



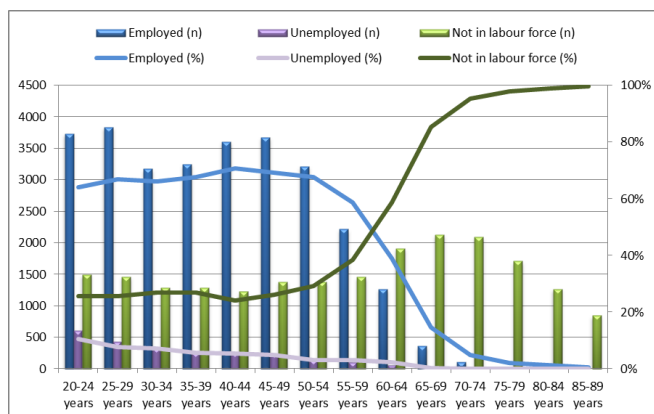
Overview of the Research and innovation program

One of three national flagship projects funded by the Suburban Jobs program, the Stretton Centre is a partnership between the City of Playford, The University of Adelaide's Australian Workplace Innovation and Social Research Centre (WISer), the Urban Renewal Authority, and the South Australian and Federal Governments. Once established the Stretton Centre will be a regional hub for integrated industry, workforce and urban development, addressing challenges and pursuing opportunities through research, collaboration and innovation.

Key trends research

The *City of Playford Socio-demographic, Employment and Education Profile* provides a detailed analysis of approximately 80,000 City of Playford residents at the last Census (August 2011). As such it provides a baseline for understanding and planning for the local population. Playford has a **growing and youthful population** drawn to the area for its comparatively cheap housing. Relatively **high rates of unemployment** in parts of the region represent a major challenge as does the generation of appropriate, sustainable local employment opportunities.

Figure 1: Labour force participation in Playford



Challenges and opportunities research

Better understanding and providing a focal point for tackling the economic and workforce development challenges facing the region is a major objective of the Stretton Centre. The Centre will support pilot projects in the growing **health** and **ageing** sectors to help inform strategy and program development. A priority is to better understand the likely demand for goods and services that might flow from new industry and workforce development initiatives linked to industrial diversification and urban regeneration agendas.

A partnership approach based on co-investment in high priority projects is being utilised by the Stretton Centre to build enduring collaborations.



Workplace and workforce research

Gathering workplace and industry intelligence is an early priority of the Stretton Centre. The *Workplace Futures Survey* is a longitudinal survey first run in October-November 2013 and designed to explore -

- **Business confidence** in investment, recruitment, profits, sales and growth.
- Factors related to **high performance workplaces** that impact on business and organisational performance and productivity.
- Current and future **employment demand** (vacancies and recruitment) and issues with supply (hard to fill vacancies), with a focus on local employment.
- Existing **skills gaps** within organisations and potential future skills requirements.
- Extent and nature of **workforce training and development**.

Data from this survey will be timely with analysis targeted to the needs of policy makers, education and training providers and businesses.

The **labour market implications** of an ageing population are significant and are being explored in other research undertaken by the Stretton Centre. An older labour force leads to increased levels of retirement, and industries and sectors with a higher concentration of older workers will face significant replacement costs. While an ageing population implies a range of challenges, it also provides a number of opportunities. There will be a change in final demand for goods and services fuelled by the consumption patterns of the increasing number of older people.



Industry development research and outreach

The impact of technology on the development of aids and equipment designed for people with age- or disability-related limitations has seen the emergence of the new field known as ‘assistive technologies’. There is significant unmet need for assistive technologies which are designed in collaboration with consumers. The Stretton Centre is working with DMITRE to map demand for assistive technologies and identify how that demand might be met by local suppliers through closer linkages with the aged care, health and disability sectors.

The Stretton Centre has co-invested with DMITRE, NC21, UNISA, the Polaris Centre and the City of Salisbury in a Manufacturing Development Officer to promote awareness of existing programs and develop collaborative initiatives linked to the State Governments *Manufacturing Works* strategy.

The City of Playford’s ambition to become a second CBD of Adelaide is the focal point for identifying how **smart procurement** linked to major urban construction projects can help to drive local industry development.

Analysis of the **impact of major infrastructure** projects in Playford explored projects with a total expenditure of over \$5 billion, with \$1.1 billion indicatively estimated to accrue to suppliers based in Playford, a further \$0.8 billion spent in the rest of the Northern Adelaide region, and a total of \$4.2 billion spent in South Australia. The analysis indicates the employment impact is felt across a wide range of industries, including education, accommodation and services due to the flow effects of the expenditure.

Innovation projects

Industry and workforce development strategies will underpin the engagement of governments, industry and research bodies in 1) the formation of partnerships for the reinvention of existing industry and the development of new industries potentially in the areas of health and ageing, horticulture, mining, defence and cleantech, and 2) development of region specific training to employment models for local employment which will deliver short term outcomes as well as preparing the groundwork for growing local employment over the next fifty years.



Examples of innovation projects include –

Shared Drive an initiative to encourage Playford residents to engage with their community, and play a role in its future technological, economic and social development. Participants develop skills and insight into the digital economy; affirm the value of their ideas and creativity and promote opportunities in the digital environment.

- **Youth on the Move** engages participants in a 12 month training initiative aimed at assisting young people realise and develop their full potential while actively involved in their community through sport. The program provides pre-vocational and life skills training through collaborative relationships with key local sporting & community clubs (including Central Districts Football Club).
- The Northern Communities of Hope **Live Training Site** project will provide an outdoor classroom for 24 local participants to develop new skills within the construction industry while delivering live works on site via a new outdoor facility at the Northern Communities of Hope.
- The Northern Health Pathways program delivers funded, nationally recognised and accredited training in **community services** qualifications at Certificate III level to residents of Adelaide’s Playford and wider-northern suburbs; embedded in the program is further, non-accredited training in life skills, personal goal-setting, and career support.

Projects under development

A number of major projects are under development in the areas of advanced manufacturing, procurement and industry development, smart workplaces and horticulture.

In 2013, WISer is participating in a bid (along with CSIRO, AIG, ASFA and the University of Melbourne) for the **Manufacturing Industry Innovation Collaborative Research Centre** (MIICRC). The MIICRC has the potential to contribute significantly to the accelerated growth of knowledge-intensive manufacturing, and to bring valuable projects of both a technical and an economic character to the state. In SA, the focus will be on applying the program and research focus areas to major value chains (resources, defence, clean tech and medical and assistive devices), and new materials science to create new products and applications (titanium), additive and subtractive manufacturing applications, and non-destructive testing, together with workplace leadership/innovation and ‘factories of the future’.

The Stretton Centre is co-investing with the SA Department for Manufacturing, Innovation, Trade, Resources and Energy in **Smart Workplace** initiatives that can help to strengthen vulnerable sectors against shocks that might lead to large scale employment losses (such as car components suppliers etc.)

WISer and the Stretton Centre are collaborating with the SA Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure, City of Playford and the Urban Renewal Institute on the development of a research proposal for an **AURIN datahub** providing locally relevant data to inform scenario planning for urban planning and development, industry and workforce development, urban infrastructure and social well-being.

Growing demand for safe and sustainably grown food presents a range of opportunities for local and regional food producers. The Stretton Centre is working with government and the horticultural sector, to help identify **horticultural innovation and development opportunities** for the region.