TalentCo

A practical guide to entering Australia's climate workforce

FINDING YOUR GRADUATE CLIMATE CHANGE CAREER

PREPARED FOR

TalentCo candidates

REGION

Australia

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Use this deck section by section, or as a quick reference to the sector or category that matters to you.

INTRODUCTION

About This Guide

Climate change has moved from a niche specialism to a mainstream career driver. Australia's legislated net-zero-by-2050 target, growing renewable build-out, and rising emissions-disclosure expectations mean climate-related skills are now sought across almost every part of the economy. This guide gives TalentCo candidates a practical map of where climate jobs sit, a graduate pathway and further-training guide for nine job categories, and sector detail across government, industry, consulting and NGOs.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Find your category

Identify which of nine functional job categories fits your background and follow its pathway.

Go sector by sector

Government, industry, consulting and NGOs each hire differently read the sector that fits.

Follow the search method

A seven-step process with best-practice tactics you can run in parallel across sectors.

Shortlist your training

Five microcredentials or short courses per category to strengthen your applications.

SECTION 01

The Australian Climate Jobs Landscape

Climate-related employment is not one industry it's a set of functions repeated across four employer types, each with its own culture, hiring calendar and entry pathway.

Government

Sets policy, regulates emissions, funds the transition federal, state and local.

ENTRY POINTS

Structured grad programs · advertised APS/state roles · internships

Industry

Energy & utility companies, renewable developers, and corporates building in-house net-zero teams.

ENTRY POINTS

Grad programs (eng/finance/commercial) · direct junior roles · placements

Consulting

Big Four & specialist advisory firms helping clients measure, report and reduce emissions.

ENTRY POINTS

Grad & vacation programs · direct Graduate/Associate Consultant hires

NGOs & Not-for-Profit

Advocacy, research and campaigning organisations, plus grant-making bodies.

ENTRY POINTS

Direct applications · internships & volunteering · project contracts

SECTION 02 · JOB CATEGORIES 1–2 OF 9

Job Categories: Graduate Pathways

Policy & Government Affairs

Policy officer · Climate policy adviser · Regulatory affairs adviser

GRADUATE PATHWAY

1. **Build a project or case study sample**
   Complete an honours or postgraduate project on a climate or energy policy topic a strong writing sample is one of the most persuasive things you can attach to a government application.
2. **Target structured government entry points**
   Apply to the APS Graduate Program or a state policy stream; a parliamentary or ministerial internship is a strong alternative if a graduate program isn't available in your cycle.
3. **Gain real submission-writing experience**
   Help an NGO, union or academic draft a public consultation submission a low-cost way to practise the exact skill departments are hiring for.

TOP TRAINING & CERTIFICATIONS

- Grad Certificate/Diploma in Public Policy or Public Administration
- In-house departmental policy academy training (most departments run one)
- Short courses in cost-benefit analysis and regulatory impact assessment

Science, Research & Measurement

Climate scientist · GHG accountant · MRV analyst

GRADUATE PATHWAY

1. **Strengthen your research credentials**
   An Honours or Masters (research) in climate, atmospheric or environmental science strengthens applications to CSIRO, the Bureau of Meteorology or university research groups.
2. **Target measurement-focused employers**
   For GHG accounting/MRV roles, apply to the Clean Energy Regulator, a state EPA, or a consultancy preparing National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting (NGER) submissions.
3. **Get hands-on measurement experience**
   A university placement, a CSIRO vacation program, or a citizen-science monitoring project all demonstrate the practical measurement skills employers look for.

TOP TRAINING & CERTIFICATIONS

- GHG accounting training aligned to the NGER scheme and GHG Protocol
- Certified Environmental Practitioner (CEnvP) Climate Change Specialist stream, EIANZ
- Postgraduate research degree (Masters/PhD) for an academic path

Job Categories: Graduate Pathways

Engineering & Technical Delivery

Renewable energy engineer · Grid/network engineer · Energy efficiency engineer

GRADUATE PATHWAY

1. **Choose the right degree electives**
   Complete an Engineers Australia–accredited engineering degree, selecting power systems or renewable energy electives where they're offered.
2. **Secure a placement before you graduate**
   An industry placement or vacation internship during study is how most large energy employers identify graduate engineers ahead of the formal recruitment round.
3. **Apply to structured graduate engineer programs**
   Target graduate programs at energy retailers, transmission/distribution network businesses, or renewable energy developers the highest-volume entry point.

