





## Outcome 1: Free and open international trade in services

### The Government:

- Released the [Digital Economy Strategy](#) on how Australia will secure its future as a modern and leading digital economy and society by 2030.
- Supported the development of two OECD reports that help policymakers identify and respond to emerging challenges arising from [digitalisation](#).
- Participated in the World Intellectual Property Organization's 41st Standing Committee on [Copyright](#) and Related Rights meeting.
- Engaged Singapore on the [FinTech Bridge](#) to deepen collaboration and improve access to Singaporean market for Australian Fintech firms.
- Built capacity in APEC economies to adopt best-practice in regulating the [fintech and regtech sectors](#).
- Committed to finalise the [corporate collective investment vehicle](#) (CCIV) regime with a revised commencement date of 1 July 2022.
- Agreed-in-principle professional services provisions in the [Australia-UK FTA](#) that delivers long-term benefits for UK and Australian professionals through collaboration between accreditation and regulatory bodies.
- Provisionally closed the mutual recognition and professional services chapter of the [Australia-EU FTA](#), which includes a framework for the mutual recognition of professional services qualifications.
- Agreed with Malaysia to consider establishing a professional services subsidiary body to the [Malaysia-Australia FTA Joint Commission](#).
- Funded Australian participation in international meetings that [shape international standards](#) in priority areas, including critical technologies and minerals.
- Actioned seven of the 12 action items of the [National Blockchain Roadmap](#) focused on privacy, security and interoperability of blockchain systems in international standards.
- Funded technical cooperation between APEC economies through the \$23 million [APEC Economic Diplomacy Fund](#).
- Supported the [WTO Services Domestic Regulation](#) Joint Statement Initiative.
- Funded [OECD reporting](#) on progress made on services domestic regulation reform in the APEC region and the potential benefits for APEC SMEs from further reforms.
- Worked with other members of the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership ([CPTPP](#)) to better understand technical barriers to trade and identify future priority areas to address.

### Industry:

- Actively [advocated](#) services outcomes in Australia's interest in the WTO, G20, APEC and CPTPP through international conferences and events.
- Organised high-profile events and co-authored policy briefs on [digital trade](#) issues.
- Worked with copyrights-holders and partners on expanding multi-territory [digital licensing](#) and to identify potential barriers to entry, or diminution of IP rights, in export markets.
- Identified areas for increased Australian participation and supported industry experts to participate on [international standards](#) committees in emerging sectors.



- Worked to shape [global ICT standards](#), including on blockchain, artificial intelligence, and cybersecurity.
- Engaged regional and international standards organisations to [build capacity and harmonise standards](#) in the Indo-Pacific region.

### The Government and Industry jointly:

- Expanded [Australia's mutual recognition agreements](#) of professional qualifications, licensing or registration, including with Singapore for accountants.
- Developed an [inventory of mutual recognition agreements](#) on licensing, qualifications and accreditation of professionals and skilled service providers in APEC economies.
- Promoted Indigenous business inclusion across APEC economies, including improved access to the digital economy, at the [APEC Business Advisory Council Indigenous Business Leaders' Dialogue](#).

## Improving professional mobility in the Asia-Pacific region

Australia funded the creation of an online inventory to enhance transparency and improve access to information about mutual recognition agreements among Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) economies.

The inventory helps individual service providers, firms, industry bodies and governments better understand where mutual recognition exists for specific professions, and where there are gaps. The purpose is to help exporters tap into these arrangements where they exist, and pinpoint areas to focus on new arrangements for the future.

More details are available [here](#).





