

LG TalentEX

your talent exchange network

**Connecting Councils
Empowering Careers**

A man and a woman are shown in a close-up, looking at a laptop screen. The man is on the left, and the woman is on the right, wearing a white hijab and a patterned blouse. The background is a warm, golden-brown color with a circular vignette effect.

Acknowledgement to Country

We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the traditional custodians of the land, and we offer our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.

Credits

LGPro Emerging Leaders Program 2025 LG TalentEX Project Team:

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In today's complex operating environment councils need agile skilled and motivated teams.



Introducing LG TalentEX – Your Talent Exchange Network

Across local government, it's getting harder to find the right people. You train new staff, invest time and energy and then? They leave.

It's happening everywhere. It's draining. It's exhausting.

Councils are struggling to keep up, and the pressure is real. Imagine if there was a simple way to connect talent across councils.

A website. A portal. An app.

A place where councils could share skills, fill gaps fast, and keep great people engaged.

Sounds good, right? Well, it exists.

LG TalentEX is a sector-wide initiative designed to make workforce challenges easier.

Through short-term secondments, council professionals can gain fresh experience, share knowledge, and bring new ideas back home. It's about connecting councils, strengthening skills, and building a collaborative workforce that benefits everyone.

Joining is easy.

Download the app. Jump on. Start connecting.

Your council can't afford to miss out because the future of local government starts with us, together.

**Download the app.
Jump on.
Start connecting.**



LG TalentEX

your talent exchange network



Introduction

LG TalentEX is a sector-wide initiative designed to strengthen capability, collaboration, and career development in local government.

This application-based program will enable council professionals to undertake secondments at other councils, gaining valuable experience while sharing knowledge and expertise.

In today's complex operating environment, councils need agile, skilled, and motivated teams. LG TalentEX provides a structured pathway for staff to broaden their professional horizons, build cross-sector relationships, and bring fresh insights back to their home councils. The program aims to retain talent by offering meaningful development opportunities that keep people engaged and connected.



Background and Rationale

Local government faces workforce challenges shaped by demographic shifts, financial pressures, and evolving service demands:

Skills shortages



in areas such as engineering, planning, and IT

Ageing workforce



risking loss of institutional knowledge

Recruitment difficulties



especially in rural councils

Retention issues



driven by job insecurity and competition from other sectors

Financial constraints



limiting investment in staff development

To address these challenges, councils need greater collaboration and investment in professional development. Structured programs such as leadership workshops, mentoring networks, and cross-council secondments can build capability and resilience. Aligning workforce strategies with organisational objectives ensures councils anticipate future skill needs and strengthen internal capacity. Regional partnerships can further enable shared resources, collaborative projects, and knowledge exchange.

LGPro Secondment Trial – Lessons Learned

Around 8–10 years ago, LGPro piloted a secondment program to support professional development and assist rural councils with recruitment challenges. Participating councils paid an entry fee of about \$1,000, and positions were advertised via a central portal. Secondments typically lasted 3–6 months, but arrangements required consideration of:

Superannuation



Fleet/commuter vehicles



WorkCover



Relocation allowance and accommodation



Wage responsibilities and pay differences



While the program delivered some success stories, it was discontinued due to financial costs and the extensive administrative burden.

What we know

Who works in local government?

There are roughly

43,175
FTE WORKERS

in the Victorian local government sector as at 2021.



The workforce is

MULTI-GENERATIONAL

with increasing need to leverage both early-career and older workers for capability and knowledge transfer.



Why people leave local government?

Turnover is rising, increasing from

17% to **22%**
(2018-19) **(2022-23)**

across Victorian councils.

Rural councils experience the highest turnover, reaching

25%
in (2022-23)



What people are looking for / why they stay?

65% OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT WORKERS

want to advance their careers within the sector, but many feel dissatisfied with the merit and opportunity systems.



Local government offers

STRONG VALUES-BASED EMPLOYMENT

with workers seeking purpose-driven roles that benefit the community.



FLEXIBLE WORK, WELLBEING, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

and opportunities for collaboration are key engagement factors for employees.





Broader pressures shaping retention

Local governments face acute skills shortages, with

**9 IN 10 COUNCILS
REPORTING SHORTAGES**

(up 30% since 2018)



The sector is not widely viewed as an employer of choice, requiring

**STRONGER STORYTELLING
ABOUT PURPOSE, IMPACT,
AND CAREER PATHWAYS**



Source: Victoria's Future Local Government Workforce – Insights Report (September 2025)

Program Objectives

LG TalentEX is an application-based program designed to facilitate secondments between local governments. This will be a powerful tool for professional growth, knowledge exchange, and skill development.

Here's how LG TalentEX will work and what features it will include:

Key Features of the Application-Based Program:



Secondment Marketplace

- A centralised platform where councils can post secondment opportunities.
- Listings include role descriptions, duration, location (remote/in-person), required skills, and objectives.



User Profiles and Match-Making

- Professionals create profiles detailing their skills, experience, interests, and development goals.
- Smart matching algorithms suggest suitable secondment opportunities based on profile data.



