



## Media release

### **Jobs and Skills Summit: Opportunity and access can drive productivity**

Adult Learning Australia, the national peak body for not-for-profit adult community education, has outlined key priorities for the federal government in its Jobs and Skills Summit Statement.

“Our statement identifies actions for the federal government that target educational disadvantage and give people who are marginalised access to high quality education programs and meaningful work,” says Jenny Macaffer, CEO of Adult Learning Australia (ALA).

ALA’s Statement brings an “equity lens” to employment and to skills shortages. It identifies solutions that community education can bring to the systemic problems that compound disadvantage for people with poor access to training and workforce opportunities.

“People who have left school early, who have literacy or language issues or a disability, who lack confidence or have been unemployed for a long time need support to develop the skills they need to participate in training or work.

“Adult community education has a strong track record in working with disadvantaged Australians, both in vocational education and training and through its pathway programs that support people to develop the foundation skills and confidence they need to find a job or undertake formal study. For many adults who are hesitant about joining an accredited course, non-formal community-based classes offer a safe and supportive introduction and are a vital pathway to formal education and work.

“Australia needs a long-term approach to lifelong learning that recognises the relationship between informal, non-formal and formal learning, particularly for educationally disadvantaged Australians, using a whole of government approach and placing the learner at the centre.”

“We believe the Summit presents an opportunity for Australia to show leadership by committing to an education and training sector that is flexible enough to meet everyone’s needs and abilities, and has the potential to transform our future.”

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**ENDS**

**About ALA:** Adult Learning Australia is the national peak body for adult and community education with over 1,400 members representing all states and territories of Australia.

**Media contact:** Visit [www.ala.asn.au](http://www.ala.asn.au) or call 03 9689 8623 for more information

**Statement:** <https://ala.asn.au/jobs-and-skills-summit-ace-and-equity/>

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