Jobs Queensland
Future skills. Future workforce.

Outback Regional Tourism Workforce Plan 2018–2020

Introduction

Tourism is a $25.4 billion industry in Queensland, providing direct and indirect employment for approximately 217,000 people or 9.1 per cent of the State's workforce.[1]

Tourism encompasses multiple sectors because visitors consume goods and services sourced across the economy.[2] The industry includes: transport (air, rail, road and water); accommodation; attractions; events; food services (takeaway, cafés and restaurants); clubs and casinos; retail; arts and recreation; travel agencies and tour operators; education and training; and tourism (marketing, information and planning). Cafés, restaurant and takeaway food services, retail trade and accommodation are the largest direct tourism employers.[3]

Tourism in Queensland is experiencing rapid growth and skilled workers are needed. Females currently comprise 54 per cent of the national tourism workforce.[4] Fifty-six per cent of Queensland's 54,000 tourism-related businesses are located outside the Brisbane region. Tourism is an industry dominated by small business, with nine out of 10 tourism businesses employing less than 20 people.[5]

The labour market challenges for the sector include sourcing, developing and retaining staff to work in regions, who have the necessary skills and capabilities, can meet short term seasonal demands, are available to work the hours required and are willing to work for the conditions and pay on offer.

The Queensland Government's *Advancing Tourism 2016–20: Growing Queensland Jobs* committed to the development of a tourism workforce plan to help the industry meet the growing demands of visitors who are seeking high quality services and experiences. Jobs Queensland worked extensively with industry stakeholders to develop the *Queensland Tourism Workforce Development Plan 2017–20* (http://jobsqueensland.qld.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/tourism_workforce_plan.pdf).

The State Plan outlines four themes identified by industry that are critical to tourism's future growth — careers, local workforce, skills and collaboration. During consultation with tourism stakeholders, industry was clear that it wanted achievable, realistic recommendations that could be owned by industry in partnership with government and actioned at a local level as well as statewide.

This plan details the actions that Outback Queensland tourism industry representatives identified as the priorities for the development for the region's future workforce. The North West, Central West and South West Outback areas identified different actions to address these priorities, reflecting the different needs of the communities in this vast tourism region.

Bonus Downs Farmstay, Mitchell. Photographer: Caroline and Craig Makepeace. Photo courtesy of Tourism & Events Queensland.

1. Tourism Research Australia, 2018, *State Tourism Satellite Accounts, 2016-17*,
    https://www.tra.gov.au/research/view-all-publications/all-publications/economic-reports/state-tourism-satellite-accounts-2016-17.
2. Tourism is not listed as a discrete industry in the Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification (ANZSIC).
3. Tourism Research Australia, 2017, *Tourism Businesses in Australia, June 2012 to June 2016*, Appendix A, Table A.15, h
    https://www.tra.gov.au/research/view-all-publications/all-publications/economic-reports/tourism-businesses-in-australia-june-2012-to-june-2016.
4. Tourism Research Australia, 2017, *Tourism Satellite Account 2016-17*,
    https://www.tra.gov.au/research/view-all-publications/all-publications/economic-reports/tourism-satellite-account-2016-17.
5. Tourism Research Australia, 2017, *Tourism Businesses in Australia, June 2012 to June 2016*, Appendix B, Table 8.1, https://www.tra.gov.au/Research/View-all-publications/All-Publications/Economic-reports/tourism-business-in-australia-june-2011-to-june-2016.

Outback Queensland tourism

The Outback Queensland region covers a vast area of Queensland's interior, encompassing the main centres of Mount Isa, Julia Creek, Birdsville, Longreach, Winton, Barcaldine, Roma and Charleville.
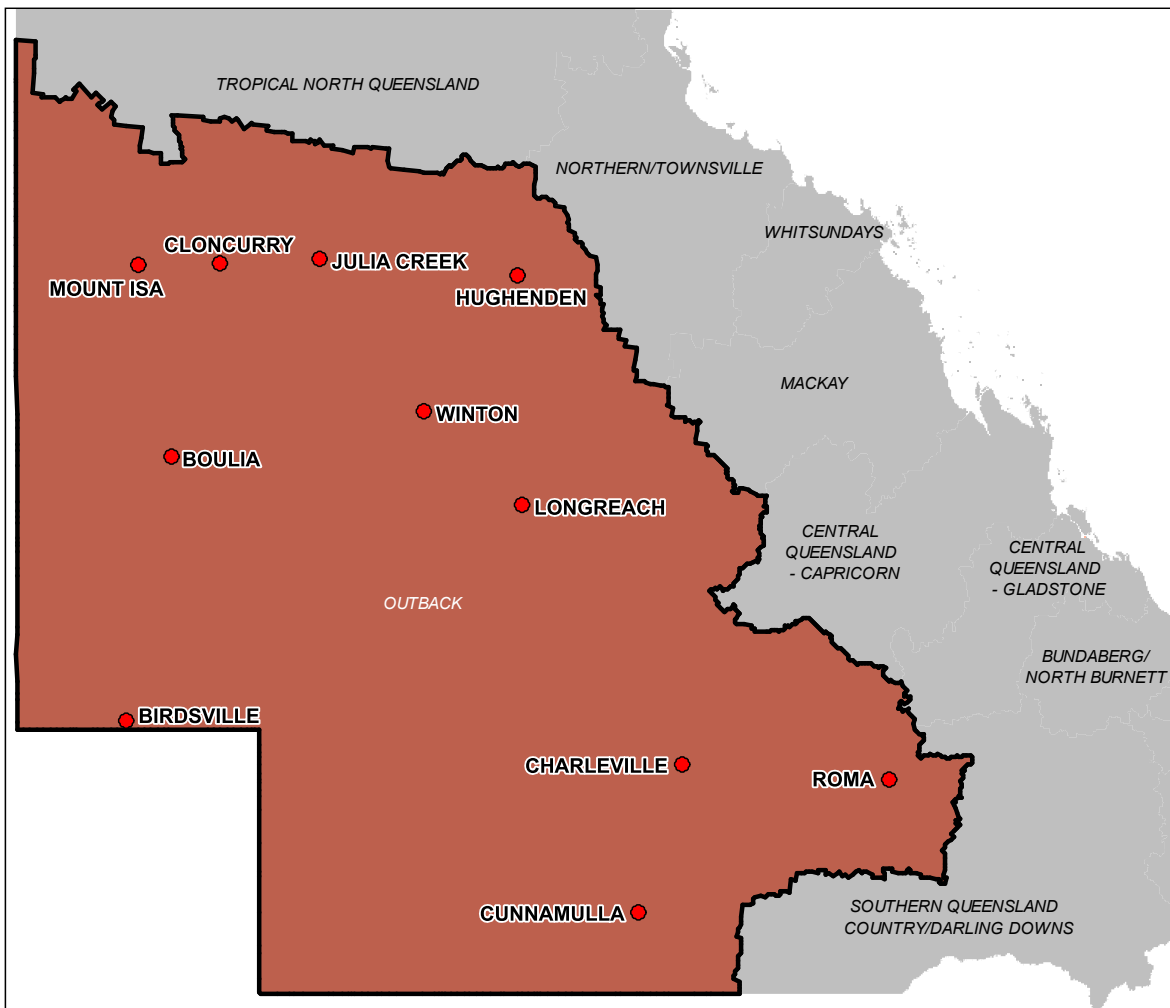
Source: Developed by Queensland Government Statistician's Office as per ABS, 9503.0.55.001 – Tourism Region Maps and Allocation File, Australia, 2016.

