



bridging the gap.

how to tackle australia's tech skills shortage



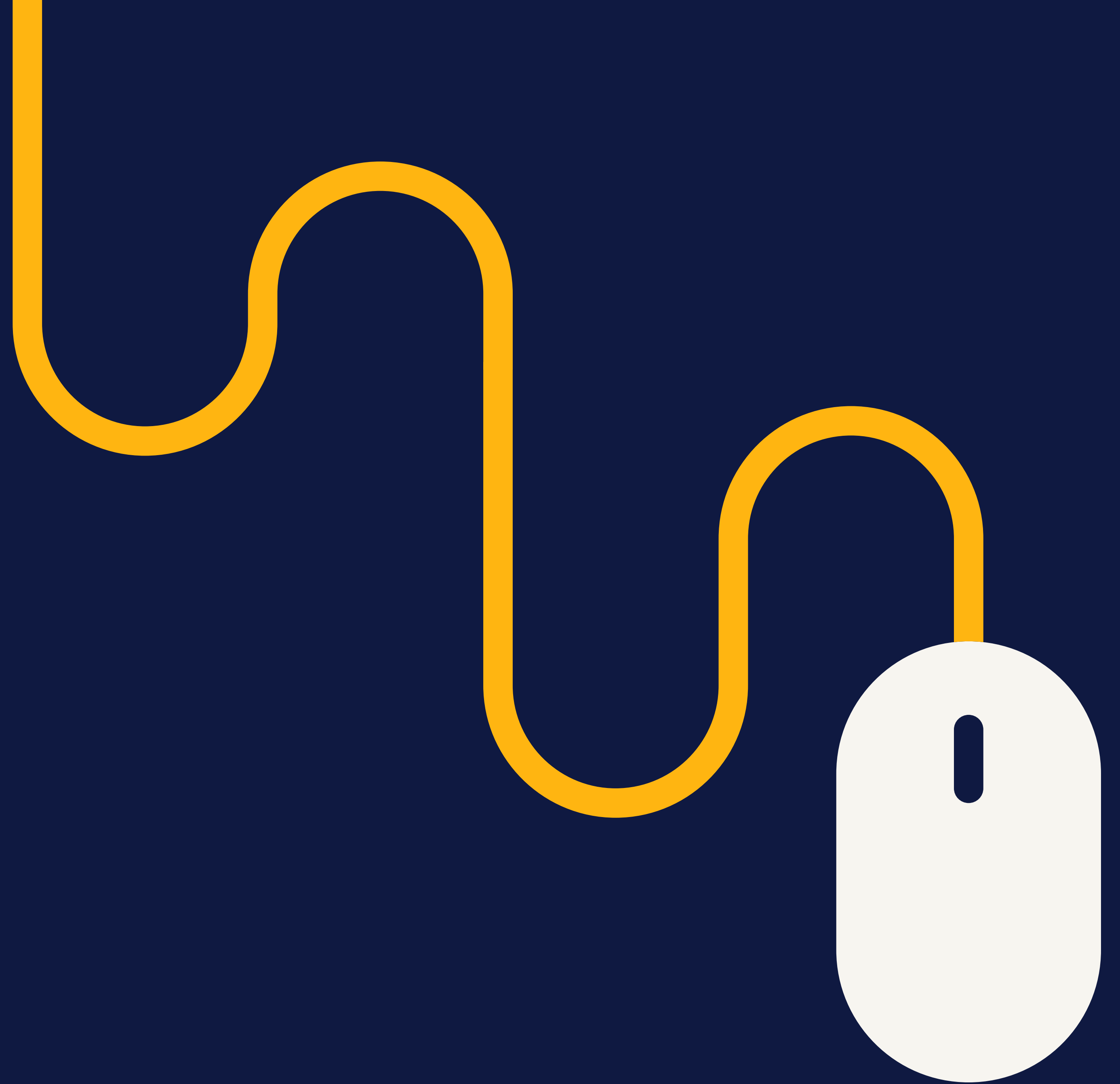
randstad
technologies.

1,014 senior leader respondents

about the survey.

In March 2020, Randstad Australia surveyed 1,014 key decision-makers involved in the technology sector hiring process about how the industry can make the sector more attractive to workers.

The ever-changing nature of coronavirus is an ongoing lesson in agility. Our new report highlights how employers can future-proof Australia's tech industry whilst also meeting the needs of talent today.



