opportunity for us to do more in this space by actively promoting engagement with WorldSkills Australia at all levels across TAFEs and other VET education providers, increasing numbers of youth participating in competitions YoY.

Hence, not only does the feedback serve to validate WorldSkills Australia's Vision, Mission, and Purpose, but it can also be leveraged to support more youth to raise their level of engagement with VET-based education and career pathways.

It will serve to open the door for those, not yet engaged with WorldSkills Australia, to take a peek at what's possible.



Our Value To Skills Practitioners- The Voice Of Our Trainers/Experts/Judges

OUR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE:

INCREASE THE EXPERTISE OF SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PRACTITIONERS TO WORLD BEST STANDARD

OUR FOCUS IS ON INCREASING THE:

- Number of educators /careers advisors following their participation in WorldSkills Australia events reporting improvement in their expertise and capability to advise young people about technical skills pathways
- Number of vocational education and training practitioners engaged with WorldSkills Australia reporting improvement in their expertise and capability.
- Number of Australian workplace and Institutional training and education providers who have embedded WorldSkills Australia Skills Competitions standards into their development and assessment practices

Through this survey, as per previous initiatives, we delved into the Skills Leads' /judges' purpose and drive- why do they do what they do, what value they get out of being involved in the skills' benchmarking competition forum and now in the WorldSkills Australia Skills Excellence Forum, what value they believe they provide and what value they receive from their involvement.

WHAT OUR SKILL LEADS SAID

Where it all starts

Skills Leads' Motivation to participate in the WorldSkills Australia Skills Excellence Forum was fuelled by:

- Desire to bring Skills Excellence-based practices back into their workplaces
- Desire to give back to the youth of Australia
- Desire to influence Australian Youth to develop a Skills Excellence mindset
- Desire to learn and grow personally and professionally in the WorldSkills Australia Community
- Desire to avail themselves of networking opportunities with the diverse community
- Desire to add value to my peers and the WorldSkills Australia Community
- Desire to have new experiences by being part of the WorldSkills Community
- Desire to add value to their organisations through their engagement with WorldSkills Australia

The Influence of Worldskills Australia- Experience Upon Engagement

Key feedback: About being involved with WorldSkills Australia, here is what our Skills Leads said:

77.8%

"My capability as an educator and trainer/Industry expert has been enhanced by engaging with WorldSkills Australia"

77.8%

"My technical expertise has grown as a result of my involvement with WorldSkills Australia"

70.4%

"I have gained greater influencing and leadership skills"

70.4%

"I am able to give better advice to youth about technical skills pathways to pursue as a result of my engagement with WorldSkills Australia"

63%

"The WorldSkills agenda supports me to stay current and understand new/emerging trends in my chosen field"

55.6%

"The new/enhanced knowledge and practices I have gained through my engagement with WorldSkills has positively influenced my teaching/industry practice"

51.9%

"I have gained greater access to career progression opportunities as a result of my engagement with WorldSkills Australia"

It is clear again from these responses and the responses received through the Nationals Survey 2021, that Skills Leads enjoy providing value to competitors and peers through the WorldSkills Australia forum and indeed, being part of the WorldSkills Australia community. Many use the WorldSkills Australia as a platform for continuing professional development, taking away key learnings to implement back in their work context. Retired teachers and industry experts who come back to contribute as mentors value the continued human connection commented on the "WorldSkills family" and their increased sense of purpose.



Key feedback: About being involved in the WorldSkills Australian Skills Excellence Forum, here is what our Skills Leads said:

92.6%

state that they have gained professional development & enhanced technical skills by being a Skills Lead and organising the program for the Skills Excellence Day.

96.3%

state they gained a great level of satisfaction organising the Skills Excellence Day

92.6%

state that they have gained professional development/enhanced technical skills by being a Skills Lead and organising the program for the Skills Excellence Day

“ 100% said:

I enjoyed working with an intimate group of participants and believe I contributed to their skills development by tailoring the day to areas they wanted to focus on or new technology within the skill which may not be incorporated into the competition projects.