The Outback tourism region's vision[6] is to be 'the number one choice for an authentic Australian Outback experience and adventure for families'. Known for character events like the Roma Cup, Julia Creek Dirt n Dust Festival, Mount Isa Rodeo, Boulia Camel Races, Winton's Vision Splendid Outback Film Festival and the Birdsville Big Red Bash, the most remote music festival in the world, the region takes its mission to connect every visitor with an authentic and memorable Australian outback experience and adventure to heart.

The unique natural assets of the outback are a strong drawcard for domestic and international visitors alike. From gliding over more than 1100 sand dunes that make up the Simpson Desert, to lush gorges within national parks and giant sandstone structures, the region astonishes visitors for its remote, vast landscapes and presents a never-ending stream of epic views of natural diversity by day, and the uninterrupted beauty of the stars by night.

The Outback tourism region aims to increase visitation during low visitor periods by becoming a 'year-round' destination with links to quirky events, hands-on experiences and once-in-a-lifetime moments.

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6.   Outback Destination Tourism Plan 2017–2020.

Regional population and employment characteristics

The Outback tourism region is home to approximately 56,000 people or 1.1 per cent of Queensland's total population. The -2.3 per cent average annual growth rate over the past five years is well below with the State average of 1.5 per cent.[7] However, the population is projected to grow by approximately 2000 people by 2026.[8] Unemployment in the region is at 6.1 per cent which is equal with the State overall.[9] The median age is 35.1 years compared with the Queensland median of 37 years.[10]

The top five employing industry sectors are agriculture, forestry and fishing; mining; health care and social assistance; public administration and safety; and education and training. The top five occupations are managers; technicians and trades workers; labourers; professionals; and machinery operators and drivers.[11]

Regional tourism workforce

The mining, agriculture and retail industries have been the traditional economic drivers for the region. The growth of these industries has attracted new residents and jobs to the region and provided necessary infrastructure to support tourism development.

While tourism is only a relatively small industry for the Outback tourism region, it is part of a sustainable long-term pathway towards a diversified and vibrant economy. A broader economic base is important to provide a wider range of employment and economic development opportunities for the local community.

Tourism directly and indirectly employs 2000 people in the region. A total of 1480 of the region's workforce were directly employed in tourism jobs in the region in 2015–16. Of these, 780 were in full-time employment and 700 in part-time. The tourism-related industries that contributed most to direct regional tourism employment in the Outback tourism region in 2015–16 were:

- accommodation (150 full-time and 170 part-time)

- cafés, restaurants and takeaway food services (90 full-time and 180 part-time)

- retail trade (120 full-time and 100 part-time).[12]

Employment in accommodation and food services in the Queensland Outback region is projected to grow by 14.6 per cent in the five years from 2017 to 2022. Retail trade employment for the same period is projected to grow by 2.0 per cent.[13] Nationally, there is projected employment growth of 9.0 per cent in hospitality, retail and service manager occupations, indicating the potential career pathway advancement the industry offers.[14]

Graph 1 (page 7) outlines the industry breakdown of people employed within the tourism industry in the region.

7. Australian Bureau of Statistics 3218.0, *Regional Population Growth, Australia*, various editions.
8. *Queensland Government Population Projections*, 2015 edition (medium series).
9. Australian Government Department of Jobs and *Small Business, Small Area Labour Markets publication, December quarter 2017*, https://www.jobs.gov.au/small-area-labour-markets-publication.
10. Australian Bureau of Statistics 3235.0, *Population by Age and Sex, Regions of Australia* unpublished data and Queensland Treasury estimates.
11. Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Census of Population and Housing, 2016, General Community Profile - G51, G57* and unpublished data.
12. Deloitte Access Economics 2017, *Regional Tourism Satellite Account Outback 2015-16*, https://www.tra.gov.au/ArticleDocuments/245/Outback%20factsheet%2015_16.pdf.aspx?Embed=Y.
13. Australian Government Department of Jobs and Small Business, *Labour Market Information Portal, 2017 Regional Projections*, http://lmip.gov.au/default.aspx?LMIP/GainInsights/EmploymentProjections.
14. Australian Government Department of Jobs and Small Business, *Labour Market Information Portal, 2017 Occupational Projections*, http://lmip.gov.au/default.aspx?LMIP/GainInsights/EmploymentProjections.