“The critical role that the tech sector plays has come into the fore as Australian workplaces rapidly adapt to new ways of working amid the global pandemic.

But as demand grows, our survey clearly shows that tech leaders feel there are gaps in how the sector attracts talent.

By focusing on what tech workers want, and collaborating with government and education providers, organisations can win the war on talent today and build a pipeline for the future.”

Alex Jones, Director Randstad Technologies



tackling the tech skills shortage.

COVID-19 has exposed the need for tech skills in Australia like never before as the sector remains integral to the nation's response to the pandemic. Our research indicates the growing demand for local tech talent will peak as borders remain closed.

As a result, organisations must focus on short term strategies that can win the war on talent today, whilst also collaborating with employers and the government to deliver a highly-skilled talent pool that meets the long term needs of the industry.

The tech sector has recently been identified, in Randstad Australia's 2020 Employer Brand Research, as the most attractive for workers.

But while that might be the case, this new survey also highlights that there are more hurdles for Australia's sector to overcome before it can be considered on par with international counterparts.

In fact, more than half (56%) of those making hiring decisions within the tech industry admit they struggle with finding candidates with the correct skillset for their roles, which is particularly the case when employers are looking for management personnel.

It reveals an urgent need for education and upskilling in the sector.

But there are ways that organisations can make themselves more appealing to employees, and there are also steps employers can take – both from a proactive and collaborative perspective – to meet the needs of Australian workers, and therefore attract the right talent.

Thankfully, the tech leaders surveyed have already expressed they are keen to focus on both short- and long-term solutions.

Three methods: diversity and inclusion initiatives, further investment into education and rallying government support will ensure the sector can attract more talent.

These strategies combined take a more holistic view to build Australia's tech skills.



drivers for

tech workers
revealed.

The top five factors tech industry employees look for when selecting a workplace.



latest technology

The key drivers that appeal to tech job seekers and employees are things that can be addressed in the short-term, especially in an environment where tech companies are now needed more than ever.



financial health

In order to drive interest in the sector on a short-term basis, tech companies need to consider realigning to position themselves as the most attractive in the sector to draw attention from tech job seekers and employees.



salary and benefits

Whilst the tech sector is considered to be Australia's most attractive, with so much uncertainty in the workforce, these five criteria, along with employer branding, will be key to keep existing employees and attract new talent.



good reputation

Tech companies should also address and promote a culture that embodies these values.



job content

call of
the tech
leaders.



The top concerns of tech industry leaders.

Australia's tech industry needs to future-proof the sector by meeting the needs of talent today.



61% of leaders feel the government doesn't do enough to promote the tech industry.

67% even feeling the government prioritises other sectors.

56% believe that education offerings in Australia aren't right for the skills they recruit.

56% think the tech sector can do a better job of working with education establishments to make tech more appealing.

The top concerns of tech industry leaders.

60% diversity benefits



56% candidate skills



63% gender balance



52% candidate attraction



60% noted that diversity, in general, would benefit the sector.

63% say stronger gender balance in the industry would make tech more appealing.

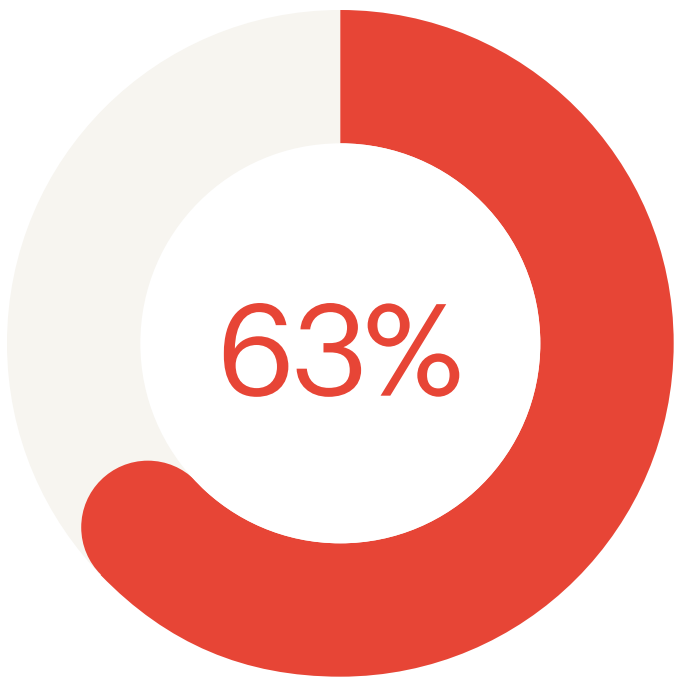
56% found that candidates didn't have the skill set needed for the roles they were recruiting and that the hardest to recruit for are management roles.