”

100%

believe the the WorldSkills Australia Skills Excellence Forum is a terrific addition to WorldSkills Australia programs for volunteers

100%

believe the the WorldSkills Australia Skills Excellence Forum is a terrific addition to WorldSkills Australia programs for apprentices, trainees and students

Feedback from Skills Leads reiterates that their engagement through the WorldSkills Australia Skills Excellence Forum gave them strong personal fulfillment, job enrichment, recognition of greater value of self and the value they can add to others and that they gained true satisfaction from realising others' potential and obtained strong human connection through networks. This mirrors the value they have told us they obtain from engaging in WorldSkills Australia competitions.

In addition, Skills Leads simply enjoyed bringing the Skills Excellence day to life, challenging their youth charges to innovate, use new technologies and develop new cross-skill collaborative practices. They also enjoyed the networking and the additional professional development opportunities they were provided, including greater understanding of the need to raise their personal brand equity, and writing competition

packs. They enjoyed the more intimate setting, working with smaller groups and innovating for the future. Skills Leads also specifically commented on obtaining greater awareness and understanding of what they could do more of with WorldSkills Australia and appreciated the opportunity to do so.

ANECDOTAL COMMENTS

When asked- What did you get the most value out of engaging in the WorldSkills Australia Skills Excellence Forum, here's what respondents said:

- The sessions were all great, but the networking and process were awesome
- I found the skills training sessions very rewarding
- I think first and foremost the skills day was about the participants. They are our future. We need to invest in them. Secondly is the information on how to be more involved with WorldSkills.
- It worked well for my mind set- The focus on the participants.
- Garnering closer connection and relationship with participants, hearing of other people's stories. Enjoyed the skills excellence day
- Skills excellence day was great for myself and the participants finding out about innovation in our skills area.
- Branding around helping myself and others to discover and clarify their brand and values and how they can make themselves stand out.
- Professional development opportunities session very good in helping me to understand how I can further develop my WorldSkills journey and how I can also contribute to my skills area and assist in developing further generations of tradespeople.
- The growth of the youth of today and the skills they excel in. Thank you Enjoy these the most!
- The satisfaction of the fact that I transferred my skills knowledge of cloud computing to the participants. Inspiration of life stories. New knowledge of what you could do with digital badges
- Showing others new skills, I got to learn something new about how I could progress professionally myself
- The skills day was so motivating for myself, I loved seeing the participants love it as much as me and seeing what you planned for the session come together perfectly
- I loved to organise a special day for the past competitors. I dream of being more involved in WorldSkills events and competitions
- As I have never led a session before, doing so has given me more confidence and a renewed life for training

In comparing their experience at the WorldSkills Australia Skills Excellence Forum to that of WorldSkills Australia Competitions, here is what Skills Leads had to say:

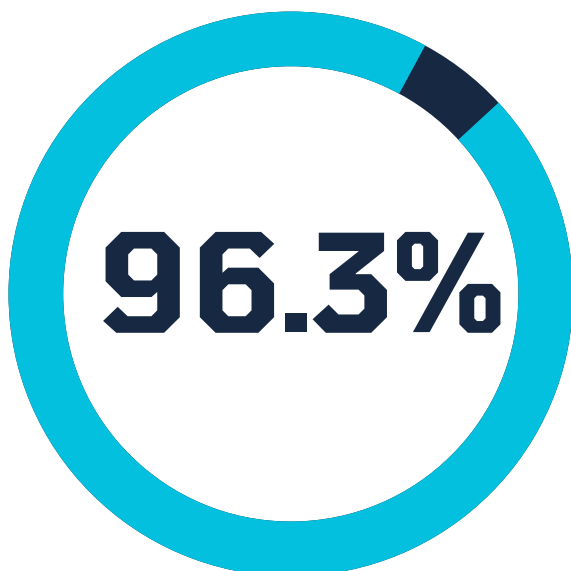
- More intimate as there are less people involved. It was a great networking opportunity
- The closer more relaxed nature of this forum gave better time to get involved and know the participants. Different engagement types. I liked the opportunity to work with the participants as a recognition for their development
- More knowledge about WorldSkills, Great PD
- Opportunity to network and meet WorldSkills team, other skill leads and participants. Less pressure than competitions as it had a different focus, more relaxing and allowed for more professional development and bonding.
- Sharing my skills with my participants. Different value from both
- The Skills Excellence forum added more value to my professional development.
- The Forum allowed for workshopping ideas that then can be implemented in the National Competition like the Cross-Skill trial- Floristry and Visual Merchandising.

