

AUSTRALIAN THOROUGHBRED
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT FORUM

Post Forum Workshop Summary

TOGETHER FOR RACING
OBTAIN TRAIN RETAIN

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Post Forum Workshop Summary

The inaugural Australian Workforce Development Forum was an opportunity for the breadth of the Thoroughbred Industry to come together to discuss and workshop the issues that surround obtaining, training and retaining its critical workforce.

In April 2021 Racing Australia, in conjunction with the Principal Racing Authorities, Godolphin and Thoroughbred Industry Careers under the banner of Together for Racing *International*, hosted the inaugural Australian Workforce Development Forum which was an opportunity for the breadth of the Thoroughbred Industry to come together to discuss and workshop the issues that surround obtaining, training and retaining the most important part of the industry, aside from the Thoroughbred, our people.

The theme over the two days was collaboration and participation by having the opportunity to engage with our panelists which featured some of the most powerful and independent thinkers within not only the Thoroughbred Industry but also within the world of business. A full list of presenters is available at www.togetherforracinginternational.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/development_forum.pdf

This summary captures the objectives, questions and outcomes over the two days and will form the basis of an ongoing strategy.

Racing Australia and our presenting partners thank everyone who gave their time and energy to participate.

WATCH VIDEO

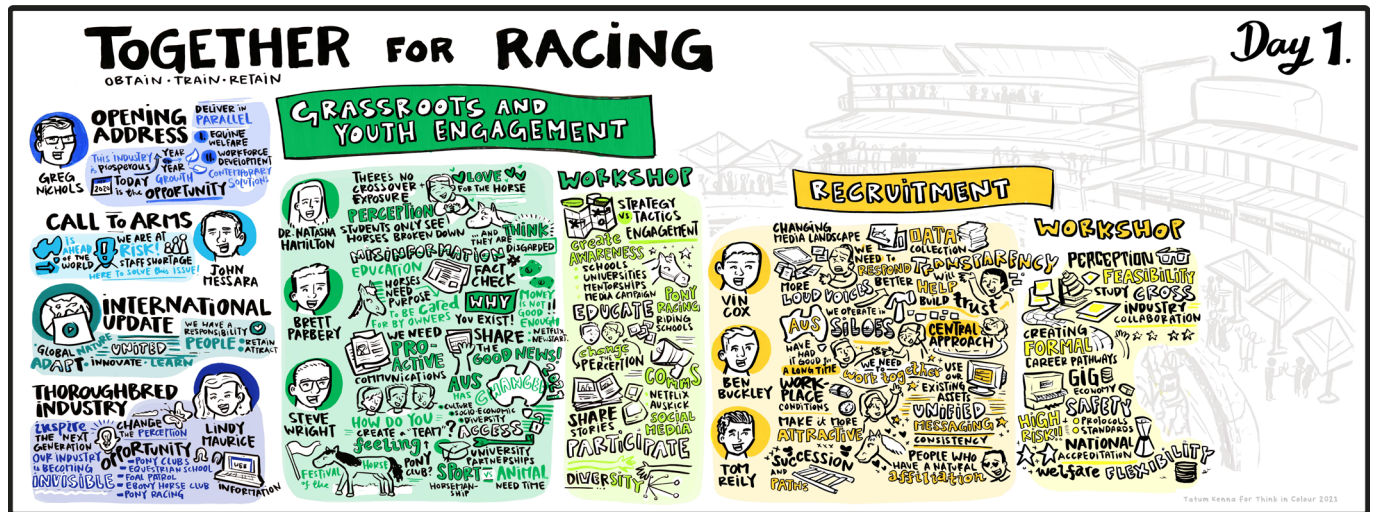


**TOGETHER
for RACING
INTERNATIONAL**

*Obtain, Train and Retain
a workforce now and
into the future.*

Day 1

Theme: Grassroots and Recruitment Youth Engagement



The Forum hosted some 100 racing and breeding stakeholders from across Australia.



Workshop 1 Grassroots

Objective:

Develop recommendations to obtain and attract people to join the Thoroughbred Industry workforce and to minimise barriers to entry.

Question:

Identify initiatives that could be implemented to increase grassroots engagement.

Forum findings

1. Access of physical horse experiences within racing precincts

- Touch and feel experiences
- Holiday programs
- Riding centres/lessons at tracks
- Free opportunities to visit, pat, and ride horses (sensory experiences)

2. Potential utilisation of existing infrastructure

- Pony Racing
- Racing to School Concept or similar
- Hosting high level (FEI) equestrian events using the infields of race tracks over carnivals

3. Content creation

- Story telling via different platforms
- Use of apps/games for children and young teenagers

4. Community engagement

- Equestrian and Pony Club communities connected at all levels with the Thoroughbred Industry
- Schools (Primary, secondary, and tertiary engagement/partnerships)
- Careers advisors and showpiece days
- Roadshow
- Students (years 8 to 12, University Students)

Strategic focus to implement findings

Awareness, Educate, Participate



Workshop 2

Recruitment

Objective:

Develop recommendations to obtain and attract people to join the Thoroughbred work force and to minimise barriers to entry.

Question:

Generate methods to reduce barriers to entry to the Thoroughbred Industry.