Learning and Development Integration

- Link secondments to individual development plans.
- Include goal-setting, progress tracking, and post-secondment reflection tools.



Knowledge Capture and Sharing

- Encourage secondees to document learnings and share insights via blogs, presentations, or internal forums.
- Option to contribute to a shared knowledge repository accessible by all councils.



Reporting and Analytics

- Dashboards for HR and managers to track participation, outcomes, and skill development.
- Insights into cross-council collaboration trends and talent mobility.



Support and Resources

- Onboarding guides for host councils and secondees.
- Templates for agreements, evaluation forms, and feedback surveys.

Strengthening inter-council collaboration and knowledge sharing is essential for building a capable, connected local government sector. By leveraging shared expertise and flexible career pathways, councils can address common challenges, deliver consistent outcomes, and retain top talent.

Targeted initiatives such as wellbeing programs, succession planning, and structured secondments support workforce resilience and leadership continuity. Secondments, in particular, enable staff to broaden their experience and networks, creating a more adaptable and future-ready workforce.



Proposed Program Overview

The LG TalentEX platform is designed to strengthen workforce capability across the local government sector by enabling councils and employees to connect through short-term secondment opportunities.



Operating much like a match-making application, the platform will allow staff seeking professional growth or a change in environment to be paired with suitable temporary placements that align with their skills, experience, and career aspirations. Councils will be able to advertise project-based roles, backfill needs, and capability building placements in a transparent and accessible way.

By providing a streamlined and sector-wide approach, LG TalentEX aims to enhance staff retention, support continuous learning, and promote collaboration between councils. The program will facilitate knowledge transfer, expose employees to different organisational settings, and encourage innovation through shared expertise. Implementation will be guided by a clear framework that outlines desired outcomes, participation metrics, satisfaction indicators, and sector impact. A pilot phase, informed by stakeholder engagement and user feedback, will be used to refine the platform features, processes, and governance arrangements before broader rollout.

Platform Overview and Functionality

LG TalentEX will be a secure, app-based hub for councils and employees to manage secondments. Users can create profiles, browse opportunities, and handle the entire process through an intuitive interface with personalised recommendations, search filters, and real-time alerts. The platform will integrate with HR systems to streamline approvals, track participation, and support the full secondment lifecycle.

Process for Listing, Matching and Managing Secondments

Councils will be able to list secondment opportunities directly within the platform by completing a structured role template outlining key responsibilities, duration, required skills, and desired outcomes. Once published, these opportunities will be visible to employees across participating councils. Staff can browse listings or receive automated suggestions based on their skills, experience, interests, and career aspirations. The matching algorithm will prioritise job-fit, skill alignment, and developmental goals to create strong, targeted matches. Both staff and host councils can manage secondment applications within the platform, including expressions of interest, interviews, approvals, and progress tracking. Throughout the process, the platform will support communication, status updates, and documentation to ensure transparency and streamlined coordination.

Eligibility Criteria for Participants and Host Councils

Eligibility will follow consistent sector-wide criteria. Employees must work for a participating council, have manager endorsement, and meet any role-specific requirements. Host councils must provide meaningful work, supervision, onboarding, and support. All councils must comply with agreed guidelines, including employment conditions, OH&S standards, and reporting obligations.

Duration and Types of Secondments

LG TalentEX offers flexible secondments, including short-term project support, skill-development placements, and backfill roles for temporary vacancies. Assignments typically range from a few weeks to several months, based on the work and agreement between councils. This flexibility ensures councils access needed capability while employees gain practical experience to advance their careers.



Benefits



In a sector facing increasing complexity, workforce shortages, and retention challenges particularly in regional areas. LG TalentEX offers a strategic solution.

It provides a structured pathway for staff to broaden their professional horizons, build cross-sector relationships, and bring fresh insights back to their home councils. The program is designed to keep people engaged, motivated, and committed to a career in local government. Benefits for the various stakeholders include:

For Employees



Career development, exposure to new environments, enhanced skills.

For Councils



Access to skilled staff, improved collaboration, workforce flexibility.

For the Sector



Stronger regional networks, shared innovation, and capability uplift.

Why LG TalentEX is a Game Changer for Regional Councils:



Access to Skilled Talent:

Regional councils often face difficulties attracting specialised staff. LG TalentEX allows them to host experienced professionals on secondment, filling critical gaps and boosting project delivery.



Staff Development Without Relocation:

Regional employees can gain metropolitan or cross-regional experience without permanently leaving their communities, supporting retention and career progression.



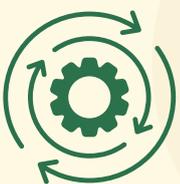
Knowledge Sharing Across Diverse Contexts:

Regional councils bring unique insights and challenges. LG TalentEX fosters two-way learning, enabling innovation and best-practice exchange between councils of all sizes.



Strengthened Regional Collaboration:

The program builds stronger networks between councils, encouraging shared solutions to common challenges and fostering a more unified sector.



Workforce Resilience:

By offering flexible career pathways, LG TalentEX helps councils build a more adaptable and future-ready workforce.