Graph 1: Industry breakdown of people directly employed in the tourism industry, 2015–16 (%)

- Accommodation 22%
- Food Services 19%
- Retail Trade 15%
- Education and Training 4%
- Other 40%
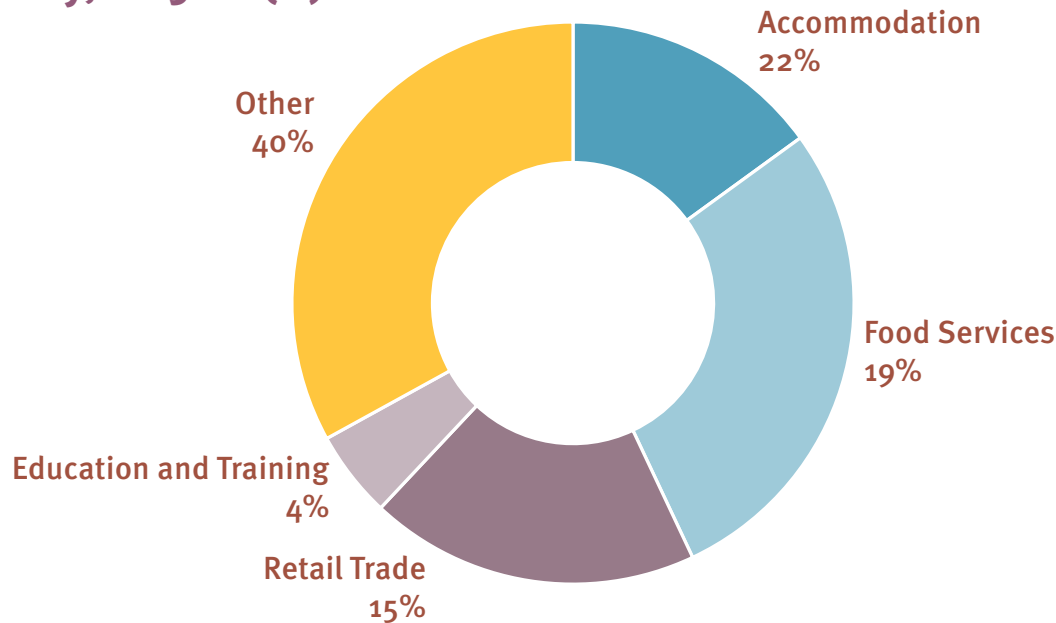
Source: Deloitte Access Economics, *Queensland Regional Tourism Satellite Accounts 2015–16*. Final report prepared for Tourism and Events Queensland, October 2017.

Occupations experiencing shortages across all regions in Queensland are waiters, kitchenhands, bar attendants, baristas and chefs.[15] Data shows an average of eight job advertisements for food trade workers (including chefs) each month between May 2010 and April 2018[16] with seven job advertisements for hospitality, retail and service managers, and three for hospitality workers respectively within the Outback Queensland labour market region, which is the predominant part of the Outback tourism region.

The regional tourism industry will benefit from an inclusive workforce, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. With 8.1 per cent of the regional population being Indigenous and of working age[17], there are numerous opportunities for inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples beyond offering cultural experiences to all aspects of the tourism industry. Support and resources are available for employers who wish to mentor a new Indigenous employee, as well as Indigenous entrepreneurs who seek to establish a new business venture. These resources are available at the back of this plan.

Australia's Indigenous heritage presents the unique opportunity for authentic cultural experiences that create a distinctive point of difference to complement the Outback tourism region's landscape and natural features. The Queensland Ecotourism Plan 2016–20[18] sets out the Queensland Government's vision for the tourism industry, Traditional Owners, conservation, research and community to partner together to create visitor experiences unique to Queensland and to inspire learning.

The Queensland Vocational Education and Training (VET) system currently offers opportunities for eligible staff to upskill through subsidised programs such as the Certificate III Guarantee and Higher Level Skills.[19] Employers can also consider increasing recruitment of trainees and apprentices within their own industry to provide pathways for new entrants.

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15. Australian Government Department of Employment, 2017, *Presentation to the Tourism Industry Advisory Group*, Australian Government.
16. Australian Government Department of Jobs and Small Business, *Labour Market Information Portal, April 2018, Vacancy Report, IVI Regional Data - May 2010 onwards*, http://lmip.gov.au/default.aspx?LMIP/GainInsights/VacancyReport.
17. Indigenous Tourism Research Australia population data supplied by the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships.
18. The Queensland Ecotourism Plan 2016-2020, September 2016, https://www.npsr.qld.gov.au/tourism/pdf/final-qld-ecotourism-plan.pdf.
19. Department of Employment, Small Business and Training, *Subsidised training and incentives*, updated June 2017, https://training.qld.gov.au/training/incentives.

Support is available for both apprentices and employers through the Queensland Government's Apprenticeships Info[20] and also the Australian Apprenticeship Support Network providers.[21] Both services provide assistance with issues that may arise for the duration of an apprenticeship or traineeship, and offer flexible support options.

The Gateway to Industry Schools (Food, Wine and Tourism) program[22] provides opportunities for industry and the education sector to work together to deliver outcomes for students, local communities and businesses. Students that participate in the program are exposed to a range of learning experiences that will assist them in their career choices and pathways to employment.

Turnover in the tourism industry has been identified as a concern which is costly for employers.[23] During consultation, stakeholders informed Jobs Queensland that staff retention issues were attributed to small labour pools, unsociable hours, low wages, seasonality and a casualised workforce. Industry can benefit from reviewing their own recruitment, retention, succession planning and training strategies to boost productivity and improve the attractiveness of the industry to meet the future demand for skilled labour.

Regional tourism businesses

Latest available data show there are more than 790 tourism-related businesses in the Outback tourism region as shown in Table 1 below. Just over 40 per cent of these are sole traders which is slightly lower than the proportion of sole trader tourism businesses statewide. Key tourism enterprises include the Australian Stockman's Hall of Fame, QANTAS Founders Museum, Australian Age of Dinosaurs Museum, Roma's Big Rig and Cobbold Gorge.

Table 1: Outback region tourism businesses[24]

Tourism businesses	Number	%	Qld %
Sole trader	329	41.5	43.6
1 to 4 employees	250	31.6	30.1
5 to 19 employees	186	23.5	20.7
20 or more employees	27	3.4	5.6
Total	**792**	**100**	**100**

20. Department of Employment, Small Business and Training, 2018, *Apprenticeships Info*, https://training.qld.gov.au/apprenticeshipsinfo.
21. Australian Government, Australian Apprenticeship Support networks, https://www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au/australian_apprenticeship_support_network.
22. Gateway to Industry Schools (Food, Wine and Tourism) program https://training.qld.gov.au/employers/gatewayschools/food-wine-tourism.
23. Davidson, M, Timo, N, Wang, Y, 2010, H*ow much does labour turnover cost? A case study of Australian four and five-star hotels*, International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management.
24. Tourism Research Australia, 2017, *Tourism Businesses in Australia, June 2012 to June 2016*, Appendix B, Table 8.1, https://www.tra.gov.au/Research/View-all-publications/All-Publications/Economic-reports/tourism-business-in-australia-june-2011-to-june-2016.

