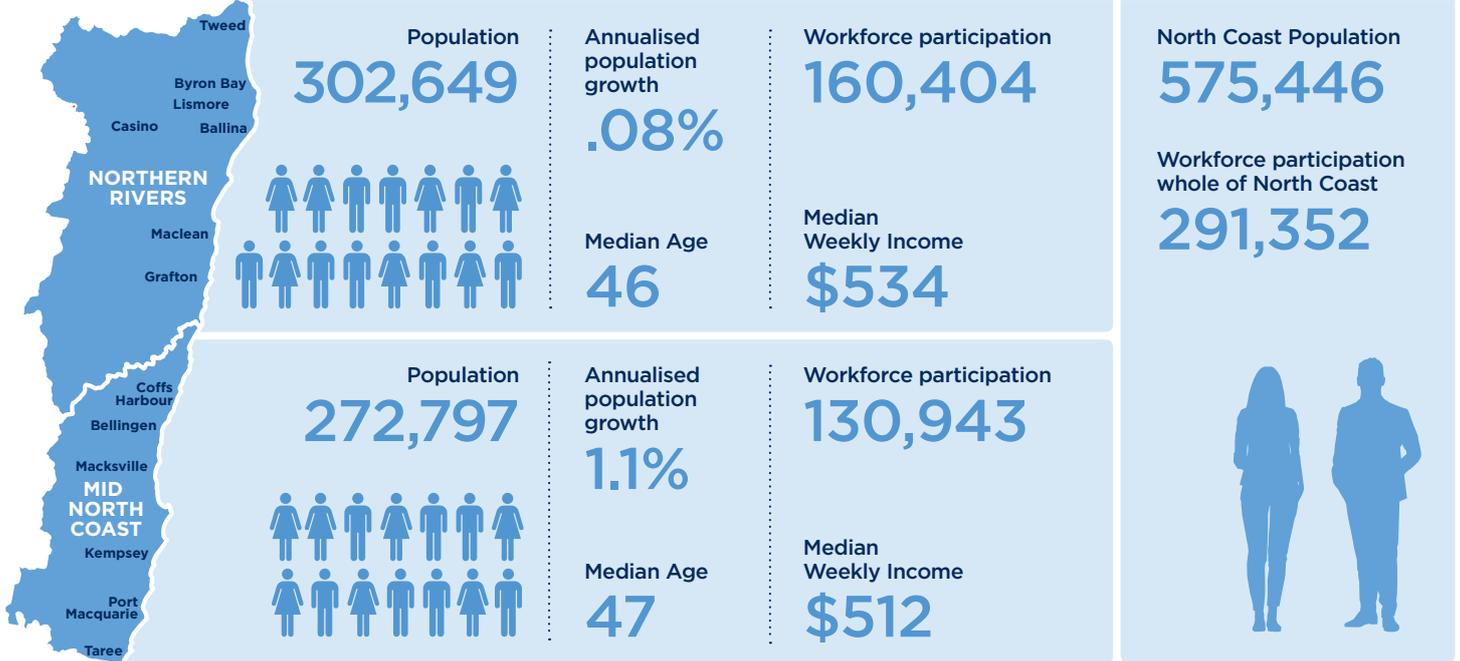


# 2019 North Coast Skills Snapshot

A collaboration between RDA Mid North Coast and RDA Northern Rivers | December 2019

## POPULATION & LABOUR FORCE



## MAJOR EMPLOYERS



## BUSINESS COUNT



## WHAT ARE THE SKILLS GAPS?

### TODAY

Top four identified skills in demand now

management  
marketing technology  
industry specific skills

### IN 10 YEARS

Most commonly identified skills needed for the future decade

industry knowledge  
technology soft skills  
marketing

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Relevant and workplace friendly training to upskill existing staff

Soft skills training for new industry entrants

Support for employers and industry groups to form workforce development plans

Better linkages for employers to labour markets



## SKILLS SNAPSHOT: WHO RESPONDED?

The North Coast Skills Audit survey was available for nine weeks in 2019. There were 175 responses in total; 55 from the Northern Rivers and 113 from the Mid North Coast a further 7 were invalid or out of region.