LG TalentEX will enable transparent, efficient matching of secondment opportunities with staff. Councils can list short-term, project-based, or backfill roles, while employees express interest based on skills and career goals.

LG TalentEX is more than a secondment program it's a strategic investment in the future of local government, with regional councils standing to gain significantly from its implementation.

Challenges and Considerations

While challenges such as operational coverage, funding, and cultural alignment will need to be addressed, the long-term benefits of LG TalentEX far outweigh the risks. This is a bold and forward-thinking opportunity to invest in our people, strengthen our sector, and build a more connected and resilient local government workforce.

Challenge	Key Considerations
Equity and Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring smaller or rural councils have equal opportunity to participate despite resource constraints. • Addressing potential disparities in secondment availability across regions.
Operational Disruption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing the impact of staff absences on home councils, particularly in critical roles. • Developing contingency plans for backfilling positions during secondments.
Cultural and Organisational Differences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Navigating variations in policies, systems, and workplace cultures between councils. • Providing adequate onboarding and support to secondees to minimise adjustment challenges.
Sustainability and Scalability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining momentum beyond the pilot phase and embedding the program into long-term workforce strategies. • Ensuring the platform and processes can be scaled to accommodate sector-wide participation.



**LG TalentEX delivers long
term benefits that far
exceed any challenges.**

Stakeholder Engagement Surveys and Results

Recent surveys conducted by the project team across metropolitan, rural, and interface councils provide a comprehensive view of both employee perspectives and organisational readiness for secondment programs. Together, these findings highlight strong interest in secondments as a professional development tool, while also revealing structural and practical barriers that need to be addressed for successful implementation.

From the staff survey, the most compelling motivator for considering a secondment is the opportunity for variety of experience. Employees consistently expressed a desire to broaden their exposure to different teams, processes, and community contexts. Career growth and skill development also ranked highly, with many respondents viewing secondments as a pathway to progress within local government without leaving the sector. Staff emphasised that these opportunities should not only offer new tasks but also structured learning outcomes and the chance to build specialist capabilities.

Despite this enthusiasm, current participation in secondments remains low. While most respondents rated the value of secondments at the highest levels both for personal development and for the benefit of their home council few have actually taken part. This gap between intent and action is largely explained by practical barriers. Location constraints were frequently cited, particularly by staff in rural areas who face challenges accessing roles concentrated in metropolitan councils. Role-specific limitations also emerged, with employees in highly specialised or single-incumbent positions concerned about backfill feasibility. Additionally, organisational support varies, with some staff reporting unclear approval processes and inconsistent endorsement from managers. Personal factors such as family commitments, financial considerations, and workload pressures further compound these challenges.



Stakeholder Engagement/Surveys and Results (cont'd)

The HR and People & Culture survey reinforces these themes from an organisational perspective. Most councils do not have a formal external secondment policy, and responses skewed heavily toward “No” or “Not Sure.” Interface councils appear slightly more advanced in this regard, but overall, the absence of clear frameworks is a significant barrier. At the same time, there is strong consensus on the importance of structure: respondents overwhelmingly rated the need for clear agreements and formal systems at the highest level. This indicates that councils recognise secondments cannot succeed without standardised processes governing terms, responsibilities, and compliance requirements.

However, feasibility remains a sticking point. While councils value secondments, their ability to release staff is mixed. Metro and rural councils, in particular, reported moderate feasibility scores, suggesting that operational and resource constraints such as backfill funding and statutory deadlines limit participation even where the perceived benefits are high.

Taken together, these findings reveal a consistent pattern: secondments are widely regarded as beneficial for employees and councils alike, but logistical, cultural, and policy gaps prevent them from becoming commonplace. Addressing these issues will require a sector-wide approach that combines clear frameworks, flexible secondment models, and practical support mechanisms. Standardised agreements, onboarding templates, and compliance guidelines can reduce uncertainty for managers and staff. Flexible formats such as short-term placements, hybrid arrangements, and micro-secondments can help overcome location and workload barriers. Finally, embedding feasibility tools and resourcing strategies within the LG TalentEX platform will be critical to converting strong interest into meaningful participation.

Ultimately, the surveys underscore both the appetite for secondments and the urgency of enabling conditions. By tackling policy gaps, operational constraints, and cultural readiness, councils can unlock the full potential of secondments as a driver of capability building, career development, and sector-wide collaboration.

