

Minister Gail Gago

Minister for Employment, Higher Education and Skills

Wednesday, 29 April, 2015

Students boost skills with the State's defence sector

The State Government has launched a new program to help South Australian university students forge fruitful careers in the state's defence sector.

Employment, Higher Education and Skills Minister Gail Gago announced the Defence and STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) Scholarship and Internship Program during an industry event at the Naval, Military and Air Force Club in the city.

Minister Gago said the program is comprised of two streams – the renewed Defence Honours Scholarship and a new Defence and STEM Internship Program.

“Both streams are aimed at providing university students with opportunities to work directly with defence and STEM-based industries to enhance their skills and improve their career and employability prospects,” Ms Gago said.

“The Defence Honours Scholarship Program will enable students to work closely with the defence industry as they undertake specific honours projects nominated by defence companies.

“Nine scholarships worth \$10,000 each have been awarded to projects involving students from the University of Adelaide, Flinders University and the University of South Australia, and a number of South Australian companies working in the defence sector.

“The second round will open later this year for projects commencing in 2016 and I encourage companies to consider submitting expressions of interest.”

Minister Gago said the second arm of the program - the Defence and STEM Internship Program - is now open for expressions of interest from companies.

“The Internship Program will enable students to gain valuable industry experience through structured work placements with local defence and STEM companies,” Ms Gago said.

“This is an opportunity for companies to contribute to the development of our future skilled workforce by imparting critical workplace skills that are hard to deliver in pure education environments.”

Acting Minister for Defence Industries Susan Close said the Government was committed to the defence sector, which creates long-term employment for our communities, attracts significant investment and drives innovation.

“The defence industry epitomises our efforts to shift from traditional to high-value manufacturing – a critical transition if our economy is to compete on a global basis,” Ms Close said.

“As a state, we make a major contribution to the national defence effort and are home to world-class industry delivering many of defence's largest and most complex projects.”

For more information on the Defence and STEM Scholarship and Internship Program visit:

www.statedevelopment.sa.gov.au/skills/defence-programs