52% believe the tech industry expects good candidates to come, rather than having to search – a key reason for it falling short.

diversity is
crucial
to success.



The sector admits it has some work to do when it comes to attracting a wider pool of candidates.



gender balance

While key attractions, such as salary, reputation and latest technology are influential in driving tech workers to one business over another, diversity and inclusion in the workplace also play a significant role in attracting candidates to the tech industry.

63% of tech leaders believe a stronger gender balance would make the sector more appealing, and more than half (58%) feel men dominate the tech industry.

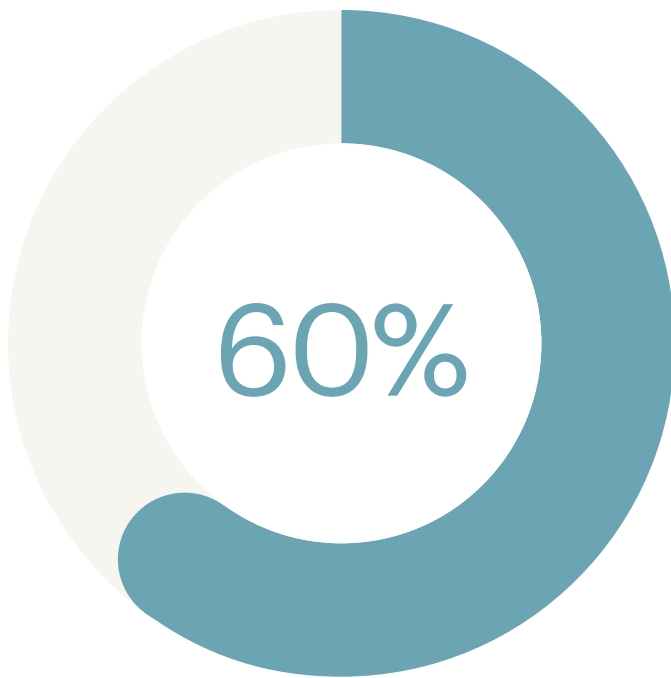
In fact, 60% noted that diversity in general (not just gender but also ethnicity, disability and sexuality) would benefit Australia's tech sector.



male dominance

As a primary factor identified by tech workers and employees, organisations in the sector must take appropriate action to build a more diverse workforce to remain front-of-mind for tech workers.

Simple measures such as explicitly stating the organisation is an equal opportunities employer on its website, and job advertisements ensure your workplace culture is as inclusive as possible.



diversity / inclusion

A further change to the organisation structure to create an inclusive culture, clear of stereotypes and gendered language is the ultimate goal.

Not only is hiring for diversity the right thing to do from a societal perspective, but it also helps draw the best talent and, in turn, helps position the organisation, and the sector as a whole, for financial and economic success.

accenture case study.



Diversity in the workplace makes good business sense – it attracts more people and creates the ideal environment for your entire workforce.

In 2018, the Harvard Business Review¹, after analysing the financial performance of venture capitalists, noted that in addition to making a business more attractive, those with inclusive cultures were also more likely to be higher performing in terms of their financial performance.

Accenture is just one example of a multinational tech company which shows how diverse businesses are able to achieve better results.

Accenture has firm initiatives that focus on delivering real and measurable diversity results with a philosophy which rests on four main pillars²: gender equality, persons with disabilities, supporting the LGBTI+ community and ethnic and racial diversity in the workplace.

Randy Wandmacher, Accenture's HR Lead for Australia and New Zealand, told The Martec³ that "the diversity of our employees is part of what makes us exceptional. We are committed to creating an inclusive and diverse workforce where people can feel comfortable and be themselves, and as a result, be productive and high performing".

