

Celebrating success in building capability across the building and construction sector

In the first full year of implementing its strategy, the Building and Construction Training Fund (BCTF) has awarded over 55 scholarships to tradespeople completing advanced trade-related study and provided governance training for over 100 directors from its member constituency.

BCTF is an umbrella association that represents 18 building and construction trade association members, which is focused on building capability across the industry by playing a lead role in advocacy around trade training as well as supporting access to ongoing development opportunities.

BCTF Chief Executive Grant Florence, says an organisation focused on capability-building beyond initial trade training, BCTF helps bridge an existing gap in the sector especially given the uncertainties from further reform of vocational education.

“Supporting tradies and other professionals in the construction sector to do advanced study not only helps lift standards across the sector but is also one of the ways that we can retain valuable experience in the industry, by helping them develop and potentially progress into new roles.

“Similarly, the governance training that we’ve been providing helps to build leadership skills in-house, ensuring that Boards have the ability to think strategically about the future of the industry,” says Mr Florence.

In 2024, BCTF has invested over \$300,000.⁰⁰ in its members’ governance training and scholarships for individuals undertaking NZQA Level Four or above qualifications in specialist construction in a range of areas, such as Building Information Modelling, Civil Engineering, Architecture, Kitchen Design and Construction Law.

In addition, BCTF has also supported initiatives to share best practice, such as developing best practice guidelines, and commenced a longer-term project to identify and map construction career pathways as an input to developing solutions to retain skilled tradespeople in the industry.

“We’re doing what we can as an industry, but it’s also critical that the Government gets the latest round of vocational education and training reform right. We provided our feedback on the Government’s proposal for reform earlier in the year, sharing our view that the reform proposed does not go far enough to ensure that vocational education is truly industry-led to drive improved outcomes.

“This latest round of reform presents an opportunity to get things right, so BCTF is committed to ongoing engagement with Government to ensure the voice of industry, and ultimately learners in our sector, is heard,” says Mr Florence.

In this context, BCTF would welcome further opportunities to engage with Government on proposed VET reform prior to any decisions being made.

ENDS

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Additional information

In 2024, BCTF has:

- Awarded over 55 scholarships to individual learners to undertake study related to their trade, through \$160,000+ in scholarships.
- Provided Not-for-Profit governance training to over 100 of the board members of the organisations members to support capability building in the wider construction and building sector.
- Supported the development of best practice guidelines for the ceilings and cladding sector, and the tiling sector in New Zealand.
- Contributed to the ongoing *Construction Careers Pathway Development* project, in partnership with the NZ Institute of Building and University of Canterbury, to develop career pathways to help reduce the number of people leaving the industry by illustrating future opportunities. The project also identifies new roles and careers that could emerge as a result of technological development.
- Supported education and training activities at association members' annual conferences and symposiums.
- Confirmed its support of ongoing Health and Safety practices and procedures for association members.
- Provided an industry-wide response to the proposal for Vocational Education Reform.