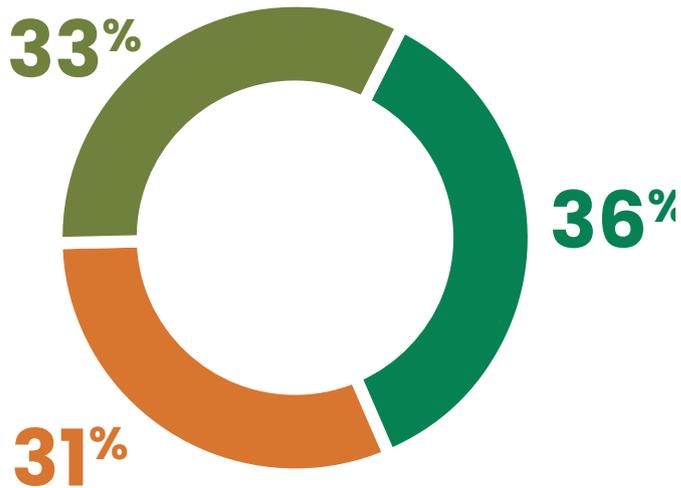


**Respondents
overwhelmingly
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highest level.**

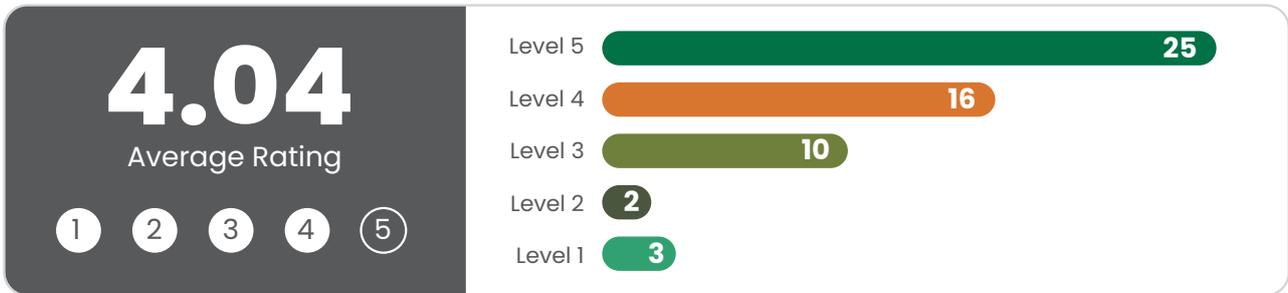
Data from the Staff Secondment Survey is as follows:

What best describes the Council you work for?

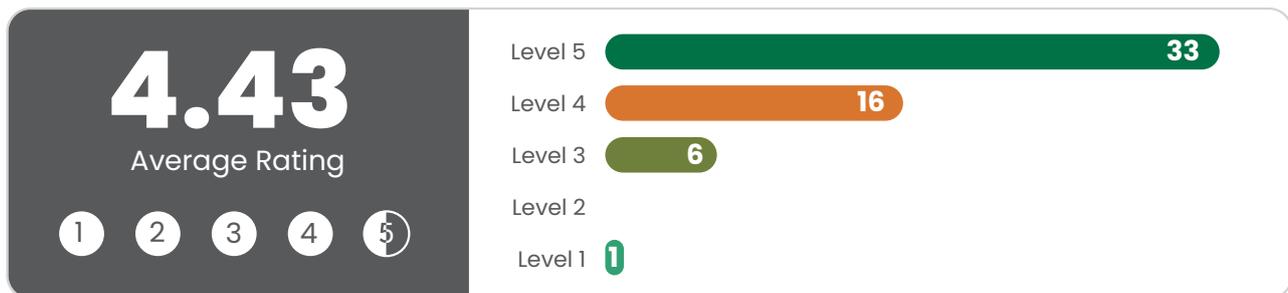
- Metro Council
- Rural Council
- Interfaced Council



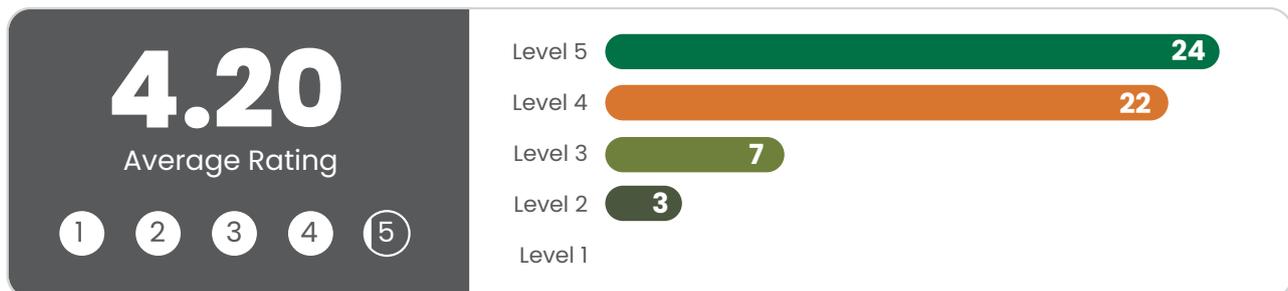
How interested would you be in participating in a secondment to another council?