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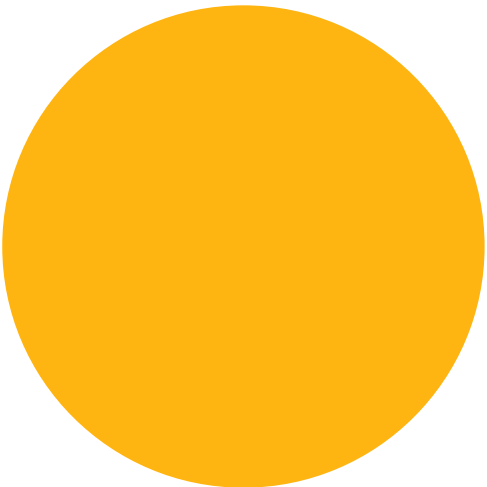
lifting the lid
on education
in tech.



Some consider education in Australia to be a barrier for recruitment and building a reliable tech workforce.



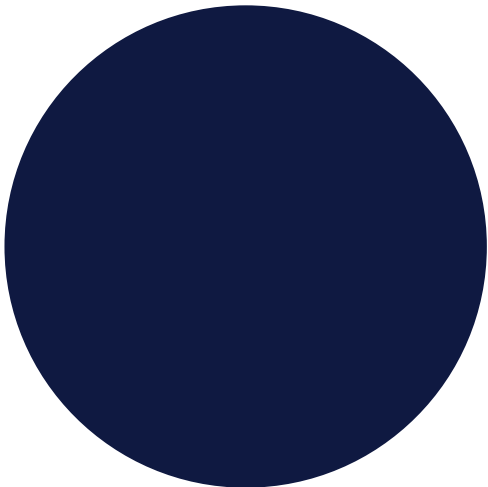
Working closer with education to make the sector more appealing is highlighted as the number one area (56%) that the Australian tech industry falls short on when looking at increasing the talent pool.



The report shows that education establishments do not prioritise technology skills. More than half (56%) of those surveyed said Australia's education system does not offer courses that give prospective talent the required skills, or even enough variety for those wishing to study in the tech space (58%).



But, Australia's education will be instrumental in bridging the gap in tech employment and addressing the skills shortage. And there are several ways those working in the industry can help.



By working closely with universities, businesses in the tech sector could assist with the writing of course structure to resolve the problem, identified by the majority surveyed, that Australia's tech courses do not teach the right skills. Employers could also work closely with universities by securing the best talent directly.



Secondly, tech employers could consider tackling the issue directly by offering opportunities such as programs or workshops, giving an employee the chance to learn the most in-demand skills. And as they progress through the business this would tackle the issue of a skills gap further up at a management level.



a secure future
in collaboration.

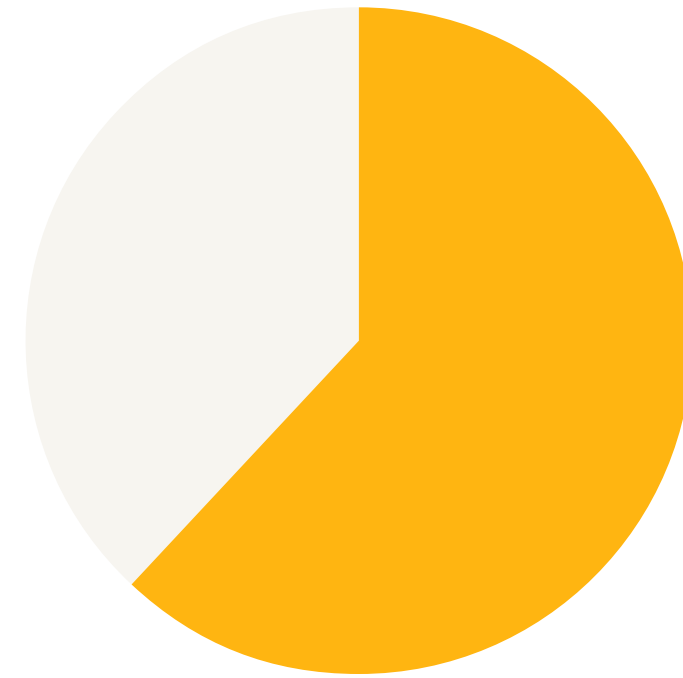
53% government relationship



Appealing to employees and working closely with education may be effective solutions to draw in more tech talent. Still, tech leaders also need to take a longer-term approach to tackle the employment gaps in the Australian industry.

Aside from listening to what employees want, working with the education sector and fostering workplace diversity, our report also highlights how the Australian tech industry expects good candidates to come, rather than having to search (52%). It also found the tech industry needs to work closely with the government to make it more appealing (53%) and better engage with talent.

