



NextEd collaborates with IBM SkillsBuild to expand access to digital skills and workforce capability

NextEd is pleased to announce a collaboration with IBM SkillsBuild, supporting expanded access to digital skills, workforce readiness and professional capability development across students, individuals, and the broader workforce.

As AI continues to reshape industries and ways of working, demand for practical digital capability is increasing rapidly. However, for many individuals and organisations, the challenge is no longer awareness of technology, but access to structured, practical pathways that build real confidence and workforce readiness. IBM SkillsBuild is IBM's free global education program focused on expanding access to technology and professional skills development. The program provides industry-aligned learning across areas including artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, data, digital literacy, and workplace skills, along with digital credentials.

What the Partnership Involves

Through this work, NextEd will support the delivery and contextualisation of these learning pathways across education, workforce, and enterprise settings.

The initiative aligns closely with NextEd's broader focus on practical, industry-aligned capability development across Higher Education, Vocational Education and Training (VET), enterprise learning, and workforce enablement.

The collaboration will support three key areas:

Supporting students and early-stage learners

Students across the NextEd ecosystem will be able to access IBM SkillsBuild pathways and credentials alongside their formal studies, helping them build practical AI, digital and professional skills.

Supporting workforce capability uplift

NextEd will include IBM SkillsBuild resources in its AI Workforce Capability programs, supporting organisations seeking to improve AI literacy and responsible technology adoption.

Expanding access to opportunity

By providing access at no cost to eligible learners, the partnership helps reduce barriers to digital skills development and supports broader participation in future-focused learning.

Mark Kehoe, Chief Executive Officer at NextEd Group, said the partnership reflects the growing importance of practical capability development alongside technology adoption.

“Technology adoption alone is not enough. Workforce capability, confidence, and access to practical learning pathways are becoming increasingly important across every sector of the economy. Our focus is helping translate digital learning into practical capability that supports employability, workforce participation, and long-term adaptability.”

Managing Director, Nick Flood, at IBM ANZ said:

“The pace of AI innovation continues to challenge and inspire businesses across industries, making skilled talent even more important than ever. IBM ANZ's collaboration with NextEd Group, is helping extend access for workers seeking the latest AI, cyber security and digital skills.”

NextEd operates across Higher Education, Vocational Education and Training, English language education, and enterprise workforce capability, supporting more than 20,000 direct students annually across Australia and internationally, alongside a growing enterprise and workforce training footprint.

The work with IBM forms part of NextEd's broader work in growing practical digital and workforce capability pathways, aligned to the future of work.

For organisations, education partners, and community groups interested in exploring collaboration opportunities, please contact:
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