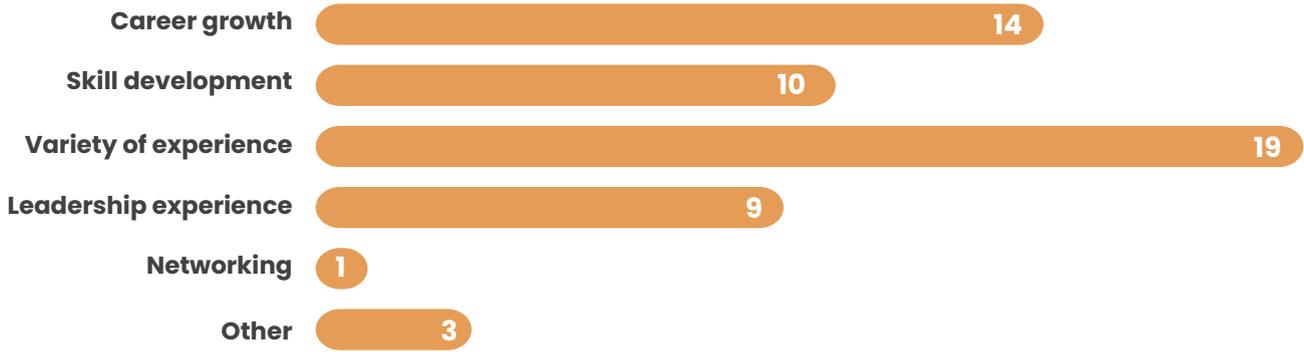
How valuable do you think a secondment opportunity would be for your personal career development?



How valuable do you think a secondment opportunity would be for your current council/team?

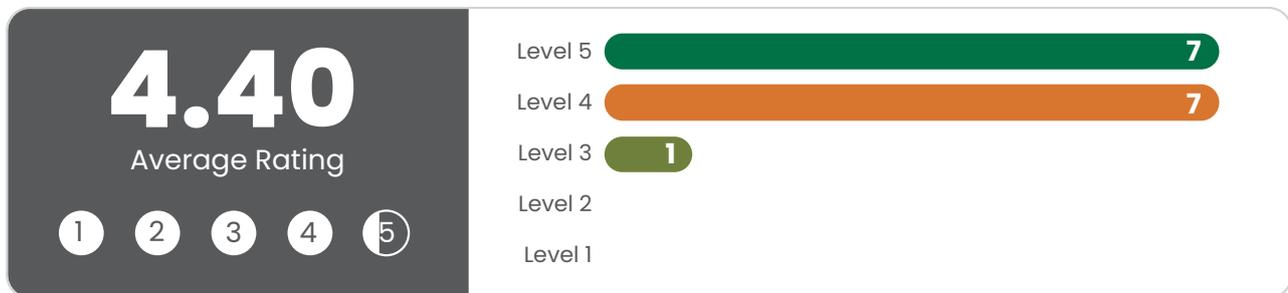


Which of the following would most motivate you to consider a secondment?

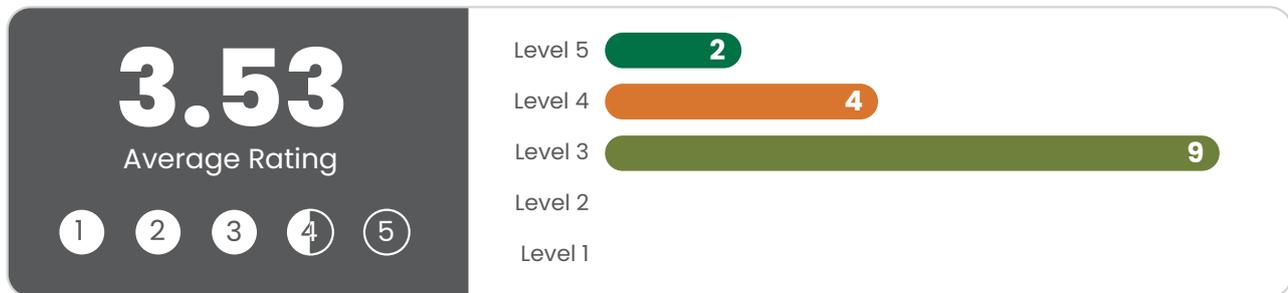


Data from the HR Secondment Survey is as follows:

How valuable do you think a formal secondment system would be to your council?

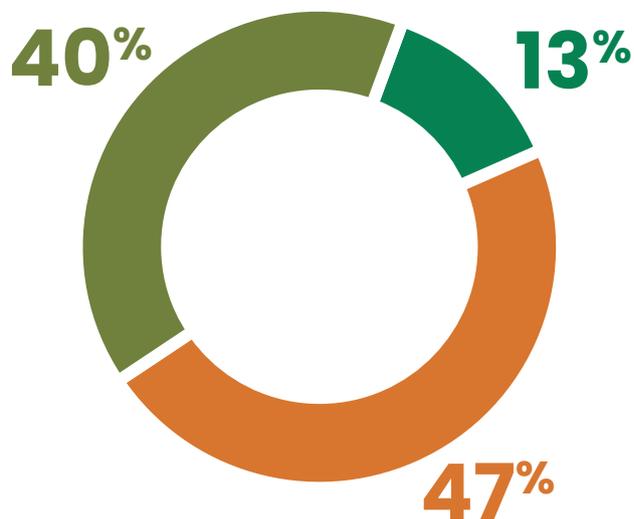


How feasible would it be for your council to release staff for secondment opportunities?



Does your Council have an external Secondment policy or procedure for incoming and outgoing secondments?

