

Smart and Skilled

SMART AND SKILLED UPDATE – NO. 287

2 October 2026

Contents

1. Summer Skills 2026/27 – Intent to Participate	1
a. Participant eligibility	1
b. Priority industry areas	2
c. Delivery period	2
d. Communications and engagement	2
e. How to submit an Intent to Participate	2
f. Assessment of submissions	2
g. Next steps	3
h. Key dates	3
i. Further information	3
2. Early Childhood Education and Care Scholarships opening soon	3

1. SUMMER SKILLS 2026/27 – INTENT TO PARTICIPATE

The department is inviting eligible Smart and Skilled providers to submit an Intent to Participate to deliver up to 1,500 fee-free training places through approved part qualifications under the GROW Summer Skills 2026/27 initiative. The program is designed to strengthen pathways into apprenticeships, traineeships, further training and employment in areas of identified workforce need.

a. Participant eligibility

Participants must meet Smart and Skilled eligibility requirements and any additional Summer Skills requirements that apply to the approved pathway and Provider Activity Schedule (PAS).

Summer Skills is intended to support a broad range of participants, including:

- school leavers and young people considering vocational pathways
- jobseekers and people who are unemployed or at risk of unemployment
- career changers
- people living in rural or remote communities
- people with disability
- parents and carers returning to the workforce
- people requiring literacy, language, numeracy, digital or other foundation skills support
- university students reconsidering their education or career direction
- people seeking entry into priority industries
- people from groups under-represented in particular occupations or industries.

b. Priority industry areas

Funding will be available for approved part qualifications listed in the Intent to Participate form across the following priority industry areas:

- Advanced Manufacturing
- Agriculture and Agrifood
- Care and Support Economy
- Construction
- Digital and Cyber Security
- Hospitality

c. Delivery period

- Enrolment window: 26 October 2026 to 28 February 2027
- Training may commence from: Monday 9 November 2026
- All training must be completed by: 25 March 2027

d. Communications and engagement

Public communications and engagement activity will commence from 8 October 2026, with a focus on informing schools, prospective participants and parents/carers about available Summer Skills opportunities.

e. How to submit an Intent to Participate

Providers wishing to participate must complete and submit the online Intent to Participate form **by 5pm Friday 16 October 2026**.

Intent to Participate form:

https://survey.education.nsw.gov.au/jfe/form/SV_eu2GaKqe6Cqolyq

Before submitting, providers should review the information in the form and ensure they have the scope, capacity, delivery locations, participant support arrangements and delivery timeframe required for the pathway(s) requested.

Providers should submit a separate response for each approved pathway and delivery location requested.

f. Assessment of submissions

The department will assess Intent to Participate submissions against regional and industry demand, provider capability and delivery viability. Assessment will include:

- demand for the requested training in the selected region or regions
- the provider's previous performance under Smart and Skilled
- the viability of the proposed delivery, including provider capacity and the requested number of places.

Submission of an Intent to Participate does not guarantee an allocation of places or the issue of a Provider Activity Schedule (PAS).

g. Next steps

Successful providers will be issued a Summer Skills PAS setting out the approved pathway(s), units, places, delivery period and applicable conditions. Providers must accept the PAS before enrolling participants.

The department will commence issuing PASs from 26 October 2026.

h. Key dates

Date	Milestone
8 October 2026	Public communications and engagement commence
16 October 2026	Intent to Participate submissions close at 5pm
26 October 2026	The department commences issuing PASs / enrolment window opens
9 November 2026	Training may commence
28 February 2027	Enrolment window closes
25 March 2027	All training must be completed

i. Further information

For questions about Summer Skills 2026/27, please email summerskills@det.nsw.edu.au.

2. EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE SCHOLARSHIPS OPENING SOON

Applications for Round 2 of the 2026 Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) Scholarship Program are **expected to open in early October**.

Whether new to the early learning sector or already working in it, a scholarship can help applicants gain the skills and qualifications they need by reducing the cost of study.

Up to \$6,000 is available to VET applicants who are enrolled in an eligible ECEC VET qualification with a Smart and Skilled provider, **commencing their first unit of study between 1 October 2026 and 31 March 2027**.

Prepare to submit

To get ready, applicants should:

- thoroughly review the [program guidelines](#) to ensure they understand eligibility and enrolment advice requirements.
- [Log in or create a MyServiceNSW account](#), which is required to apply, and review their MyServiceNSW profile to ensure information is up to date.

Share the opportunity

A flyer is attached to help you share information about the scholarship program and a toolkit with downloadable resources will be available soon.

Additional support is available for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students and students living in regional, rural or remote NSW.

Unless otherwise directed in the information above, please refer enquiries regarding specific operational matters such as Financial Caps and programs/initiatives to your Regional Provider Support Manager.

Please contact Training Services Customer Service & Operations at TSCust.Service@det.nsw.edu.au for:

- technical support with issues such as system/information access and functionality and reporting
- further information for students or employers (unless otherwise directed).

Please note that this update is for the information of approved Smart and Skilled Providers only.