TOP TRAINING & CERTIFICATIONS

- Chartered Professional Engineer (CPEng) via Engineers Australia
- Specialist training in battery storage systems design/installation
- Grid connections and network integration short courses

Climate Risk, Finance & ESG

Climate risk analyst · Sustainable finance analyst · ESG / carbon markets analyst

GRADUATE PATHWAY

1. **Target a dedicated ESG/climate risk stream**
   Banks, super funds and insurers increasingly run a specific ESG or climate risk graduate stream apply directly to that stream rather than the general finance program.
2. **Or enter via mainstream finance and move in**
   ESG and climate risk teams often recruit laterally from risk, credit or investment analyst roles, so a mainstream finance graduate program is a legitimate alternative entry point.
3. **Build carbon market literacy**
   Understanding Australian Carbon Credit Units (ACCUs) and the Safeguard Mechanism is directly useful if you're targeting carbon trading or project finance roles.

TOP TRAINING & CERTIFICATIONS

- GARP Sustainability and Climate Risk (SCR) certificate
- CFA, CPA or Chartered Accountants ANZ (CAANZ) pathways
- Carbon Market Institute short courses on ACCUs and the Safeguard Mechanism

Job Categories: Graduate Pathways

Data & Analytics

Climate data analyst · Emissions modelling analyst · GIS/remote sensing analyst

GRADUATE PATHWAY

1. **Build a public-data portfolio project**
   Analyse publicly available climate or emissions data (e.g. NGER or AEMO datasets) to demonstrate applied skills employers can see directly, not just claim on a resume.
2. **Apply to agencies with real datasets**
   Graduate data/analyst roles at DCCEEW, AEMO, the Bureau of Meteorology, consultancies or energy companies are the most direct route into this category.
3. **Contribute to an open, visible project**
   An open-source climate data tool or a university research group builds a track record you can point to, especially if your degree is more general.

TOP TRAINING & CERTIFICATIONS

- Postgrad certificate in data science, statistics or GIS
- Esri / GIS certification for spatial analysis roles
- Cloud platform certification AWS, Azure or Google Cloud

Sustainability & Net-Zero Strategy

Sustainability adviser · Net-zero program manager · ESG reporting analyst

GRADUATE PATHWAY

1. **Build broad commercial exposure first**
   Many sustainability leaders start in any graduate program and move into a dedicated sustainability function once they understand how the business actually runs.
2. **Or apply directly into the function**
   A growing number of corporates and consultancies now hire straight into sustainability/net-zero teams as a graduate or analyst apply directly where this is offered.
3. **Show initiative before your first paid role**
   Volunteering on a university or workplace sustainability committee is a simple, visible way to demonstrate genuine commitment before you have paid experience.

TOP TRAINING & CERTIFICATIONS

- Grad Certificate in Sustainability / Environmental Management
- ISSB/AASB S2 climate reporting training (CPA Australia, CAANZ)
- GRI Certified Sustainability Professional training

Job Categories: Graduate Pathways

Law & Compliance

Environmental / climate lawyer · Regulatory compliance officer

GRADUATE PATHWAY

1. **Choose the right law electives**
   Complete a JD or Bachelor of Laws, selecting environmental or climate law electives where they're available, to build subject-matter depth early.
2. **Complete PLT and gain admission**
   Practical Legal Training is mandatory before you can practise complete it through a provider such as the College of Law, then apply for admission through your state or territory's board.
3. **Seek relevant clerkships or compliance roles**
   Clerkships or paralegal roles at firms with an environment/planning practice, or compliance teams at the Clean Energy Regulator or a state EPA, are the clearest entry points.

TOP TRAINING & CERTIFICATIONS

- Practical Legal Training (PLT) — mandatory for admission
- CPD in environmental and planning law once admitted
- Certified Environmental Practitioner (CEnvP) — EIANZ

Communications, Advocacy & Campaigns

Campaigner · Communications officer · Community engagement adviser

GRADUATE PATHWAY

1. **Build a visible portfolio**
   Student media, an NGO internship, or volunteer campaign work all demonstrate the writing and organising skills this sector weighs heavily start building this before you graduate.
2. **Apply directly formal grad programs are rare**
   Approach NGOs, government campaign teams and corporate public affairs teams directly, since structured graduate programs are uncommon in this category.
3. **Use a contract role as your entry point**
   A fixed-term campaign contract is a common, legitimate way in, and frequently converts to an ongoing role once you've proven yourself.