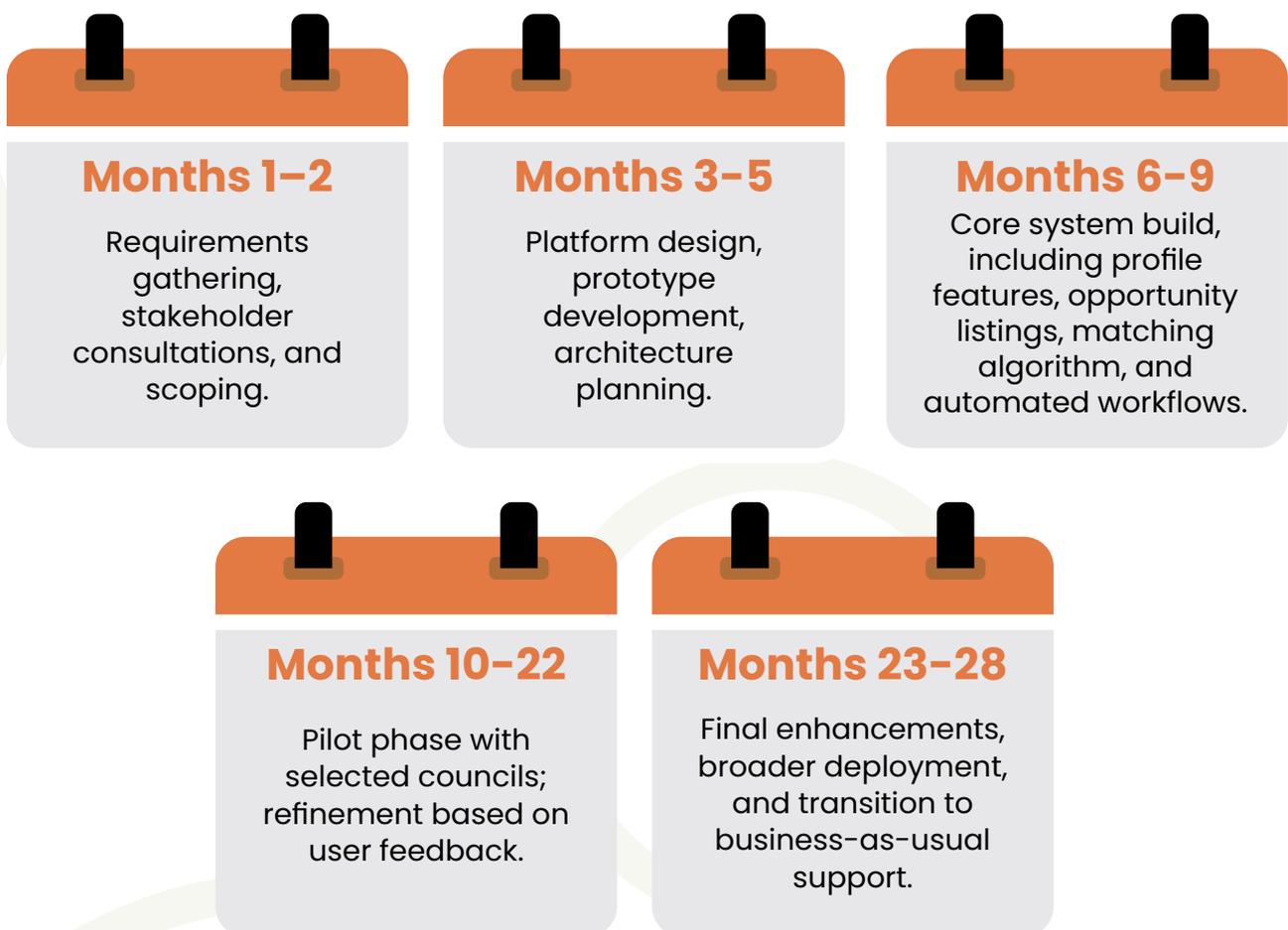
- Yes
- No
- Not Sure



Implementation Plan

Timeline and Key Milestones

A phased implementation approach of approximately 26–28 months is proposed to ensure usability, scalability, and sector alignment. Key milestones include:



This staged approach supports iterative improvements and risk management while maintaining delivery momentum.

Roles and Responsibilities

The platform can be implemented with a minimal core team, supported by strong automation and vendor capability. Key roles include:

Project Lead: Coordination, governance, timelines, and reporting.

Technical Lead / Vendor Partner: System development, integrations, security, and technical maintenance.

User Interface Designer: Ensures a clear, intuitive experience for staff and council users.

Sector Engagement Lead: Communication, consultation, training materials, and pilot facilitation.



Automation will reduce ongoing administrative tasks through features such as automated approvals, communications, reminders, and reporting dashboards.

Technology and System Requirements

The platform will require secure, scalable, and modern technology. Core requirements include:

- Cloud-based hosting with secure authentication and role-based access.
- Mobile-responsive interface suitable for desktop, tablet, and mobile.
- Integration capability with common council HR or identity systems.
- Automated workflows for matching, notifications, approvals, and reporting.
- Data security aligned with Victorian public sector standards.
- Real-time analytics for monitoring participation and outcomes.