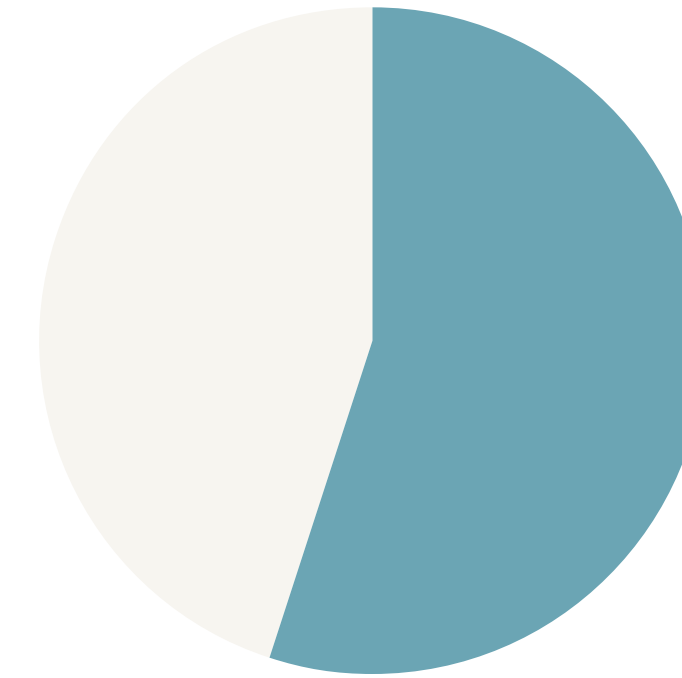
62% education disparity



Thankfully, the report highlights that the industry is already starting to identify long-term solutions and knows it needs to rely less on looking inward but instead focus on collaborating with other sectors. It will build the required skills and talent pool needed to increase Australia's tech force for the future.

The recent news that the government plans to reduce the cost of IT courses by 20% may help entice talent into the sector. But even when pupils show interest, 62% of those surveyed feel that Australia's educational establishments don't stand up to their international counterparts when it comes to tech courses.

55% too humble



Australian tech workers, employees and employers should all work together to rally government support and bring the tech sector in line with overseas standards.

The Australian tech industry could also do more to promote the great work it does globally – 55% of those surveyed said Australia's tech industry is too humble when talking about successes.

The reality is, without industry self-promotion and government support, Australia will not be perceived as a leading tech hub, and so talent will continue to go elsewhere. Local tech organisations need to do more to promote the tech sector here in Australia as a whole and in turn, retain its skilled workers.

amazon case study.

2

Many tech companies overseas are already making headway in addressing the gap in tech talent.

A McKinsey report⁴ on how regions can pinpoint the strengths and gaps in their pool of talent uses Amazon's search for its HQ2 location as an example of how businesses can bridge the gap.

When the HQ2 bid was announced, the Capital Region (which encompasses Baltimore; Richmond and northern Virginia; and Washington, DC) had already begun to implement programs to deepen its talent pool to ensure there were enough workers with the right skills to satisfy demand for tech talent.

To better understand the talent landscape, McKinsey partnered with the Greater Washington Partnership to conduct in-depth research into the area to get visibility of talent imbalances and common trends, as well as new insights into how leaders can deal with them effectively.

The McKinsey report also advised that other metropolitan areas shouldn't wait for a similar trigger to act.

"First, metro areas should evaluate supply imbalances for their tech talent pool. Next, they should prioritise the available tools based on their potential to address talent gaps. Leaders can—and must—convene partners from the government and academia to collaborate on efforts to produce, attract, and retain talented workers," the report said.

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next steps.

It's clear that leaders in tech want the long-term focus to be on fostering education, training and diversity initiatives and that with the right tools and approaches, the sector as a whole can tackle its tech skills shortage.

In the meantime, to engage top-level talent today, leaders can look to the findings within the Randstad [Employer Brand Research](#) to build their public image and close the gap between the needs and wants of Australia's tech workers. We can mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on the tech skills gap with these building blocks in place.

If you would like to discuss the relative attractiveness of your sector or find out how you can use the research insights to drive more effective workforce strategies in your organisation, [visit our website](#).

Alternatively, you can request a visit by reaching out to your local Randstad Account Manager or emailing us at employerbranding@randstad.com.au





bridging the gap.



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#newways