

# Running internal expressions of interest



A guide for RTO managers in automotive and mining Vocational Education and Training (VET) contexts

*Part of the AUSMASA Trainer and Assessor VET Career Framework*

## About this guide

An expression of interest (EOI) process invites your team to put their hand up for a genuine role or opportunity. Done well, it does more than fill a vacancy. It surfaces capabilities that may not be visible in the current role and creates the conditions for useful conversations about what would strengthen a future application.

This guide supports RTO managers and program leaders in designing and running an EOI process well and in making good use of what it surfaces through follow-up conversations with applicants.

## Running an EOI process well

An EOI process should be conducted only when there is a genuine opportunity and genuine openness to who might take it up. Processes run as a formality, with the outcome already determined, erode trust quickly. People who have submitted an EOI and felt the process was going through the motions are unlikely to engage again.

This is a real dynamic in many organisations, particularly in larger or more complex ones. The answer is not to avoid EOI processes, but to run them honestly. That means being clear about what the opportunity is, the selection criteria, and what will happen after submissions are received.

### Before running an EOI, be clear on:

- what the opportunity is and whether it is genuine: a role, an acting arrangement, a project or a development opportunity
- what the selection criteria are and how submissions will be assessed
- what will happen with every submission, including those that are not successful
- what timeline you are working to, and when applicants will hear back
- whether the process is open to all staff or targeted to a specific group.



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## What an EOI can surface

An EOI is primarily a selection mechanism. It asks people to demonstrate how their experience and capabilities align with the role's requirements. But it also surfaces issues that are not always visible through day-to-day management.

### Previously unknown capability

People bring experience, qualifications, and skills that are invisible in their current roles. This is particularly common when a manager is new to the team or when relevant experience predates the current position. A trainer with additional qualifications, involvement in projects elsewhere, or significant experience in other industries may never have had reason to disclose it. An EOI provides a direct invitation to do so.

### Development needs and readiness gaps

Where an applicant addresses the selection criteria but identifies gaps in their readiness, the submission becomes the starting point for a targeted development conversation. Identifying those gaps in the context of a genuine opportunity is more useful than identifying them in a general performance review. The person has a reason to engage with the development conversation.

## A note on privacy and organisational context

How an EOI process is managed varies significantly depending on the organisation's size and structure. In a small RTO, where the manager overseeing the process knows all the applicants, post-EOI conversations can be relatively open and forward-looking.

In larger organisations, submissions may come from staff across different departments or program areas. In these contexts, the hiring manager may not have an existing relationship with every applicant.

When applicants come from outside the manager's direct team, post-EOI conversations should be guided by the nature of the relationship and the context. A conversation about the application itself, including what was strong, what was missing, and what would strengthen a future submission, is entirely appropriate regardless of the relationship. Broader career development conversations are best held between the applicant and their own manager, and only where the applicant chooses to initiate them.

What an applicant discloses in an EOI submission should be treated with care. It should not be shared with their current manager without their knowledge and consent.



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## Conversations with applicants after an EOI

Every person who submits an EOI deserves a response and a conversation. This applies to unsuccessful applicants as much as to successful ones. A person who applies and receives only a brief outcome notification gains little from the process. By contrast, a person who has a constructive conversation about their application, including what would strengthen future opportunities, gains something valuable regardless of the outcome.

The depth and nature of that conversation will depend on the relationship and the context. Two broad forms are worth distinguishing.

### Where you know the applicant

When the applicant is from your team or department, and you have an existing working relationship, the conversation can cover the application and go beyond it. What did their submission reveal about their capabilities and aspirations? What development would help them be ready for this kind of role in future? What can the organisation offer to support that?

### Where the applicant is from another team or department

When you do not have an existing relationship with the applicant, focus the conversation on the application. What was strong in their submission? Where were the gaps relative to the selection criteria? What would make them a stronger candidate in future? This is genuinely useful feedback, and it is entirely within the hiring manager's role to provide it.

### A useful post-EOI conversation covers:

- acknowledging what the applicant submitted and thanking them for engaging with the process
- identifying what was strong in their application relative to the selection criteria
- being clear and specific about any gaps, what was missing or underdeveloped
- discussing what would strengthen a future application
- noting any capability that was not previously known, where that is relevant and appropriate.

Keep a brief record of what each conversation surfaces. Over time, this builds a picture of capability, aspiration and development needs across the people who engage with your EOI processes.



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## Tracking submissions and follow-up

Use the table below to record what each submission surfaces and what follow-up is needed. This is particularly useful when managing multiple submissions and ensuring everyone receives a response

| Applicant | Capabilities surfaced | Strengths on application | Gaps identified | Outcome | Follow up |
|-----------|-----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|---------|-----------|
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