Communication and Training Strategy

A structured communication and training approach will support adoption across councils:

- Sector briefings and introductory webinars.
- Video guides and short walkthrough modules embedded within the platform.
- User-friendly manuals and frequently asked questions.
- In-platform prompts, tool tips, and guided onboarding to minimise the need for formal training.
- Consistent messaging highlighting benefits, expectations, and participation pathways.



Funding and Resourcing

Costs

The costs include one off capital expenditure for development and an annual maintenance/operational expenditure. The estimates for costs will be further explored during our consultation with pilot councils along with various funding options as mentioned below.

Funding options

Several viable pathways exist to support initial development and ongoing operation:

Council collaboration model



Shared funding contributions across participating councils to reflect collective benefit.

Government grants



Potential eligibility for workforce development, digital innovation, or sector capability grants.

Regional partnerships



Existing region-based council groups may co-fund the platform to support regional workforce mobility.

Subscription or membership model



Optional annual fees tied to council size, usage levels, or region.

Integration to Council Budgets

If councils choose to fund the platform individually or collectively, costs can be incorporated into existing operational budgets by reallocating resources typically spent on:

- Recruitment agencies and headhunting fees.
- Temporary staffing and short-term labour hire.
- Advertising costs for filling hard-to-recruit roles.

By using secondments to meet capability gaps, councils can redirect spending toward a sector-owned, cost-effective workforce solution.



Councils can redirect spending toward a sector owned cost effective workforce solution.

Next Steps for Implementing LG TalentEX



Stakeholder Engagement and Pilot Program Design

A communication plan will be developed to articulate the benefits of LG TalentEX to councils and staff.

This will support the project group to conduct targeted consultation with HR managers and senior leadership across the Local Government sector. During this consultation, participation in the program will be sought and further feedback regarding timing and administrative details received. This will identify a group of councils willing to participate in a pilot phase and potential participants for expansion of the program.

To understand how successful the pilot is, clear metrics must be defined.

This may include:

- The number of secondments completed
- Participant satisfaction
- Knowledge shared across Councils
- Staff retention and/or career advancement

To facilitate a streamlined rollout and to optimise administrative resources, standardised templates for employment agreements, onboarding and performance outcomes will be workshopped and developed with pilot councils.

Funding and Platform Development

Funding sources to cover administrative and website/app platform costs will be investigated as previously mentioned.

Resources will be allocated for program administration, platform maintenance, and ongoing support.

Technical requirements for reaching the secondment target audience, creating user profiles, matching algorithms and establishing a web platform and application will be scoped. Options for leveraging existing platforms or identifying bespoke solutions will be explored. A crucial element of platform development will be ensuring compliance with data privacy and security standards.

Measuring Impact, Knowledge Capture and Potential Growth

Measuring the impact of the pilot program on individuals and councils will determine how successful the pilot program is. Clear metrics will be used to measure outputs, along with capturing qualitative benefits through surveys and anecdotal evidence.

A shared knowledge base for councils to access insights, tips, best practices and foster connections will be established.

The pilot will run for 12 months, during which program metrics will be collected and participant experiences shared. Analysis of the data, including reviewing financial viability will inform whether the pilot program can be expanded across the sector successfully.

Unlocking this outcome will create greater development opportunities across the sector, driving stronger staff retention and empowering fulfilling, future focussed careers.



Frequently Asked Questions

Program Overview

What is LG TalentEX and how does it work?

LG TalentEX is a platform designed to match secondment opportunities with interested staff, like a matching app for career development. Councils can list short-term placements or project-based roles, and employees can express interest based on their skills and career goals.



Why is this program needed?

The local government sector faces workforce shortages, retention challenges, and increasing complexity, especially in regional areas. LG TalentEX provides a strategic solution by offering growth opportunities without leaving the sector.

Is LG TalentEX available to all councils?

Yes, the program is designed for all councils, with a focus on regional collaboration and sector wide participation.

How does the matching process work?

Employees create profiles highlighting skills and interests, while councils post opportunities. The platform then suggests matches based on compatibility.

Benefits

What are the benefits for employees?

Career development, exposure to new environments, and enhanced skills without permanent relocation.

How do councils benefit

Access to skilled staff, improved collaboration, and workforce flexibility to fill critical gaps.

What's the broader impact on the sector?

Stronger regional networks, shared innovation, and capability uplift across councils.

What resources will LG TalentEX provide?

A dedicated app/platform, framework and guidelines for councils and secondees, templates to support employment agreements and onboarding.

**LG TalentEX provides a strategic solution
by offering growth opportunities
without leaving the sector.**



Frequently Asked Questions

Operational & Financial Considerations

Who pays the wages for the secondee?

Typically, the home council continues to pay wages, but arrangements may vary. Differences in pay will need to be negotiated upfront.

Is there a relocation allowance?

This will depend on the specific secondment arrangement and council policies. It's not guaranteed but can be considered for longer placements.

How do we manage backfilling roles?

Councils will need to plan temporary coverage. The program encourages strategic workforce planning to avoid a 'revolving door' situation.

Are there administrative costs for councils?

Yes, depending on the funding model, councils may incur minor administrative/operational costs, but these are outweighed by the benefits of talent sharing and savings achieved in recruitment costs.

