

Media Release

NECA welcomes Queensland Government extension of free TAFE apprenticeships for under 25s

The **National Electrical and Communications Association (NECA)** welcomes the Queensland Government's announcement to extend the free TAFE apprenticeships for under 21s programs to include under 25s. This new \$21 million funding announcement is an investment in the future careers of more young Queenslanders.

The delivery of this election promise will be a positive step forward in the economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, which hit young people particularly hard. This free apprenticeship for under 25s initiative will ensure young people find decent and secure jobs in high-demand industries, like electrical contracting.

Oliver Judd, Executive Officer and NECA Spokesperson said:

"We welcome this leg up for young people, who have been hit very hard by the pandemic, but now have an opportunity to access a rewarding career like electrical contracting.

"In many industries the workforce has shrunk, however construction is accelerating back to pre-COVID levels faster than we expected. There are high-demand industries that need new apprentices now and will continue to need them in coming years. Anything we can do to help young people find safe and well-paid jobs, we believe is a success.

"The Queensland Government is showing strong initiative on this issue. We call on the other states to implement similar programs as soon as possible, which also recognise the important role played by group training organisations. The faster we can get more young people into work, the faster our nationwide recovery will be."

NECA is calling on all state governments to implement similar free apprenticeship funding schemes to increase the accessibility of trades to young people, especially those who are leaving or have recently left high school.

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