

MEDIA RELEASE

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Master Builders ACT welcomes Labor's promise to expand try-a-trade program for young women

Master Builders ACT welcomes ACT Labor's recent announcement to double the "try a trade" program in ACT public schools if they are re-elected on 19 October.

Master Builders ACT CEO Anna Neelagama said "We welcome any initiative to attract more young women to building and construction. Diversifying the workforce is essential to addressing our ongoing builder and trade shortages."

"There is a chronic skills shortage across every single trade in the ACT and nationwide. Currently, women make up just 13.6 per cent of Australia's construction industry workforce, and only 3.7 per cent of them are 'on the tools'."

"We would like to see more of these kinds of initiatives from government to encourage young women into building. While Labor's plan represents a relatively modest investment in Canberra's future builder workforce, it is a welcome and positive step."

"We know that the number of people joining the industry each year is not enough to keep up with demand. There are overall significantly less young people taking up apprenticeships in building and construction, and to reverse this we need to do more to promote the value of Australian apprenticeship pathways to young people."

"We need to give young women access to unbiased careers education and information. We also need to remove the bias towards higher education so that young women have the same opportunities to pursue trade apprenticeships as their male counterparts."

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Authorised by Anna Neelagama on behalf of Master Builders Association of the ACT.

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