Tech Council
of Australia

26 September 2025
Jobs and Skills Australia
Department of Employment and Workplace Relations

Re: Submission to the 2025 Core Skills Occupation List (CSOL) Consultation

Dear Jobs and Skills Australia,

The Tech Council of Australia (TCA) welcomes the opportunity to provide input into the 2025 CSOL consultation.

Australia's long-term prosperity depends on a dynamic, skilled, and globally competitive technology workforce. By ensuring the CSOL reflects current and emerging demand, JSA can play a pivotal role in addressing skills shortages, supporting innovation, and safeguarding Australia's competitiveness.

Most priority technology roles secured in the 2024 CSOL remain, providing much needed certainty to employers and skilled migrants. However, three critical occupations remain excluded despite clear evidence of shortage:

- *Machine Learning Engineers* – essential to AI adoption, facing acute global competition.
- *User Experience (UX) Designers* – now recognised under OSCA, but demand significantly outstrips supply.
- *Product Managers* – requiring recognition as a standalone occupation, distinct from ICT business analysts.

Recommendations:

1. Include **Machine Learning Engineers, UX Designers, and Product Managers** on the 2025 CSOL.
2. Ensure OSCA codes remain flexible to capture emerging technology roles.
3. Continue strong engagement with industry to build robust, evidence-based assessments of future skills needs.

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute. We would be pleased to provide further data or insights to support your work.

Please contact ██ for more information.

Sincerely,

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Submission to Jobs and Skills Australia

The Tech Council of Australia (TCA) welcomes the opportunity to provide input into the 2025 Core Skills Occupation List (CSOL) consultation. The TCA represents over 160 members across the Australian technology sector, including startups, scale-ups, multinationals, and employers across diverse industries that depend on digital capabilities.

As Australia moves into the first year of CSOL structured under the new Occupation and Skills Classification of Australia (OSCA), we commend Jobs and Skills Australia (JSA) for its commitment to evidence-based consultation. It is essential that the CSOL accurately reflects the rapidly evolving skill needs of the technology workforce, ensuring Australia remains globally competitive and continues to attract and retain the talent required to power economic growth.

Australia's technology workforce has grown to more than 1 million workers. This expansion is driven by demand across all sectors — from software development and data analytics, to cybersecurity, AI, and product design. Ensuring migration settings reflect critical skill shortages is vital to sustaining this momentum, complementing domestic training initiatives, and supporting businesses of all sizes.

In 2024, we welcomed the inclusion of many core technology roles in the CSOL. This provided much-needed certainty to employers and skilled migrants. However, several critical occupations remain outside the list despite strong evidence of demand. The TCA submits that these should be reconsidered for 2025.

Priority Occupations for Inclusion

While most of the roles secured in 2024 remain on the list, we urge JSA to reconsider the following three occupations:

- **Machine Learning Engineers** – A fast-growing and highly specialised field underpinning the adoption of artificial intelligence across the economy. Shortages are acute, with high competition for talent globally, and attrition to overseas employers is a risk.
- **User Experience (UX) Designers** – Now recognised as a standalone OSCA occupation, UX Designers play a critical role in product development, accessibility, and customer adoption. Demand significantly outstrips local supply.
- **Product Managers** – Product management is distinct from ICT business analysis and requires unique skills in strategy, design, and market alignment. Recognition as a standalone occupation is essential to accurately capture demand.

Evidence of Shortage

The TCA and its members have observed:

- **Salary trends**: Rising median salaries for UX Designers, ML Engineers, and Product Managers, signalling strong demand and limited supply.
- **Recruitment patterns**: High reliance on international applicants to meet skills thresholds for these roles.
- **Job vacancy data**: Persistent difficulty filling these positions despite sustained job postings.
- **Attrition rates**: Loss of specialised talent to international competitors, particularly in machine learning.

We encourage JSA to consider both industry-wide data and company-level submissions in assessing these shortages.

Recommendation

The Tech Council of Australia recommends:

1. **Inclusion of UX Designers, Machine Learning Engineers, and Product Managers** as priority occupations on the 2025 CSOL.
2. Ongoing review and refinement of OSCA codes to ensure they accurately reflect the evolving nature of technology roles.
3. Continued engagement with industry to build robust evidence bases for emerging skills in areas such as artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, and digital design.

Conclusion

Australia's long-term prosperity depends on a dynamic, skilled, and globally competitive technology workforce. By ensuring the CSOL keeps pace with industry demand, JSA can play a pivotal role in addressing skills shortages, supporting innovation, and safeguarding Australia's competitiveness.

The TCA appreciates the opportunity to provide input to this consultation and stands ready to provide further data or insights to assist JSA's work.