- I felt like I could really engage more with the participants from other regions as at Nationals- it is all focused on competition and sometimes you have not met any competitors out of your region; so it was nice to train with competitors from other states.
- It was totally different-A more intensive training program, Smaller groups, and more opportunities to network
- The same value, competitions are the most rewarding for the competitors, I found this rewarding also

When asked about what WorldSkills Australia could do to enhance their experience as Skills Leads, here's what respondents had to say:

- Keep going. What you are doing is great and I wish to be more involved, possibly as a national judge
- I think this was a great concept and good opportunity for the participants to gain knowledge. The event was run exceptionally well and thank you for allowing me to lead and chose 3 well deserving participants. It was delightful to help them and hopefully improve their careers
- It's a great opportunity for the previous competitors to upgrade their skills and bring up more about volunteering and how to be part of judging. Encourage the young people to get involved with WorldSkills again and pay it forward for others.
- The skill specific day could almost be extended to an extra half full day. It gives a greater opportunity in a more relaxed environment to reach and converse with participants that is not necessarily available at a competition.
- I have enjoyed the opportunity to work with participants prior to the training day and have enjoyed the opportunity to share my knowledge and build the skills of others
- It is my pleasure to be a volunteer for WorldSkills, as skills lead, I was given all the support I needed with WorldSkills Queensland and Australia. Thank you for the experience.
- Had a great experience nothing needed to be enhanced for me as a skills lead
- WorldSkills Australia did so much for me. I cannot thank them enough. To enhance my experience; have more of these events!

GREAT ACHIEVEMENT FOR WORLDSKILLS AUSTRALIA IN ITS QUEST TO BUILD SUCCESSION FOR LONGER-TERM SUSTAINABILITY



of Skills Leads said that the WorldSkills Australian Skills Excellence Forum has inspired them to further progress their involvement with WorldSkills Australia

When asked about what they would like to do more of with WorldSkills Australia, here's what respondents had to say:

- I'd like to run a regional sometime but am also interested in the judge and expert roles.
- I would like to be chief judge for plumbing at the next national world skills comp
- I want to learn what and how I can progress internationally as a volunteer and strive to get my skill to international competition
- Would like to work more with the Australian team, I have worked regionally for 10 years. Would like wall and floor tiling to move back into the international skills, and we are starting the tiling VETDSS
- I will continue to be involved as a regional convenor and judge (with even more enthusiasm!) but now I have a clearer understanding of the importance of WorldSkills and the impact it can have in numerous positive ways on competitors, judges and non-competitors (apprentices and students in our RTOs in the skills, attitude and approach to our vocations we can pass on). I would like to work towards becoming a national judge and seeing what can happen from there.
- Still continue my role as regional convenor and judge.
- I would like to be more involved in National and International events
- Further volunteering for the greater goodness of Australia's talented youth.
- In my 12 years with WorldSkills I've done many roles. I'm always ready to take on new roles and expand my abilities. I'm keen to do any role that WorldSkills needs filled.
- I'd like to continue my involvement through judging and progressing to chief national judge in the future.
- Be an expert for Australia one day or a chief judge at Nationals. Be involved in an International competition That's my dream.
- It must be noted here that Skills Leads are clearly intrinsically motivated to learn and grow through continuing to engage with WorldSkills Australia.
- WorldSkills Australia, through the Skills Excellence Forum, progressed even more towards engaging and inspiring skills practitioners, new and old alike, and indeed, achieving its key strategic objective of enabling skills development practitioners further who are clearly reporting an increase in their knowledge, expertise and capability, directly related to their WorldSkills Australia engagement.

EVIDENCE-BASED OPPORTUNITY

The combination of passion and purpose driving this respondent group is evidently a key success factor for WorldSkills Australia and not something to take for granted. As the data shows, not only does their WorldSkills Australia engagement support their continued professional development, raising expertise and capability, but also aids in retention of this valued workforce within education and industry.