Regional training profile

There were 740 people in tourism-related training in the Outback tourism region in 2016. The majority of enrolments (76 per cent) were in hospitality qualifications at Certificate I, II, III, IV and Diploma levels. Most of these enrolments were in the Certificate II in Hospitality (183), followed by the Certificate III in Hospitality (161) and 57 enrolments in the Certificate I in Hospitality across the Outback tourism region. Other popular qualifications were the Certificate II in Tourism (131) and Certificate II in Kitchen Operations with 105 enrolments.[25]

The Outback College of Hospitality Trade Training Centre's 'big red truck' based at Longreach State High School provides training for students across the local region, including Aramac, Barcaldine, Blackall and Winton State Schools. The facility is also hired by Registered Training Organisations and private catering companies to deliver training and large-scale catering at events across the region.

The region highlighted the need for further development of opportunities for underutilised groups to participate in upskilling and training within the region. Programs such as Skilling Queenslanders for Work deliver training to improve skills and employment opportunities for Queenslanders aged 15 years or older, no longer at school and needing assistance to secure employment. Participants are provided with supported training opportunities via community-based projects, run locally by funded organisations. Programs such as this being delivered at the local level with face-to-face delivery have been highlighted by stakeholders as those most needed in regional areas.

Table 2 (page 10) shows the main vocational education and training qualifications for the tourism industry. Retail qualification are also important to the tourism sector, but have not been included due to their broader application.

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25. National Centre for Vocational Education Research, 2017, *National VET Provider Collection, total VET students and courses*,
     https://www.ncver.edu.au/data/collection/students-and-courses-collection/total-vet-students-and-courses.

Table 2: Tourism industry qualifications

Industry qualification
Certificate I, II, III (including traineeships) and IV in Hospitality
Diploma and Advanced Diploma of Hospitality Management
Certificate III in Hospitality (Restaurant Front of House) (including traineeship)
Certificate II in Kitchen Operations (including traineeship)
Certificate II, III and IV in Asian Cookery
Certificate III and IV in Commercial Cookery (including apprenticeships)
Certificate III (including apprenticeship) and IV in Catering Operations
Certificate III and IV in Patisserie
Certificate I in Tourism (Australian Indigenous Culture)
Certificate II and III in Tourism (including traineeships)
Certificate II, III and IV in Holiday Parks and Resorts
Diploma of Holiday Parks and Resorts
Certificate III in Travel (including apprenticeship)
Certificate III and IV in Guiding
Certificate IV in Travel and Tourism
Diploma and Advanced Diploma of Travel and Tourism Management
Certificate III in Events
Diploma and Advanced Diploma of Event Management
A range of undergraduate and postgraduate university programs

Largely impacted by environmental factors, tourism-related apprenticeship commencements across the Outback tourism region have been lower in recent years compared with 2015. However, traineeship commencements have notably risen in 2017.

School-based apprenticeships and traineeships (SATs) continue to provide a transitional pathway for youth across the region, and comprised 15 per cent and 19.5 per cent respectively of commencements in 2016.

Commencements and completions over the past three years are shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Outback tourism region apprenticeship and traineeship summary[26]

	2015	2016	2017
Commencements			
Apprenticeships	696	424	427
Traineeships	433	358	466
Completions			
Apprenticeships	417	290	226
Traineeships	280	237	246

26. Department of Employment, Small Business and Training, 2018, *Direct Entry-Level Training Administration (DELTA) database, Queensland.*

Looking ahead — North West Outback

This plan details the actions that the Outback tourism industry representatives identified as the priorities for the development for the region's future workforce. The North West, Central West and South West Outback areas identified different actions to address these priorities, reflecting the different needs of the communities in this vast tourism region.

The priorities in this plan for North West Outback's focus on three main themes – local workforce, skills and collaboration – as identified during consultations with Outback tourism stakeholders. The North West Outback, which includes Mount Isa, has identified different actions to address these priorities.

Investment in tourism products and experiences

A number of tourism developments that are underway or proposed that will provide job opportunities and demand for new skill requirements in the North West Outback, include the Mount Isa Rodeo Hall of Fame and the Julia Creek 'At the Creek' Stage 2, design of a virtual or augmented reality experience at Combo Waterhole, as well as the Porcupine Gorge National Park experience.

Mount Isa City Council has released its Economic Development Strategy.[27] This includes the proposed development of 'The International Mining Museum' to celebrate 100 years of mining, working with key partners to expand one of Queensland's strategic tourism drives (the Overlander Way), and the proposed establishment of a sister city in China to increase trade, investment and tourism opportunities.

Workforce priorities and action plan

Local workforce – Build a sustainable labour pool

Tourism business' capacity to grow is dependent upon their skilled workforce. Tourism offers the young people of the North West Outback employability skills that are transferable to other industries. In turn, tourism skills can support retention of younger workers within local communities.

Effective partnerships between schools, local training providers and industry are critical to create awareness of the career opportunities and foster a future talent pool. There are partnerships in place in the North West Outback but it is important they continue to grow.

Participants noted that:

• pathway programs need local training providers to deliver the qualifications

• more tourism pathways, such as tour guiding, are becoming available locally

• the Skilling Queenslanders for Work program could be promoted more in some of the North West Outback's smaller council areas

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27. Mount Isa City Council Economic Development Strategy, http://www.mountisa.qld.gov.au/documents/43375862/43478697/MICC%20Economic%20Development%20Strategy%20-%2016072017.pdf.

- the time allocation required to support the training is challenging for some councils

- the loss of the Group Training Organisation local to Mount Isa has impacted momentum leaving a gap in terms of a training facilitator

- the industry relies heavily on word of mouth for jobs

- promoting job opportunities in tourism needs to start in schools

- while the secondary colleges and TAFE Queensland are driving local networks there is the need to further strengthen partnerships.

Tourism is one of the economic diversification opportunities identified in the Strategic Blueprint for the North West Minerals Province[28] and this is being supported by the Department of State Development, Manufacturing and Infrastructure and Planning (DSDMIP) which has resourced additional positions including a Manager, Employment Services and Manager, Economic Diversification. DSDMIP has also hosted inaugural employer and job seeker/career changer forums to provide advice about the support available and economic conditions in the North West Outback.