Cultural & Strategic Alignment

How does the program align with sector goals?

It supports professional development, talent retention, and knowledge sharing across councils reinforcing local government as an employer of choice.

How will cultural differences between councils be addressed?

Through onboarding processes, clear expectations, and fostering collaboration to ensure smooth transitions.

How will success be measured?

Metrics will include participation rates, satisfaction surveys, and impact assessments during the pilot phase.



Risks & Challenges

Is there a risk of losing staff permanently?

While there's always a risk, the program is designed to improve retention by offering growth opportunities within the sector rather than losing talent to other industries.

How will operational impacts be managed?

Success depends on buy-in from people leaders and careful planning to minimise disruption.

What about data privacy and system integration?

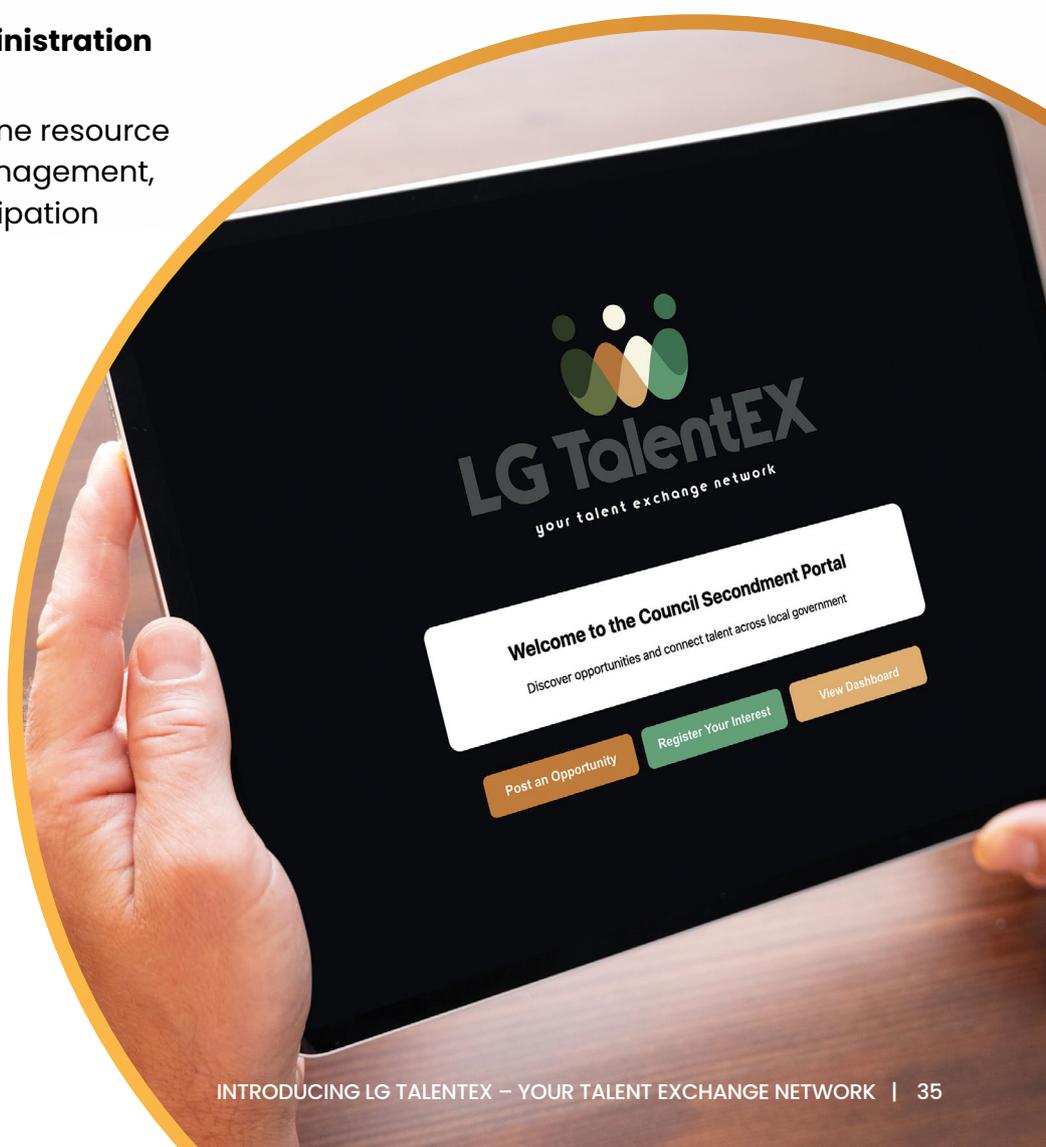
The platform will comply with privacy standards and plans to integrate securely with council systems.

How will funding and administration be handled?

A clear framework will outline resource allocation for program management, potentially including participation fees similar to past trials.

What happens if a secondment doesn't work out?

Clear agreements and exit strategies will be in place to ensure minimal disruption and smooth return to the home council.



LOCAL GOVERNMENT
LGPRO
PROFESSIONALS
THE LEADING VOICE

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EMERGING
LEADERS
PROGRAM