## Outcome 2: Best-practice systems and rules across Australia

### The Government:

- Removed out-dated regulatory barriers and simplified doing business with Government as part of the [Digital Business Plan](#) announced in the 2020-21 Federal Budget.
- Commenced the next phase of the new [whole-of-government business registry platform](#) with the appointment of the Commonwealth Registrar of the Australian Business Registry Services.
- Prepared a discussion paper for release this year on the [APEC Cross Border Privacy Rules](#) to inform industry consultations on implementing the system domestically.
- Commenced the [New Investment Engagement Service](#) to provide information to foreign businesses planning significant new investments in Australia.
- Committed \$11.6 million toward delivering [a significant expansion of Australia's bilateral tax treaty network](#) to reduce the tax burden on cross-border operations and give greater certainty.
- Passed legislative amendments to improve the [national regulation of offshore resources](#) and concluded reviews of Commonwealth regulators for offshore petroleum operations and greenhouse gas storage.

### Industry:

- Gathered perspectives on a potential Australian industry position on [digital standards](#).
- Drafted an [industry position paper](#) on digital trade for consideration at the 2021 Digital Trade Forum, covering several sub-topics relevant to digital trade and an SME case study.

### The Government and Industry jointly:

- Discussed digital business policy issues as the [Digital Technology Taskforce](#) defines pathways and targets to ensure Australia is a leading digital economy under Australia's Digital Economy Strategy.

## New Investment Engagement Service

The Australian Tax Office (ATO) has introduced a New Investment Engagement Service (NIES) for businesses planning significant new investments in Australia.

The NIES offers investors an opportunity to engage with specialists prior to the execution of significant commercial transactions. The purpose of the NIES is for the ATO to further support business by providing tailored guidance on specific tax issues within a short timeframe.

The NIES is part of the 2021 Budget initiatives to encourage global businesses to invest in and relocate to Australia. More details are available via [here](#).





## Outcome 3: World-class skills and talent

### The Government:

- Worked with the states and territories to progress the implementation of all the recommendations of the [Australian Qualifications Framework Review](#).
- Committed an additional \$500 million, matched by states and territories, to expand the [JobTrainer Fund](#) by up to 163,000 places and extend the program to 31 December 2022.
- Provided scholarships to train up to 468 specialists in artificial intelligence and other emerging technologies through the [Next Generation Graduates Programs](#).
- Established the [Cyber Security Skills Partnerships Innovation Fund](#) to promote career pathways, training, apprenticeships and internships that develop the cyber security skills Australia needs.

## Next Generation Graduates programs

The Government is co-funding scholarships with universities and industry under the Next Generation Graduates Programs.

The Next Generation Artificial Intelligence (AI) Graduates Program is being delivered under the AI Action Plan, a component of the Digital Economy Strategy. The Program will attract and train up to 234 home-grown, job-ready AI specialists through competitive national scholarships.

The Next Generation Emerging Technology Graduates Program is also being delivered as part of the Digital Economy Strategy. The Program will attract and train up to 234 additional home-grown, job-ready specialists in emerging technologies other than AI, such as robotics, cyber security, quantum computing, blockchain and data through competitive national scholarships.

More details are available [here](#).





## Outcome 4: Cutting-edge and internationalised services

### The Government:

- Supported METS Ignited hold [accelerator programs](#) for mining technologies and services start-ups, including the expansion of the Qld-based Quantum TC Business Accelerator program.
- Supported AustCyber to establish [Cyber Security Innovation Nodes](#) in WA, SA, Tas, ACT and NSW, each specialising in key priority capabilities related to State or Territory strengths.
- Extended the [temporary MBS telehealth arrangement](#) to the end of 2021.
- Facilitated financial innovation, with six firms entering the [enhanced regulatory sandbox](#) by 1 July 2021 allowing them to more easily test new financial services or credit activities.
- Sold 358 of 26 GHZ mmWave [spectrum](#) at auction to accelerate the deployment of 5G infrastructure.
- Commissioned a [review of the regulatory architecture if the payments system](#), which has now been submitted to government.
- Launched Australia's [Artificial Intelligence Action Plan](#), including \$124 million in funding to promote investment, support competitiveness, create jobs and improve lives.
- Developed 120+ [profiles of high priority markets](#), which include services to help exporters.
- Announced plans to provide [Export Finance Australia with new equity investment power](#), giving it more flexibility to support export-linked projects.
- Changed the [Export Market Development Grants](#) scheme to a forward-looking grant program, with 2021-22 applications open from 16 August to 30 November 2021.
- Launched the [Australia-Malaysia Tech Exchange](#) to share information and facilitate cooperation, including on e-invoicing and personal data protection.

