



**Professional  
Scientists  
Australia**

# A WORKFORCE PLAN FOR SCIENCE

*One of the main reasons we exist is to help you advance your career as part of the STEM workforce.*

We know you want to make a contribution – to make a difference – whether it's in a small business, in a larger corporation, in commonwealth, state-funded or local government organisations, in a publicly-funded science agency, in a non-for-profit, in research or your own entrepreneurial venture.

But the reality for scientists – whether you have an undergraduate degree, a Masters or a PhD – is that with the changing landscape of work expectations in what are often volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous work environments, scientists need to update their skills to keep up. If you're not upgrading and broadening your skills, you're not advancing – you're potentially treading water or going backwards.



As new software, new practices, new ways of working and new fields of specialist expertise emerge, the skills you were originally trained in when qualifying can become outdated - the gap between your science qualification and the skills needed in the contemporary STEM workforce can widen. Continuing Professional Development (CPD) can help bridge this gap.

Engaging in CPD demonstrates your commitment to keeping your skills current and provides a basis for career advancement. Skills development adds to your transferable skill portfolio, enhances your career options, keeps you motivated and allows you to work smarter.

We know that employers seek these skills but often struggle to find them – and in some cases, don't see investment in staff CPD as a priority. In our latest Scientists survey, 45% of respondents said there was insufficient skills development in their workplace over the previous 12 months.

The ACOLA report Skills and capabilities for Australian enterprise innovation found that Australia's mixed track record in innovation is largely due to "a lack of access to the appropriate mix of technical and non-technical skills, which include entrepreneurial, business, operational, marketing and commercialisation skills."

It's part of our role to advocate for the need for such skills development in the contemporary STEM workforce and to be part of helping deliver the right mix of technical and non-technical skills to you.

**The aims of our CPD program are to:**

- provide informal CPD to support formal accreditation requirements where they're in place;
- support the development of transferable enterprise or soft skills alongside technical skills;
- help bridge the gap between your formal education and the skills you need to progress in your career in today's workforce; and
- allow members to differentiate themselves in the professional employment market.

We are strongly committed to helping you acquire the right mix of broader skills and capabilities to be as effective as possible in your particular operating environment – and to career pathways for STEM professionals rather than just skills acquisition. Professionals who strengthen their transferable enterprise skills beyond their technical knowledge are making one of the best investments they can in their professional future – these skills never date, can't be automated by a robot, are in high demand by employers and will stand you in good stead for the rest of your career.