\* Includes Tourism & Hospitality and Accommodation & Food Services  
 \*\* Includes Health, Aged Care, Disabilities and Community Services

### WORKFORCE SIZE



58% employ 1-10 people  
 21% employ 11-50 people  
 20% employ 51+

### ANNUAL TURNOVER



25% \$2M+  
 27% \$500K-\$2M  
 14% \$200k-\$500K  
 14% less than \$50K

**45%**

of respondents have a highly casualised workforce with over 50% working casually or part time

**29%**

utilise volunteers (including family, work experience and student placements) in their business

## FUTURE BUSINESS CONFIDENCE

Over the next decade, businesses indicated they were very likely or certain to introduce the following:

**61%**  
 felt very likely / certain to introduce new improved methods and processes

**54%**  
 Innovating in house

**52%**  
 new products

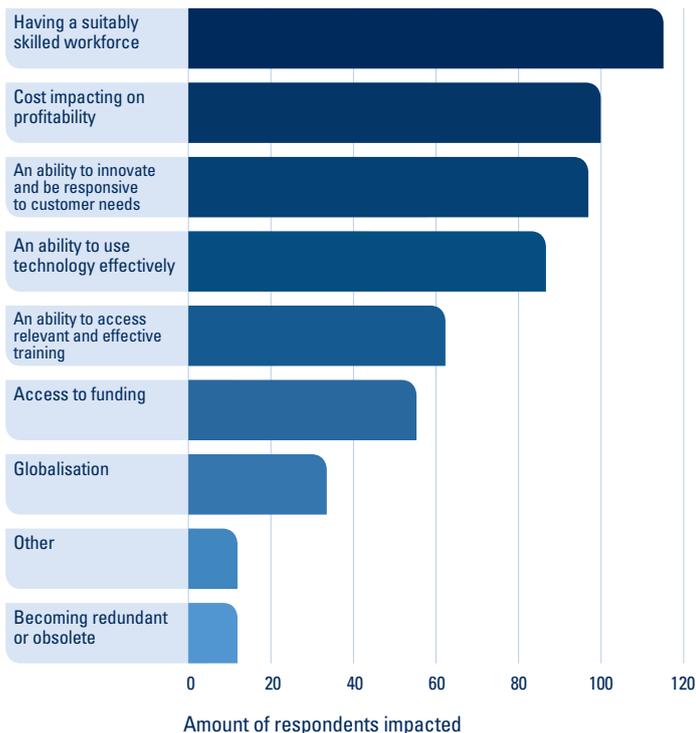
**51%**  
 marketing or organisational innovation

**46%**  
 of respondents felt likely to collaborate with others for innovative business purposes

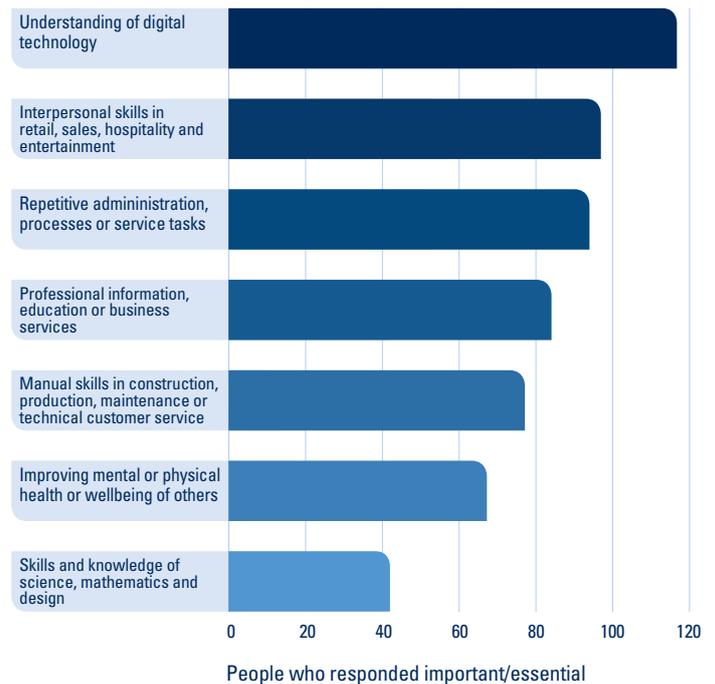
“Skills surveys identify current issues and support good business decisions for future employment in our region.”