Regional opportunities to partner with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups, tourism organisations and heritage groups to deliver community-based programs and initiatives were also highlighted as needing further investigation and support.

Skills – Build the industry's capacity to grow

In a region dominated by mining and agriculture, there is significant competition for skilled and unskilled labour across a range of occupations. The region continues to be a major location for mineral exploration and is also seeking to expand agricultural industries and diversify opportunities through agribusiness ventures.

To build a skilled labour pool that can meet seasonal demand, the local tourism industry requires strategies to be competitive against or complement industries offering higher wages, stable jobs and career options. For example, agriculture in the region presents an opportunity for job sharing across industries.

The necessity to expand and access training in digital tourism and entrepreneurship was also highlighted by North West Outback stakeholders.

Collaboration – Build the industry's capacity to address local issues and develop innovative solutions

There is a general lack of awareness amongst business owners and managers of where to access information and support to upskill themselves, for example, as industry mentors and in diversifying operations.

Industry stakeholders in the region felt a long-term, sustainable information portal was needed for each industry and suggested that tourism could be a pilot.

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28. A Strategic Blueprint for Queensland's North West Minerals Province,
    https://www.statedevelopment.qld.gov.au/a-strategic-blueprint-for-queensland-s-north-west-minerals-province-nwmp/regional-development/nwmp.html.

Cloncurry. Photographer: Peter Lik. Photo courtesy of Tourism & Events Queensland.

A shared sense of purpose action plan

⚠ PRIORITY
Local workforce

◆★ GOAL
Build a sustainable labour pool

RECOMMENDATION: Strengthen partnerships between schools, local tourism employers and local government to identify the skills pathways and provide local work experience opportunities for school students.

Future opportunity

1. Investigate the feasibility of appointing a person to fulfil the role of 'navigator' in the North West Outback to help put people in touch with one another, especially in smaller centres.

RECOMMENDATION: Improve awareness and navigation of business support programs, improve take-up of apprenticeships and traineeships, pre-employment programs and programs to encourage employment of people from disadvantaged groups (women returning to work, mature age, Indigenous, migrant).

Local actions	Existing resources include:
2. Hold forums in the North West Outback every six months that are focused on improving awareness and navigation of support programs, take-up of employment and training opportunities in tourism.	NWMP Blueprint. Skilling Queenslanders for Work. 'Back to Work'. Office of Small Business' business support portal.

⚠ PRIORITY
Skills

◆★ GOAL
Build the industry's capacity to grow and flourish

RECOMMENDATION: Develop and support a network of local 'tourism champions' drawn from existing networks, industry and training providers who will promote the industry regionally and support regional businesses to adopt and implement their chosen workforce development strategies.

Local actions	Existing resources include:
3. Identify regional tourism champions either through OQTA or the proposed tourism forums.	OQTA. QTIC. Young Tourism Leaders.

RECOMMENDATION: Promote the opportunity to develop skills for entrepreneurship and digital tourism already available in the training package.

Local actions	Existing resources include:
4. Expand and tailor the provision of regular training in digital tourism and entrepreneurship to the regional tourism industry.	VET Investment Plan. DestinationQ. Business Queensland's small business tools.

! PRIORITY
Collaboration

★ GOAL
Build the industry's capacity to address local issues and develop innovative solutions

RECOMMENDATION: Collaborate across government, industry bodies and local employers to develop and promote a 'hub' where they can easily access information on existing resources and targeted support which would enhance their ability to take-up existing opportunities to build business capabilities.

Local actions	Existing resources include:
5. Promote business support programs and mentoring available to businesses within the region.	Mentoring for Growth. Small Business Solutions. QTIC Young Professional Mentoring Program. Business Queensland's small business tools. DITID Grow your tourism business.

Future opportunity

6. Explore options to develop a pilot tourism industry portal.

Mount Isa Rodeo. Photographer: Tony Walsh. Photo courtesy of Tourism & Events Queensland.

Birdsville. Photographer: Chris McLennan. Photo courtesy of Tourism & Events Queensland.

Looking ahead — Central West Outback

This plan details the actions that the Outback tourism industry representatives identified as the priorities for the development for the region's future workforce. The North West, Central West and South West Outback areas identified different actions to address these priorities, reflecting the different needs of the communities in this vast tourism region.

The priorities in this plan for Central West Outback focus on three main themes – local workforce, skills and collaboration – as identified during consultations with Outback tourism stakeholders. The Central West Outback, which includes Longreach and Winton areas, has identified different actions to address these priorities.

Investment in tourism products and experiences

A number of tourism developments are underway or proposed that will provide job opportunities and demand for new skill requirements in the Central West Outback include, Great Desert 4WD and Birdsville's big red sand dune walk experiences, the refurbishment of the Waltzing Matilda Centre, flights between Longreach and Winton, the expansion of the QANTAS Founders Museum, Australian Age of Dinosaurs (Stage 3), Australian Stockman's Hall of Fame and Barcaldine Tourism Precinct, as well as the Blackall Tambo heritage precinct.

Workforce priorities and action plan

Local workforce – Build a sustainable labour pool

The industry locally needs to provide career opportunities for both school students and for mature age workers. For young people providing paths such as traineeships is important, while for mature age people the tourism industry needs to make the most of their life skills. Given the seasonal nature of tourism it is possible to support dual careers in the region. The need for training to meet identified skills shortages in the region, especially chefs, was also highlighted.

The Longreach State High School has identified agriculture, tourism and healthcare as key priorities offering job opportunities for school leavers. In 2018, the school curriculum includes the Certificate I and II in Tourism and Certificate II in Kitchen Operations. The school is also reviewing the current arrangements with a view to working with industry to change from an intensive two-week program to achieve a certificate level qualification to conducting training over a longer period of time, ideally Terms 1 and 4 during summer and the tourism off-season.

Building on engagement currently undertaken by key local industry people who give their time to talk to local school students about tourism and the opportunities the industry offers, it was felt that awareness about the industry needs to start at Year 8. It was also important to highlight the broad range of skills the industry provides, such as management and organisational planning.

Planning is underway in Longreach for a Community Strengthening Conference in 2018 which will incorporate a range of industries including tourism. Engaging with people locally will be important as the conference agenda is developed, with the aim of taking a whole-of-community approach.

While the employment of locals must be a priority, backpackers provide a supply of labour where there is not a local labour pool. Backpackers also contribute a different set of life skills and could take on roles in the community such as talking to local school students.