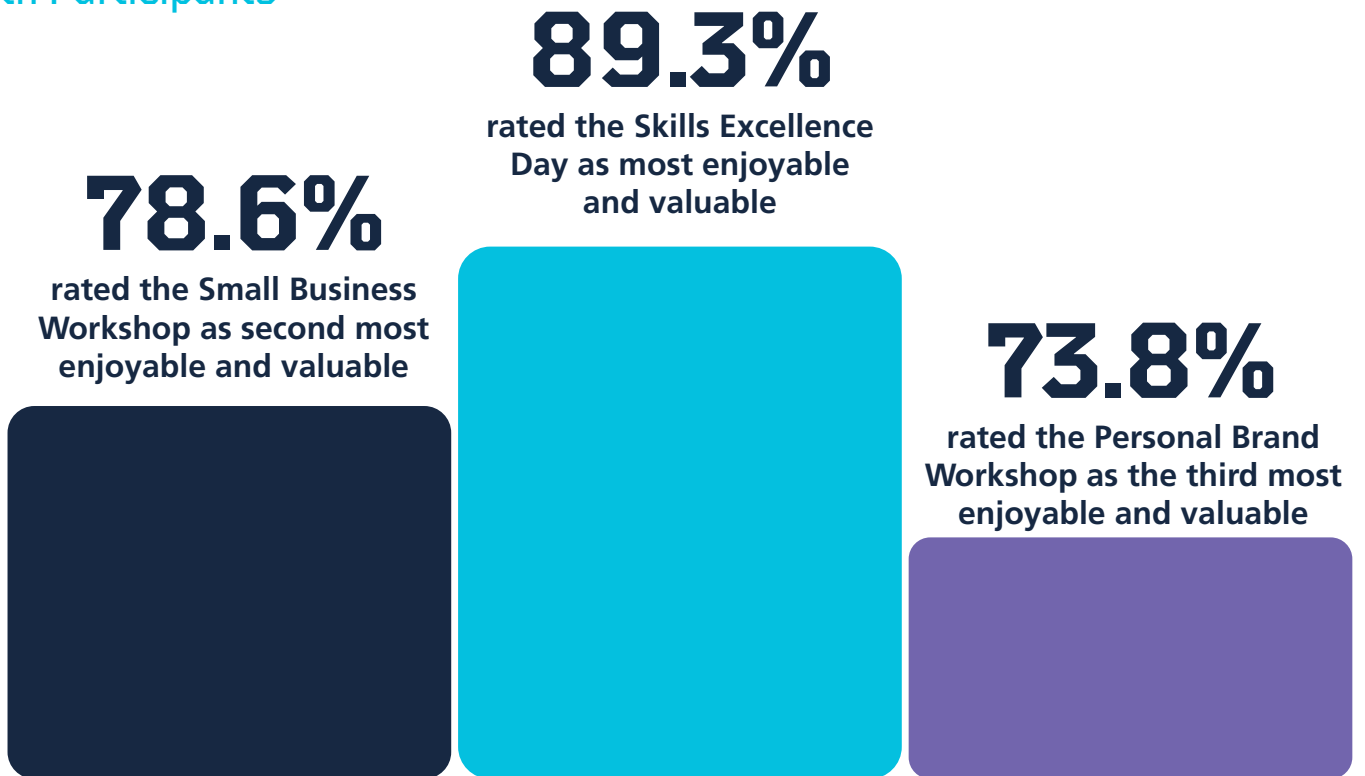
Acting on feedback received from National Survey 2021, WorldSkills Australia has done well, through the Skills Excellence Forum, to build on this further, by providing clear and relevant professional development opportunities.

By continuing to provide more diversity of opportunity for mentors and experts to add value to youth and peers, WorldSkills Australia can further validate their contribution to the cause and also stimulate others to follow in their footsteps, creating strong succession of this crucial volunteer workforce.