## Factors impacting business in next five years



## Factors supporting business in next five years



## FINDING STAFF

77% of respondents recruited from the local area

“We use a combination - in the past traditional media - we are now finding that social media can be effective.”



**24%**  
rely on word of mouth



**22%**  
advertise through media



**13%**  
networking



**10%**  
social media



**4%**  
recruitment agency



**4%**  
job service

## CHALLENGES TO GET SKILLED STAFF



Of all survey respondents, the following challenges were experienced in seeking skilled staff:

**54%**  
lack of available skills in the region

**45%**  
location (remoteness)

**48%**  
Small population base

**41%**  
attitude towards employment from employees / prospective employees

**34%**  
competition from out of the region

## ADDRESSING SKILLS GAPS

Businesses overcome skills gaps in their workplace by:



**65%**  
skill up existing staff

**52%**  
mentor existing staff

**39%**  
employ new staff

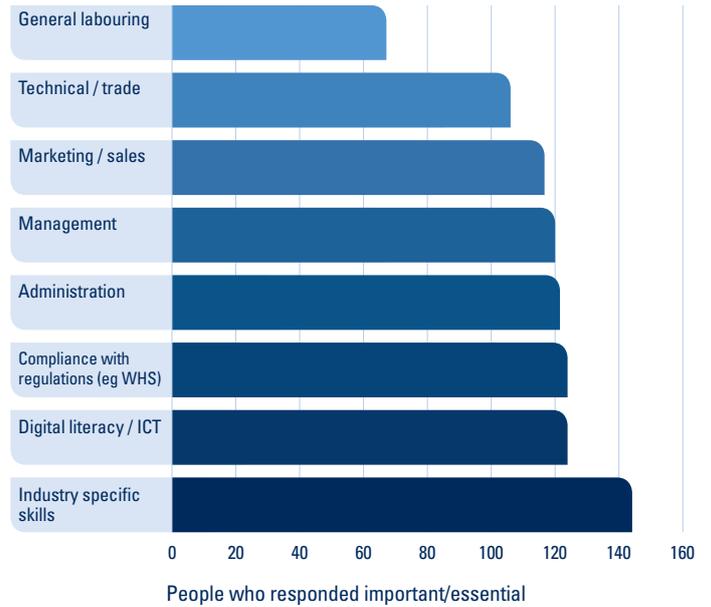
**31%**  
have a workforce development plan

**29%**  
sub-contract out

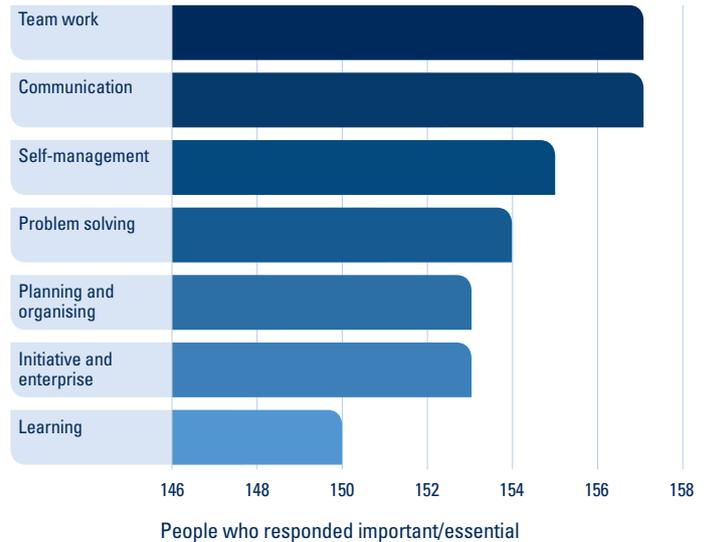
**23%**  
hire casual staff

## SKILLS FOR THE FUTURE

Important skills for business in the next 5 years



Important soft skills for business in the next 5 years



## TRAINING OPTIONS

Businesses are most likely to utilise the following education and training options to ensure current workforce needs are met.



**24%**  
prefer in-house training

**21%**  
apprenticeships/ traineeships

**12%**  
short courses

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Industry is often the last proponent to be included in a conversation about employment. Employers need to be engaged at the local level using established industry networks, RDAs and other service providers. 60% of businesses in the Mid North Coast and a further 62% in the Northern Rivers are solopreneurs. These businesses require additional support to achieve a sustainable business model and then to grow.