### Industry:

- Supported [Indigenous businesses](#) to grow their business through international trade and investment, including new collaboration with Canada and through APEC projects.

### The Government and Industry jointly:

- Assisted SMEs to adopt digital technologies via the Government's \$6.9 million in funding to 14 trusted organisations to deliver the [Cyber Security Business Connect and Protect Program](#).
- Co-delivered export assistance to Australian fintech and other [born global tech exporters](#).
- Hosted webinars to promote Australian services in key markets during COVID-19, including on [Trans-Tasman Fintech Opportunities](#).



## Export Market Development Grants

Austrade's Export Market Development Grants (EMDG) scheme changed to a forward-looking grant program on 1 July 2021.

The program helps Australian businesses grow their exports in international markets by encouraging small to medium enterprises to market and promote their goods and services globally. EMDG now provides greater funding certainty to grantees, through a simplified and streamlined program, so they can plan their promotional activities with confidence.

Applications for the 2021-22 EMDG grant round open on 16 August 2021 and close on 30 November 2021. More details are available via [here](#).



*The Services Exports Action Plan is Australia's first coordinated national action agenda to boost services export performance. It signals official recognition that Australia is a services economy and that all Australian industries are dependent on knowledge-intensive services inputs for their own competitiveness.*

**James Angus Bond**  
President, Australian Services Roundtable





## Outcome 5: Information-driven policies and business strategies

### The Government:

- Held the inaugural [Professional Services Roundtable](#) with industry stakeholders to identify priority markets and market access issues faced by professional services exporters.
- Engaged a cross-section of Australian society on Australia's trade policies through a meeting of the [Ministerial Advisory Council on Free Trade Agreement Negotiations](#).

### Industry:

- Initiated work on a [policy brief](#) that explains to Australian businesses and the public what 'digital trade' is, and early measurements of digital trade in Asia and the Pacific.
- Jointly hosted [free trade agreement outreach](#) activities on industry interests in Australia's free trade negotiations with the United Kingdom and the European Union.
- Made a submission to the Government's Media Reform Green Paper highlighting the important cultural and economic contribution the [screen sector](#) makes to Australia.

### The Government and Industry jointly:

- Piloted a six-part [Global Market Insights Seminar Series](#) to share insights from Australia's global diplomatic and trade commission network.

## Sharing Market Intelligence

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) has strengthened the Government's extensive engagement with business and industry, at home and overseas. More than 985 significant domestic consultations were held with business stakeholders in 2020-21.

DFAT, in partnership with Austrade and the Export Council of Australia piloted a six-part Global Market Insight Seminar Series, hosting 1149 participants in the first six months of the 2021 calendar year.

The department continues to meet fortnightly with peak industry bodies and business to share insights from the global network to help business manage disruptions and to understand market risks and emerging opportunities.







## Organisations implementing the Action Plan

- Attorney-General's Department, Australian Government
- Australian Bureau of Statistics, Australian Government
- Australasian Performing Right Association and Australasian Mechanical Copyright Owners Society [APRA AMCOS]
- Australian Services Roundtable [ASR]
- Australian Trade and Investment Commission [Austrade], Australian Government
- Department of Education, Skills and Employment, Australian Government
- Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australian Government
- Department of Health, Australian Government
- Department of Home Affairs, Australian Government
- Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources, Australian Government
- Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications, Australian Government
- Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, Australian Government
- Department of the Treasury, Australian Government
- Indigenous Network for Investment Trade and Export (IGNITE)
- Screen Producers Australia
- Standards Australia

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### Want to get involved?

Contact us <https://www.services-exports.gov.au/contact>

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