Skills – Build the industry's capacity to grow and flourish

The importance of tourism in the region has increased due to the drought which has reduced the ability of agriculture to support the community. Hence, there is a need to promote the value of tourism for the community and the career opportunities available.

All local tourism operators perform the role of local champions. The size and remoteness of the region highlights the importance of local tourism businesses sharing knowledge and experience about workforce strategies. Existing employees within the industry who have a wealth of experience in the absence of a formal qualification may benefit from a Recognition of Prior Learning assessment through a Registered Training Organisation. Increasing qualified staff locally supports the region's ability to mentor new entrants and provide the supervision requirements for apprentices and trainees.

Regular training in digital tourism and entrepreneurial skill sets is regarded as important for the region. However, it was felt that ultimately training should contribute to a future qualification. Giving young people entrepreneurial skills was considered valuable in terms of future tourism opportunities for the community.

Collaboration – Build the industry's capacity to address local issues and develop innovative solutions

The Longreach Regional Council has established the Regional Advisory Committee for tourism comprising Council and local industry representation.

As part of its Economic Development Strategy[29], Council has identified the need for a portal to provide information to local industries including tourism. Council is committed to sharing with other smaller councils in the region and plans to localise resources on bus.gov.au for the benefit of all seven Central West Outback local government areas.

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29. Outback Propserity 2021: Longreach Region Economic Development Strategy, https://infoxpert.longreach.qld.gov.au/downloaddocument.ashx?documentId=151773.

PRIORITY
Local workforce

GOAL
Build a sustainable labour pool

RECOMMENDATION: Strengthen partnerships between schools, local tourism employers and local government to identify the skills pathways and provide local work experience opportunities for school students.

Future opportunity

7. Investigate feasibility of engaging a local coordinator to support school/industry partnerships, seasonal sharing and backpackers.

8. Investigate opportunities to increase utilisation of existing infrastructure, such as the big red truck (Outback Hospitality Trade Training Centre), to train mature age people.

Local actions	Existing resources include:
9. Continue to engage with local industry in the planning and development of the agenda for a 2018 Community Strengthening Conference, which will incorporate a range of industries including tourism.	Longreach Regional Council.

Qantas Founders Museum, Longreach. Photo courtesy of Qantas Founders Museum.

PRIORITY
Skills

GOAL
Build the industry's capacity to grow and flourish

RECOMMENDATION: Develop and support a network of local 'tourism champions' drawn from existing networks, industry and training providers who will promote the industry regionally and support regional businesses to adopt and implement their chosen workforce development strategies.

Local actions	Existing resources include:
10. Encourage local tourism businesses experienced with workforce strategies to share their knowledge and experience with other businesses through networking forums.	Chamber of Commerce. Regional Tourism Organisation.
11. Encourage all local tourism operators to see themselves as local tourism champions.	Regional Tourism Organisation. QTIC. TEQ.

RECOMMENDATION: Promote the opportunity to develop skills for entrepreneurship and digital tourism already available in the training package.

| Local actions	Existing resources include:
12. Promote the training available that would be of benefit to the industry locally regarding digital marketing, tourism and entrepreneurship.	VET Investment Plan. Certificate IV in Small Business. Certificate II in Tourism.

PRIORITY
Collaboration

GOAL
Build the industry's capacity to address local issues and develop innovative solutions

RECOMMENDATION: Collaborate across government, industry bodies and local employers to develop and promote a 'hub' where they can easily access information on existing resources and targeted support which would enhance their ability to take-up existing opportunities to build business capabilities.

Future opportunity

13. Establish an information portal for industries, including tourism, in the seven Central West Outback local government areas.

Stockman's Hall of Fame, Longreach. Photographer: Peter Lik. Photo courtesy of Tourism & Events Queensland.

Looking ahead — South West Outback

This plan details the actions that the Outback tourism industry representatives identified as the priorities for the development for the region's future workforce. The North West, Central West and South West Outback areas identified different actions to address these priorities, reflecting the different needs of the communities in this vast tourism region.

The priorities in this plan for South West Outback focus on three main themes – local workforce, skills and collaboration – as identified during consultations with Outback tourism stakeholders. The South West Outback, which includes Roma, has identified different actions to address these priorities.

Investment in tourism products and experiences

A number of tourism developments that have completed or are currently proposed that will provide job opportunities and demand for new skill requirements in the South West Outback include the refurbishment of the Roma Central Motel and Roma's Big Rig expansion. These will complement existing tourism experiences such as tours of the Roma Saleyards, Hero's Avenue and a range of cafés, restaurants and speciality shops.

Workforce priorities and action plan

Local workforce – Build a sustainable labour pool

Industry would prefer students in Years 8 and 9 to be exposed to the opportunities on offer from the tourism industry, and more local people were needed to talk about the tourism industry to increase general awareness. In time, this could lead to 'come and try' days subject to qualified people being available.

Participants confirmed the need to improve apprenticeship and traineeship take-up and pre-employment programs for locals. However, the remoteness of the South West Outback made attracting training providers challenging despite the incentives of regional loading payments. Stakeholders advised that training providers rarely visit local workplaces given the distance and there are insufficient numbers of people qualified to supervise apprenticeships and traineeships.

Skills – Build the industry's capacity to grow and flourish

Participants agreed there is a need for entrepreneurship and digital tourism skill sets, however this training must be delivered in-region. Non-accredited training in customer service is also needed.

Local industry also felt that sharing of good practice and success stories about workforce development strategies across the State would be helpful.

Collaboration – Build the industry's capacity to address local issues and develop innovative solutions

Skills development and succession planning are important across all of the South West Outback local council areas. Certificate IV training in travel and tourism has been provided to visitor information centres in the South West Outback and the focus is now on Certificate III level traineeships in tourism.

The Maranoa Regional Council's Corporate Plan 2014–2019[30] is focused on:

•   partnering with state, regional and local tourism organisations and operators to promote the region as a preferred visitor destination

•   partnering with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups, tourism organisations and heritage groups to deliver community-based programs and initiatives

•   tourism marketing and promotion e.g. tourism marketing plan and Visit Maranoa Travel Guide.

Opportunities exist for aggregating demand in Roma and across the South West Outback such as sharing apprentices and trainees across local employers.

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28.   Maranoa Regional Council's Corporate Plan 2014–2019, http://www.maranoa.qld.gov.au/corporate-plan.