About The Event (Worldskills Australia Skills Excellence Forum) Itself

What worked well

Youth Participants



Skill Leads

- 92.6% rated the Skills Excellence Day as most enjoyable and valuable
- 74.1% rated the Personal Brand workshop as second most enjoyable and valuable
- 66.7% rated Guest Speakers as third most enjoyable and valuable
- 63% rated the Networking and Digital Badging workshop as fourth most enjoyable and valuable
- 63% rated Professional Development opportunities as most valuable

What Can We Do More Of, Better, Different

The Voice of Youth Participants

77.4% of Youth Participants rated the Small Group Interactions as better than Larger Group Interactions

ANECDOTAL FEEDBACK

- I had a great time participating in the forum and have benefited a lot. I do feel that more small group activities would have been great for further interaction and deeper connections- as there are a lot of participants.
- The Australian WorldSkills event was such a great experience that I wish it was stretched out for a longer period of time.
- More time with the skills lead, it feels like we only scratched the surface of what we were covering so an additional day could be beneficial.
- More smaller groups and interactions like that. More hands-on and opportunities for all the trades. I would love to do something completely different that normally would never do as well as learning new techniques. Some groups got to go out and do excursions which sounded amazing
- Maybe have a session on managing mental health in the workplace setting.
- It would be great to have more time or an extra day for Skills Excellence
- I wish that all the lectures and practical days were extended and stretched across multiple days.
- Maybe make the event longer than 2 days
- Everything was really great, we felt important and valued as tradespeople and given lots of motivation and inspiration. More time upskilling would be fantastic

The Voice of Skills Leads

- Keep and Implement again
- I loved it all
- Skills sessions
- Open the skills day to industry and public
- Skills day is number 1
- Keep the social aspect after each day to informally chat to participants.
- Opportunities for the participants to engage with the organisation, in a non-competitive manner.
- Branding sessions were great.
- Guest speakers, dinners, skills day with industry.
- The upskilling/ professional development/ skills development for the participants, i.e. the skills day. The dinners were very good for getting to know each other and listening to keynote speakers. The workshop day was very helpful to both skill leads and participants
- Enjoyed every moment of the forum. Thank you for the opportunity to be part of this forum.
- All of the aspects should stay and just be added to in future events.
- The skills day and personal branding All of it

Do More, Do Better, Do Different

- More Networking
- More skills sessions
- Marketing and promotion of the event and acknowledgment of sponsors - clear ongoing communication with all involved about the event activities, supporters and successes. Repository of resources and materials supplied to participants on WorldSkills website for broader access. Consider an exhibition day to showcase Skills Session activities especially to relevant industry areas. Tours of TAFEs and industry within wider industry areas.

- Sharing with other skill leads our personal learning from the forum-Maybe more time for networking
- Providing introduction of business skills to participants so they know how to be able to start and run a business. Business coaching for participants so they can continue to have a successful business. Looking at how we can encourage participants to continue to be part of the WorldSkills team.
- I like the Skill day the best and even would like this extended to one and a half days More time to train and pass on knowledge to participants.




Summary Snapshot

AGREE/STRONGLY AGREE THAT WORLDSKILLS AUSTRALIA EFFECTIVELY:

	RAISES THE PROFILE OF SKILLS	PROMOTES SKILLS EXCELLENCE	SHOWCASES SKILL-BASED EMPLOYMENT PATHWAYS	DEVELOPS PRIDE IN SKILL-BASED EMPLOYMENT PATHWAYS	PROMOTES GREATER EFFICIENCY & PRODUCTIVITY IN THE WORKFORCE
YOUTH	95.2%	100%	97.6%	98.8%	
SKILL LEADS	96.2%	100%	88.9%	96.3%	92.6%

THE VOICE OF OUR YOUTH



82.1%
state that ASEF2022 has given them access to a larger network of peers and mentors

81%
state that ASEF2022 has given them more knowledge and confidence to consider starting a small business



79.8%
of ASEF2022 participants have felt inspired to strive for excellence in their chosen skill.



72.6%
believe that ASEF2022 has taught them new and improved way to use their skills



76%
believe ASEF2022 has increased their knowledge of career progression opportunities & pathways

76.2%
state that ASEF2022 has given them confidence, tips and tricks to develop their personal brand.



72.6%
believe that ASEF2022 has inspired them to aim higher in life and work.

