worldskills Shanghai 2026

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Skills for an empowered future: Building an inclusive development landscape

WorldSkills Conference 2026 Declaration, Shanghai



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Shanghai Declaration of WorldSkills Conference 2026

We, Members of WorldSkills International, gathered in Shanghai, China, from 23 to 25 September 2026, for WorldSkills Conference 2026, held alongside WorldSkills Shanghai 2026. In alignment with WorldSkills Vision 2035, and under the theme "Shaping a skills-driven future", we affirm our collective commitment to making skills a cornerstone of individual success, industrial transformation, and social prosperity.

We recognize that humanity shares a common destiny and that labor is the fundamental force driving social progress, and that the rapid advancement of artificial intelligence, the pervasive reach of digital technologies, and the urgent demands of the green transition are reshaping global labour markets. Skills are a critical force for driving economic growth, fostering social inclusion, and advancing sustainable development. To inspire more people to pursue skills and to elevate the value of skills, we call upon all stakeholders to embrace the principles of investing in people and lifelong learning. We urge that skills development be prioritized within national development strategies, ensuring equitable access to skills acquisition and upgrading for all, and positioning skills as a vital pathway out of poverty and toward a better quality of life.

I. Embracing technological transformation and cultivating future-ready skills. We commit to upholding a people-centred approach and to advancing the development and dissemination of digital, green, and AI-related competencies. We will refine the skill supply system in response to technological evolution, and ensure that talent development and industrial growth are closely aligned. We will harness AI applications to drive the digital and intelligent transformation of skills training systems, while promoting their open, fair, ethical, and accountable use.

II. Strengthening multi-stakeholder collaboration and establishing a demand-driven skills development ecosystem. Building on existing skills development frameworks, we call for their strengthening to further integrate government policies, industry needs, enterprise engagement, institutional support and broad social participation. We call upon industries and enterprises to identify skill needs, promote on-the-job learning, and bridge the gap between training supply and market demand.

III. Innovating financing mechanisms and ensuring sustainable investment in skills. We advocate for investing in people. We call on all stakeholders to scale up investment and support for skills development by establishing diversified and sustainable financing mechanisms. We further call for optimized resource allocation, greater fiscal efficiency and inclusiveness, fostering the growth of emerging skill sectors, and strengthening the development of relevant training resources.

IV. Elevating the value of skills and fostering an inclusive skills culture. We champion Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) as an esteemed and essential pathway that underpins economic growth, innovation and social prosperity. We call on countries to foster a culture that values and celebrates skills. This includes promoting parity of esteem between vocational and academic pathways, recognizing excellence in skilled professions, encouraging lifelong learning and elevating the visibility of skills through education systems, media and public discourse. We will leverage skills competitions as powerful platforms to showcase excellence and celebrate a culture in which skills are recognized as essential and valued across society.

V. Deepening international cooperation and expanding our global skills community. We commit to building a global platform for skills collaboration, addressing shared challenges, and supporting developing TVET systems strengthen their skills ecosystems. Through technical assistance, trainer development, and resource sharing, we will help countries build skills systems that are tailored to their unique development needs.

We adopt this framework as a guiding call for action, reaffirm our commitment to the full implementation of WorldSkills Vision 2035, and will work together to build an innovative, inclusive, and lifelong skills development system for all. We express our deep appreciation to China, as the co-host of WorldSkills Conference 2026, for its significant contribution to the success of this event, and we look forward to continued collaboration in advancing practical cooperation in skills development worldwide.