

Budget Policy Division  
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## International Specialised Skills Institute Budget Priority

International Specialised Skills Institute provides here a set of specific recommendations for the 2022-23 budget, and a set of recommendations for targeted Government investment in building a better skilled Australia.

The International Specialised Skills Institute (ISS Institute) exists to develop an innovative, skilled, and smart Australia by cultivating the mastery and knowledge of talented Australians through international applied research (i.e. industry-based) Fellowships.

### ISS INSTITUTE stands ready to help ease Australia's skills shortage by:

- Increasing and developing the skilled workforce in Australia
- Delivering research, skills acquisition, and international best practise to create jobs and grow Australia's innovation economy,
- Providing Fellowships that give the opportunity for Australians to undertake international skills development and applied research that will have a positive impact on Australian industry and the broader community.

With Government investment, the ISS INSTITUTE proposes to:

- **Create, support, and provide 105 new industry Fellowships over three years.**

### DIRECT ACTION TO BUILD A SKILLED AUSTRALIA

The ISS Institute International Fellowship program supports Australians across a broad range of industries and sectors to undertake international skills and knowledge enhancement leading to new ways of working and economic and social benefits. To date over 500 Australians have undertaken Fellowships facilitated through the ISS Institute. Our Fellowship Program encourages shared learning, leadership, and communities of practice. At the heart of the ISS Institute are our individual Fellows. Under our Fellowship Program the Fellows learn globally and, upon their return, pass on their newly acquired knowledge and skills through:

- Publication of a detailed Fellowship Report distributed to government, industry, educational institutions, and peers.
- Recommending improvements and enhancements in their industry sector.
- Introducing new practices and techniques.
- Disseminating their learnings, findings and recommendations via workshops, conferences, and forums.

ISS Institute plays a pivotal role in creating value and opportunity, encouraging new thinking and the adoption of new ideas and practice.

ISS INSTITUTE proposes to build on our successful Fellowship program by delivering 35 industry Fellowships to enhance Australian professional, construction, digital, leading-edge technologies, eCommerce, and emerging industry's capability.

An ISS INSTITUTE industry Fellowship program would directly support the need for highly qualified skilled workers at a time when tech, leading-edge technologies, clean energy, digital and emerging industry skills are critical to building Australia's resilience and capacity.

#### **INVESTMENT: \$4,725,000**

- 35 Fellowships per year over three years (105 in total)
- An alumni program that tracks outcomes, builds a network, and provides opportunities for mentoring relationships
- Leverage the network to create a virtuous cycle of growth for the Fellowship program
- Catalyse innovation in the Australian economy.

#### **Investment in ISS Institute applied research Fellowships will address major challenges, support critical national capabilities, and create future growth industries following the economic disruption of the COVID-19 pandemic.**

Investment in ISS Institute applied research Fellowships for responsive modern manufacturing and supply chains, clean energy, leading-edge technologies, electric vehicle mechanics, interactive games & entertainment, aged care, integrated digital healthcare, and advanced data collection and analytics will provide more reliable and better equity of access to goods, services, and utilities, as well as creating jobs in Australia. Direct funding will be highly effective in creating skilled full-time future-proof jobs that will aid Australia's post-COVID recovery.

#### **The ISS Institute:**

Founded by the late Sir James Gobbo in 1991, the independent and not-for-profit ISS Institute has to date provided opportunities for over 500 Australians to gain enhanced skills and experience in trades, professions and leading-edge technologies, through overseas Applied Research Fellowships.

With a mandate to develop a better skilled Australia and to foster an environment to innovate, this savvy group of changemakers has provided Fellowships to some of Australia's brightest stars across several sectors including food and agri-business, building and construction, textiles, art and design, conservation and restoration, and technology.

Fellowship recipient and one of Australia's most respected chefs and restaurateurs, Guy Grossi is recognised as one of Australia's leading authorities on Italian food. Guy is committed to training the next generation within his restaurants and through organisations such as HEAT (Hospitality Employment and Training), passing on his passion for cooking, sourcing ingredients that sustain heritage and artisan crafts, all of which support the ISS Institute's vision to create and deliver positive social, vocational and economic impact.

Similarly, 2008 Fellowship recipient Michael Dal Zotto has pioneered Prosecco winemaking in Australia and as a direct result of the Fellowship, the Dal Zotto family has employed dozens of staff across all facets of the wine production and distribution process. The knowledge and leadership provided by the Dal Zotto family has positioned King Valley as the industry leader in Prosecco production in Australia.

Crediting the ISS Institute with being instrumental to their success, Michael Dal Zotto said "There is no doubt that the Fellowship has given the family credibility and the ability to grow as a business. When we released Australia's first Prosecco in 2004, we released 375 dozen, in 2019 we produced more than 51,000 dozen."

Inducted into the Australian Millinery Hall of Fame, 2003 Fellowship recipient Peter Jago is a renowned name on the Spring Racing Carnival circuit and a passionate advocate of the "genius" of the late Sir James Gobbo, "...without his vision there would have been great gaps in the Applied Arts sectors including landscaping, stonemasonry, stain glass, upholstery, gilding and of course millinery."

In a global first, the Fellowship catalysed the development in October 2021 of a Fermentation Hub at Legana in Northern Tasmania, which houses 1800 square metres to ferment food, beverages and even green energy. Spear-headed by 2015 Fellowship recipient Tom Lewis, FermenTasmania was awarded \$7.5 million by the Australian Government to build the Hub, supporting the creation of 20 new jobs, with this number expected to grow.

Driving positive social change and inclusivity for people with disabilities, 2017 Fellowship recipient Jan Davis runs a program out of Holmesglen TAFE which helps students aged 16 to 19 years with mild intellectual disabilities or learning difficulties prepare for work. In partnership with Royal Children's Hospital, students complete three nine-week work placements at the hospital as part of the course. The first ten students completed their certificates in 2019 and thanks to Jan's innovation, all ten found jobs, with two employed by Royal Children's Hospital.

"My ISS research fellowship provided me with the opportunity to make significant and life-long changes to young people with disability in the world of study and employment," Jan Davis.

As it looks to the future, the Institute will continue to build on Sir James' legacy, with plans to grow the number of Fellowships available. They are currently working with IGEA (Interactive Games & Entertainment Association) to develop and fund an international Videogame Fellowship, which will assist in closing the skills gap at a senior level in the Australian videogame industry, ensuring Australia is not left behind in the fastest-growing creative industry in the world.

Its work has also had a sustained and positive impact to the Australian economy. In 2019 Swinburne University's Centre for Social Impact competed and published an evaluation of the Institute's work and contribution. The report found that 95% of Fellows continue to apply their Fellowship learnings in their current roles, that all entered the Fellowship with the intention to share the knowledge and skills they gained and that the Fellowship program has made a vital contribution to a number of industry sectors that have few or no accredited courses in Australia.

The work of the ISS Institute and its recipients has ensured that many heritage or artisan skills that are not supported by formal, professional or tertiary qualifications in Australia, including vocations such as heritage locksmithing or taxidermy, have not died out.

Conscious of the apparent lack of value and support of various trades and apprenticeships in Australia, particularly for young people looking to enter the workforce, Sir James was determined to address the gap between skills and application that existed in Australia at the time, "The role for ISS Institute was all the more critical since it was the only one source in Australia of scholarship assistance specifically directed to assist artisans, tradespeople and those who were graduates of or teachers at TAFE colleges," Sir James Gobbo.

The ISS Institute is a non-for-profit organisation and is listed by name as a Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) from 12 Aug 2005 (It is covered by Item 1 of the table in section 30-15 of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997).

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