73.8% said that they gained increased networking skills

67.9% say they developed better communication skills

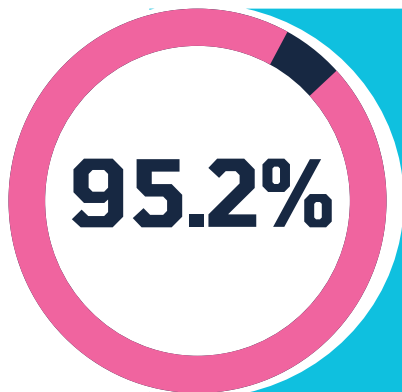
65.5% said they gained better planning and organising skills

61.9% said they developed better self-management skills

58.3% said they gained skills for better decision making

57.1% said their focus for taking initiative increased

57.1% said they gained skills for better collaboration



95.2% OF RESPONDENTS SAID THAT BEING INVOLVED WITH WORLDSKILLS AUSTRALIA MOTIVATES THEM TO COMPLETE THEIR EDUCATION!

95.2% OF RESPONDENTS SAID THAT BEING INVOLVED WITH WORLDSKILLS AUSTRALIA SUPPORTS IMPROVEMENT IN APPLICATION OF THEIR SKILLS IN THE WORKPLACE



Summary Snapshot

THE VOICE OF OUR SKILLS LEADS

92.6%

state that they have gained professional development & enhanced technical skills by being a Skills Lead and organising the program for the Skills Excellence Day.

96.3%

state they gained a great level of satisfaction organising the Skills Excellence Day

92.6%

state that they have gained professional development/enhanced technical skills by being a Skills Lead and organising the program for the Skills Excellence Day

“ 100% said:

I enjoyed working with an intimate group of participants and believe I contributed to their skills development by tailoring the day to areas they wanted to focus on or new technology within the skill which may not be incorporated into the competition projects.

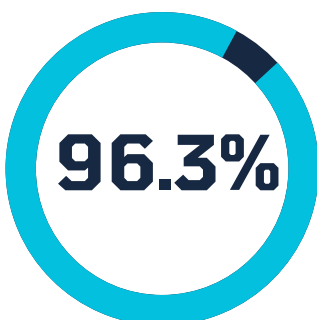
”

100%

believe the the WorldSkills Australia Skills Excellence Forum is a terrific addition to WorldSkills Australia programs for volunteers

100%

believe the the WorldSkills Australia Skills Excellence Forum is a terrific addition to WorldSkills Australia programs for apprentices, trainees and students



of Skills Leads said that the WorldSkills Australian Skills Excellence Forum has inspired them to further progress their involvement with WorldSkills Australia

The Way Forward

As is clear in findings from the survey, there is no question that WorldSkills Australia is effectively achieving its strategic objectives. All respondent groups have been vocal in identifying what actions they value and providing feedback for continuous improvement where relevant. While we take a minute to recognise what has gone well, it is time to keep moving forward with strong purpose and drive.

The WorldSkills Australia Skills Excellence Forum, as the feedback confirms, has effectively earned its place in coming years as an event that is not only complementary to WorldSkills competitions, but a true value-add. The inclusion of participants in the Forum, who were not able to compete or did not qualify for competing in the Nationals and the Internationals is in the spirit of WorldSkills Australia's vision to raise the profile of Skills Excellence and add even greater value to the Youth of Australia. In addition, the Forum gave Skills Leads and Youth participants the opportunity to learn, innovate and collaborate in a different setting, enabling them to go further towards best practice domestically, at first instance. Personal professional development forums and conferences are not new concepts in the wider business community, however there are few that purposefully target newly qualified trade and skills people who having just finished their vocational education may be aspiring to become business owners and leaders of the future within the skills sector. We at WorldSkills Australia identified this opportunity and provided targeted assistance and support through the Australian Skills Excellence Forum. The Australian Skills Excellence Forum served to further progress our core objectives of enhancing the capability of our skilled people to develop well-rounded career persona through access to knowledge and experiences, consequently further strengthening the current and future workforce of Australia.

Hence, it is recommended that WorldSkills Australia continues to progress its domestic engagement and enablement strategy through development of innovative products and services as those offered in the Inaugural WorldSkills Australia Skills Excellence Forum for the benefit of key stakeholder groups - our Youth and Skills practitioners, raising aspirations in both groups to be the best they can be and progress further in career and life.

We invite all of you in the skills ecosystem including education, industry, government, and community, to collaborate with us in this movement to create an even better future for the youth of Australia and setting Australia up as an international leader, showcasing skills excellence.



**PREPARED BY PLAYMAKERS CONSULTING SERVICES PTY. LTD.
FOR WORLDSKILLS AUSTRALIA**

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