A shared sense of purpose action plan

⚠ **PRIORITY**
Local workforce

★ **GOAL**
Build a sustainable labour pool

RECOMMENDATION: Strengthen partnerships between schools, local tourism employers and local government to identify the skills pathways and provide local work experience opportunities for school students.

Local actions	Existing resources include:
14. Promote tourism to school students from Years 8 and 9 to increase awareness of industry breadth.	QTIC Tourism and Hospitality Career Guide. Discover Tourism. Young Tourism Leaders.

RECOMMENDATION: Improve awareness and navigation of business support programs, red-tape/administrative reduction for SMEs to improve take-up of apprenticeships and traineeships, pre-employment programs and programs to encourage employment of people from disadvantaged groups (women returning to work, mature age, Indigenous, migrant).

Local actions	Existing resources include:
15. Promote local return to work programs, which includes diverse skills to encourage employment of people seeking work.	'Back to Work'. Skilling Queenslanders for Work.

RECOMMENDATION: Promote mentoring programs to support both students and tourism employers to take-up apprenticeships and traineeships.

Local actions	Existing resources include:
16. Promote existing support mechanisms available to industry and collaborate regionally to increase face-to-face service provision for the benefit of apprentices, trainees and businesses.	Australian Apprenticeship Pathways. Apprenticeships Info. Regional Jobs and Investment Packages.

RECOMMENDATION: Develop innovative and alternative training pathways locally to support the entry of under-represented groups, such as women returning to work and migrant communities, into the industry.

Future opportunity

17. Explore opportunities to increase local access to training.

RECOMMENDATION: Develop/support a network of local 'tourism champions' who will promote the industry regionally and support regional businesses to adopt and implement their chosen workforce development strategies.

Local actions	Existing resources include:
18. Regionally-based (face-to-face) business support and development training for small to medium business operators.	Certificate IV in Small Business. Business Queensland Business Advisors. QTIC Mentoring Program. DestinationQ website and app.

RECOMMENDATION: Promote the opportunity to develop skills in entrepreneurship and digital tourism already available in the training package.

Local actions	Existing resources include:
19. Provide regionally-based training in digital tourism, entrepreneurship and customer service to the regional tourism industry.	VET Investment Plan. Certificate IV in Small Business. Certificate II in Tourism. Be My Guest. DestinationQ website and app.

RECOMMENDATION: Develop and support a network of local 'tourism champions' drawn from existing networks, industry and training providers who will promote the industry regionally and support regional businesses to adopt and implement their chosen workforce development strategies.

Local actions	Existing resources include:
20. Encourage local tourism businesses experienced with workforce strategies to share their knowledge and experience with other businesses through networking forums.	Chamber of Commerce. Regional Tourism Organisation.

PRIORITY
Collaboration

GOAL
Build the industry's capacity to address local issues and develop innovative solutions

RECOMMENDATION: Collaborate across government, industry bodies and local employers to develop and promote a 'hub' where they can easily access information on existing resources and targeted support which would enhance their ability to take-up existing opportunities to build business capabilities.

Local actions	Existing resources include:
21. Explore options to share apprentices and trainees.	Australian Apprenticeship Support Networks. Apprenticeships Info. Group Training Organisations.

Maranoa River, Mitchell. Photographer: Matthew Taylor. Photo courtesy of Tourism & Events Queensland.

Glossary

AASN – Australian Apprenticeship Support Network

DATSIP – Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships

DESBT – Department of Employment, Small Business and Training

DITID – Department of Innovation, Tourism Industry Development and the Commonwealth Games

DSDMIP – Department of State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning

GTO – Group Training Organisation

NWMP – North West Minerals Province

OQTA – Outback Queensland Tourism Association

QTIC – Queensland Tourism Industry Council

SATs – School-based apprenticeships and traineeships

SkillsIQ – Tourism industry skill service organisation

TEQ – Tourism & Events Queensland

VET – Vocational Education and Training

Queensland and Commonwealth resources available at June 2018

Careers in Tourism – Online resources for career entry
Discover Hospitality – http://discoveryourcareer.com.au/discover-hospitality/
Discover Tourism – http://discoveryourcareer.com.au/discover-tourism/
QTIC Tourism and Hospitality Career Guide – https://www.qtic.com.au/sites/default/files/qtic_tourism_hospitality_career_guide_2016_low_res.pdf
myfuture – https://myfuture.edu.au/
Foundation for Young Australians – https://www.fya.org.au/

Digital technologies – Online resources and access to digital technologies and services
Small Business Guide – https://www.staysmartonline.gov.au/get-involved/guides/smallbusinessguide
Digital Scorecard – https://www.business.qld.gov.au/running-business/it/digital-scorecard
Online marketing – https://www.business.qld.gov.au/running-business/marketing-sales/marketing-promotion/online-marketing
Doing Business Online – https://www.business.qld.gov.au/starting-business/internet-start-ups/online-basics
Advance Queensland Community Digital Champions – https://advance.qld.gov.au/entrepreneurs-startups/comm-digital-champ.aspx
Digital Marketing – https://cdn1-teq.queensland.com/~/media/7717acc41c054edaae353a413f3374ee.ashx?vs=1&d=20151210T185732
Digital Ready – https://teq.queensland.com/industry-resources/how-to-guides/going-digital
Tourism Tribe – https://www.tourismtribe.com/

Employment/training services – Resources and support for employers and job seekers

Jobactive – https://jobactive.gov.au/

Relocation Assistance – https://www.jobs.gov.au/relocation-assistance-take-job

myskills – https://www.myskills.gov.au/

Back to Work – https://backtowork.initiatives.qld.gov.au/for-employers/

Apprenticeships Info – https://training.qld.gov.au/apprenticeshipsinfo/

VET Investment Plan – https://training.qld.gov.au/site/docs-data/Documents/strategies/vetinvest/annual-vet-investment-plan.pdf

Australian Apprenticeships Pathways – https://www.aapathways.com.au/

Discover Staff – http://discoveryourcareer.com.au/discover-staff/

QTIC Futures Program – https://www.qtic.com.au/qticfutures

Youth Employment Program (YEP) – https://www.datsip.qld.gov.au/programs-initiatives/youth-employment-program

Skilling Queenslanders for Work – https://training.qld.gov.au/employers/funding/sqw