Barriers to entry identified were:

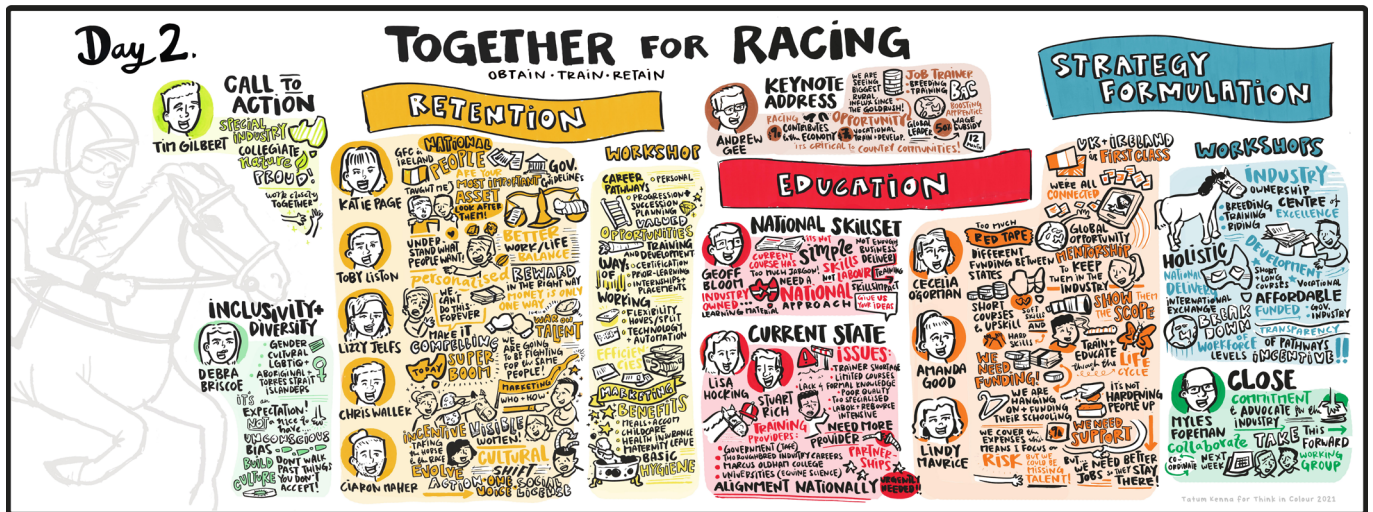
1. Hours of work
2. Negative perception
3. Safety issues
4. Limited career pathways
5. Limited education pathways
6. Awareness and access
7. Uniform and proper conditions for employees

Methods to reduced barriers:

1. Implement better working hours and surety of pay/conditions
2. Establish a central unified approach to marketing 'one brand' to tackle:
 - a. Awareness issues
 - b. Perception issues (negative association, safety and welfare)
 - c. Consistent and wide-reaching messaging and delivery
3. Create and communicate formal career pathways and development
4. Accessible education pathways
5. Establish National accreditation recognition

Day 2

Theme: Retention, Education and Strategy Formulation



Panelists and presenters included individuals from both inside and outside the industry.

Workshop 3

Recruitment

Objective:

Develop recommendations on the approach to marketing and promotion of the industry to drive awareness and challenge perception issues.

Question:

Select a target market. Brainstorm three key marketing messages to target this audience. How will these messages be delivered?

Participants agreed a unified marketing approach to create a 'career brand' would be effective.

Potential target markets identified included:

- School leavers
- Animal activists
- New owners and their families
- 16–25-year-olds
- The young punter
- Pony club participants
- Parents
- School kids
- Career changers
- Urban tribe

Marketing approach should include the following elements:

- Social Media
- Use of industry icons/heroes
- The athletic 'sporting' nature of the Thoroughbred Industry
- Turning passion into a career – capturing the love of the horse
- Wide reaching/mass audience TV (Netflix) series

Workshop 4

Retention

Objective:

Develop recommendations which improve the retention and upskilling of staff over the next five years.

Question:

Identify five high level approaches to improve workplace retention.

1. Career pathways

- Progression: Creating clear career pathways
- Succession: Recognition and standardisation of skills and skill levels for the existing workforce
- Planning: Accurate job titles which reflect a path of progression (tiered)

2. Workplace conditions

- Develop and improve safety standards and conditions across the industry
- Wages, work-life balance, starting times, flexibility, consecutive days off, professional standards lifted

3. Appropriate training of staff for the job, appropriate training of the employer

- Offer employer and staff training opportunities, for example partner with PRA or Breeder training initiatives

4. Resource management

- Hours, rostering, feasibility study of pay increases/hours

5. Collaboration

- Collective approach – achieving one outcome/one message

Workshop 5 Education



Objective:

Develop a list of potential educational and training recommendations that are attractive, affordable, and accessible to build the skills necessary to sustain our industry into the future.

Objective:

Participants will identify a practical process for developing and coordinating a national three-year education strategy reflecting Forum outcomes.

Question:

Identify a sector of the industry where your group feel skills are lacking and outline steps that can be taken to create education options that are attractive, affordable, and accessible.

Participants identified that the following areas required attention:

1. Horsemanship education

- Short stable/horse skill sets and an introduction to racing packages

2. Continued professional development

- Trainers – business skills, rule changes etc.
- Leadership skills short courses for middle management
- Upskilling staff
- Mentoring

3. Affordability of training

4. Coordination

- National alignment on coordination and communication
- Sharing teaching resources/shared knowledge state by state
- Coordination of access to government funding (both state and federal)
- Communication of existing and developing programs
- Industry financial support of existing and developing programs

5. Accessibility to face to face training providers in each state/accommodation

- Planned uniform strategy
 - i. online
 - ii. on the job
 - iii. face to face components

Thank you!

The Working Group would like to thank participants and panelists for their time and contributions over the two days and commitment to working in a spirit of goodwill together for racing.



Photos courtesy of [needforsteed.com.au](https://www.needforsteed.com.au) (excluding Forum photos)