

22 April 2026

WorldSkills stonemasonry regional competition to build on our emerging construction workforce

Adelaide will break new ground today by hosting Australia's first WorldSkills competition in architectural stonemasonry in 30 years and will debut an entirely new competition package.

Internationally regarded as the gold standard in trade skills competitions, WorldSkills Australia hosts more than 700 regional competitions every two years in 34 regions across Australia.

The South Australian Skills Commission (the Commission) is committed to growing WorldSkills and fielding the biggest ever Team SA, ahead of South Australia hosting the WorldSkills Australia National Championships in 2027.

Award-winning local training organisation FCTA – Building Careers has developed and designed the new national competition in architectural stonemasonry, a highly skilled and specialised part of the construction trades, a sector undergoing an acute skills shortage.

The Commission endorsed the establishment of architectural stonemasonry as a competition category in 2025 and is working with WorldSkills Australia and FCTA – Building Careers to have the sought-after trade included in the National Championships, to be hosted in Adelaide in 2027.

The historic stone walls of Adelaide Gaol will provide a fitting venue for entrants to compete using the new architectural stonemasonry training package for the first time today.

The competition package was created by FCTA – Building Careers Chief Executive Officer Trisch Baff and RTO Manager Wayne Hutchinson, who are members of the Commission's WorldSkills Australia – South Australian Steering Committee. It was endorsed by the Commission and then approved and adopted by WorldSkills Australia for national use.

FCTA – Building Careers was the 2024 national winner of the Small Training Provider of the Year at the Australian Training Awards. It offers bespoke training in bricklaying, stonemasonry, tiling and heritage trades and is the only provider of nationally recognised heritage trade skills in Australia.

South Australian Training Awards 2024 Apprentice of the Year winner and National runner-up Bianca Taylor, the state's first female to qualify as a stonemason, will be a judge at the competition. Bianca will also discuss her journey from apprentice to business owner and give a first-hand overview of day-to-day work as a stonemason in South Australia.

The competition will run on 22 April 2026, and guests can visit throughout the day to view the competition in progress. FCTA – Building Careers will also run an information session on the day

between 12pm to 1pm on the history and use of stone materials in South Australia and the importance of the industry in the heritage and preservation of local buildings.

WorldSkills regional competitions lay the foundation for competitors to showcase their skills and compete for a medal against their peers, with the chance to progress to the National Championships in Adelaide in 2027, and, in eligible categories, at the international WorldSkills Championships in 2028 in Japan.

As the year progresses, hundreds of South Australian competitors will compete in 64 WorldSkills Open Regional competitions across the state in 40 open skills categories. TAFE SA, PEER, FCTA – Building Careers, and MTA SA/NT will all host competitions.

For more information, visit: www.worldskills.org.au

Nominations for the South Australian Training Awards are open until 1 May 2026, visit: www.trainingawards.sa.gov.au.

Quotes attributable to South Australian Skills Commissioner, Cameron Baker

Now more than ever, WorldSkills Australia plays an important role in highlighting the crucial nature of trade skills training to help boost the pipeline of South Australia's future skilled workforce.

We are pleased for South Australia to be hosting Australia's first Architectural Stonemasonry Regional Competition in more than 30 years.

It's been gratifying to support FCTA – Building Careers with the endorsement of this national competition package. This highlights what can be achieved with collaborative and innovative approaches to training.

The Commission is proud to be hosting the WorldSkills Australia National Championships in Adelaide in 2027, and we are working to ensure Architectural Stonemasonry is included as a national category.

Quotes attributable to FCTA – Building Careers Chief Executive Officer, Trisch Baff

Architectural stonemasonry has had an increase in interest in the past decade and is now experiencing a revival as appreciation for traditional trade careers develops.

Australia needs highly qualified stonemasons to look after our beautiful old buildings and with the 2027 WorldSkills Australia National Championships being held in Adelaide – the city of churches – it was unthinkable that stonemasonry shouldn't be included.

As an award-winning family-owned business, FCTA was happy to lead the way in developing a competition package to ensure stonemasonry was once again part of the competition.