Funding/grants – Financial assistance, professional advice and support for small businesses

Jobs and Regional Growth Fund – https://www.statedevelopment.qld.gov.au/industry/industry-support/jobs-and-regional-growth-fund.html

Small Business Digital Grants – https://www.business.qld.gov.au/starting-business/advice-support/grants/digital-grants

Small Business Entrepreneur Grants – https://www.business.qld.gov.au/starting-business/advice-support/grants/entrepreneur-grants

Community Sustainability Action Grants – https://www.qld.gov.au/environment/pollution/funding/community-sustainability

Business Development Fund – https://advance.qld.gov.au/entrepreneurs-startups/business-development-fund.aspx

Ignite Ideas Fund – https://advance.qld.gov.au/entrepreneurs-startups/ignite-ideas-fund.aspx

Export Market Development Grants (EMDG) – https://www.austrade.gov.au/Australian/Export/Export-Grants/About/what-is-emdg

Indigenous business support – Resources and support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

Business Ownership – http://www.iba.gov.au/business/

Accelerate Indigenous Small Business Grants – https://www.business.qld.gov.au/starting-business/advice-support/grants/indigenous-grants

Enterprise Development – https://www.datsip.qld.gov.au/programs-initiatives/enterprise-development

Government Champions – https://www.datsip.qld.gov.au/programs-initiatives/government-champions

Tourism Indigenous Employment Champions Network – https://www.qtic.com.au/search-results?search_keys=indigenous+champions+network

Contacts and resources for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses – https://www.business.qld.gov.au/starting-business/advice-support/support/support-indigenous/indigenous-contacts

Marketing/promoting your business – Everything to successfully market your business

Consider Your Idea – https://www.business.qld.gov.au/starting-business/planning/business-success/idea

The Big Marketing Guide – https://teq.queensland.com/industry-resources/how-to-guides/big-marketing-guide/section-5-digital-marketing

Queensland Destination Events Program – https://teq.queensland.com/events/events-support/queensland-destination-events-program

Marketing Opportunities – http://marketingsales.queensland.com/

Free Images – https://visuals.queensland.com/

Mentoring/champions – Access to advice from tourism role models and experts

Mentoring for Growth – https://www.business.qld.gov.au/running-business/growing-business/mentoring-growth

Working with business advisers – https://www.business.qld.gov.au/starting-business/planning/advisers

Young Tourism Leaders – https://youngtourismleaders.qld.gov.au/

Small Business Solutions – https://business.tafeqld.edu.au/

QTIC Young Professionals Mentoring Program – https://www.qtic.com.au/mentoring

Partnerships – Resources to bring businesses, government and industry leaders together

A Strategic Blueprint for Queensland's North West Minerals Province – https://www.statedevelopment.qld.gov.au/resources/plan/nwmp/nwmp-strategic-blueprint.pdf

Gateway to Industry Schools program – https://training.qld.gov.au/employers/gatewayschools

Advancing Regional Innovation Program – https://advance.qld.gov.au/entrepreneurs-startups/advancing-regional-innovation.aspx

Advancing Regional Innovation (Entrepreneurs) – https://advance.qld.gov.au/entrepreneurs-startups.aspx

Regional Business Angels Support Program – https://advance.qld.gov.au/entrepreneurs-startups/regional-business-angels.aspx

Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI) – https://www.australianchamber.com.au/

DestinationQ – https://www.destq.com.au/about

Regional Tourism Organisations – https://teq.queensland.com/about-teq-new/contacts/rtos

Tools/resources for business owners – Resources, tools and services for your business

Australian Business Licencing Information Service – https://ablis.business.gov.au/

Australian Competition & Consumer Commission (ACCC) – https://www.accc.gov.au/business

Information and Support – http://www.asbfeo.gov.au/information-support

Help for small business and family enterprises – https://www.ato.gov.au/Business/

Tourism Research Australia – https://www.austrade.gov.au/australian/tourism

Tourism and Business – https://www.austrade.gov.au/Australian/Tourism/Tourism-and-business

Business.gov.au – https://www.business.gov.au/

Training Assets – Hire a training facility – Email: trainingassets@det.qld.gov.au

Resources for Employers – https://www.jobs.gov.au/employers-o

Growing Queensland's Companies – https://advance.qld.gov.au/entrepreneurs-startups/growing-qld-companies.aspx

Starting A Tourism Business – https://www.business.qld.gov.au/industries/hospitality-tourism-sport/tourism/starting-up

Tourism Service Quality Toolkit – https://www.business.qld.gov.au/industries/hospitality-tourism-sport/tourism/running/customer-service/service-quality-toolkit

Improving Customer Service – https://www.business.qld.gov.au/running-business/consumer-laws/customer-service/improving

Grow your tourism business – tools, resources and funding – https://publications.qld.gov.au/dataset/grow-your-tourism-business/resource/9e6d4f15-1dbf-4454-9879-2ae9cc62fbod

Inclusive and Accessible Tourism – https://publications.qld.gov.au/dataset/inclusive-tourism/resource/6edc79fe-36ff-4cb1-a8e2-6ca2658d0be7

edX – https://www.edx.org/course?search_query=tourism

Be My Guest – https://www.embracing2018.com/legacy-program/tourism-supporting-queensland-business/be-my-guest

DestinationQ – https://www.destq.com.au/

DestinationQ App – https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=au.com.entegy.dq16&hl=en

Family Business Australia – http://www.fambiz.org.au/

Future Learn – https://www.futurelearn.com/

Pathways workshops – https://www.impactinnovationgroup.com/pathways-program/

MOOCs – Massive Open Online Courses – http://mooc.org/

Queensland Tourism Accreditation – https://www.qtic.com.au/accreditation

Queensland Tourism Awards – http://www.queenslandtourismawards.com.au/

Tourism & Events Queensland – https://teq.queensland.com/

How-to Guides – https://teq.queensland.com/industry-resources/how-to-guides

Working with Tourism Australia – http://www.tourism.australia.com/content/dam/assets/document/1/6/y/t/a/2004670.pdf

Tourism Statistics – http://www.tourism.australia.com/en/markets-and-research/tourism-statistics.html

Information on tax for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals and business owners – https://www.ato.gov.au/General/Aboriginal-and-Torres-Strait-Islander-people/

Grants website – www.grants-and-assistance.services.qld.gov.au

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