TOP TRAINING & CERTIFICATIONS

- Campaign and organising training Australian Progress
- PRIA/CPRA accreditation for corporate-facing comms roles
- IAP2A Certificate of Engagement for community engagement roles

Job Categories: Graduate Pathways

Project & Program Management

Program coordinator · Project officer · Delivery manager

GRADUATE PATHWAY

1. **Build early delivery evidence**
   Take on project coordination responsibility within any graduate role or student organisation — the fastest way to build a track record before you have a formal PM title.

2. **Apply across any of the four sectors**
   Project/program officer roles are the most transferable category in this guide, and often the fastest way into a climate-focused organisation whichever sector you start in.

3. **Formalise your skills once you have experience**
   Move toward a recognised project management certification once you have 12 or more months of project experience under your belt.

TOP TRAINING & CERTIFICATIONS

- Certificate IV in Project Management Practice (BSB40920)
- AIPM Certified Practising Project Practitioner (CPPP)
- PRINCE2 Foundation / Practitioner

SECTION 02 · SECTOR 1 OF 4

Government Pathways

Sets, funds and regulates Australia's climate targets — the most structured graduate entry point.

ORGANISATIONS TO KNOW

DCCEEW · Clean Energy Regulator · ARENA · CEFC · AEMO · state energy/environment departments · local councils

HOW HIRING WORKS — A FIVE-STEP PROCESS

1. **Map the intake calendar —** Federal and state graduate programs open roughly 9–12 months ahead of a Feb/Mar start, typically between December and April put every target department's opening date in a calendar now.

2. **Register on the official portals —** Create a profile and set alerts on APSJobs (the federal graduate portal) and your state's public sector jobs site most programs are only ever advertised there, not on general job boards.

3. **Draft STAR-format responses early —** Government applications are assessed against selection criteria or capability questions prepare 4–5 Situation/Task/Action/Result examples before applications open so you can apply within days, not weeks.

4. **Apply outside the grad intake too —** Ongoing APS3–APS6 (or state-equivalent) roles are advertised year-round a direct application to an advertised policy, science or program role is often faster than waiting for the next graduate round.

5. **Confirm eligibility before you apply —** Check citizenship, security-clearance and working-rights requirements for each specific role many federal and some state positions require Australian citizenship.

WHERE TO APPLY (examples)

APSJobs Graduate Programs · APSJobs (all federal roles) · I Work for NSW · Queensland Smart Jobs

> *Policy roles benefit from a Public Policy Grad Certificate; science roles from GHG accounting & CEnvP; engineering roles from progress toward CPEng.*

SECTION 02 · SECTOR 2 OF 4

Industry Pathways

Energy & utility companies, renewable developers, and mainstream corporates building in-house climate capability.

ORGANISATIONS TO KNOW

AGL · Origin · EnergyAustralia · Transgrid · AusNet · renewable energy developers · banks, super funds, miners, property & agri firms

HOW HIRING WORKS — A FIVE-STEP PROCESS

1. **Track major employer intakes —** Large energy retailers, networks and corporates (AGL, Origin, EnergyAustralia, Transgrid, AusNet) run structured engineering, finance and commercial grad programs, typically advertised February to July for a start the following year.

2. **Watch renewable developers directly —** Smaller wind, solar and battery developers rarely run formal programs monitor their own careers pages and LinkedIn, and don't hesitate to send a speculative application to a company you'd want to work for.

3. **Build a target list from sector directories —** Use the Clean Energy Council's member and careers directory alongside GradConnection and Prosple to identify employers building climate teams beyond the well-known names.

4. **Lead with technical or quantitative evidence —** Engineering, data or finance coursework, projects and vacation placements matter more here than a generic cover letter most graduate processes include an aptitude or technical screening stage.

5. **Prioritise vacation programs —** A vacation placement roughly a year ahead of the graduate intake is the most reliable route to a return offer at the larger energy employers apply to these before the graduate round itself.

WHERE TO APPLY

Clean Energy Council Careers Guide · Prosple Australia · GradConnection Australia · Climate Salad Jobs

> *Engineers should plan toward CPEng; finance/risk hires benefit from the GARP SCR certificate; sustainability hires from ISSB/AASB S2 training.*

SECTION 02 · SECTOR 3 OF 4

Consulting Pathways

Advises both government and industry on strategy, emissions accounting and climate risk — strong for graduates wanting breadth.

ORGANISATIONS TO KNOW

Deloitte · EY · KPMG · PwC climate practices · ERM, WSP, Aurecon, GHD, Point Advisory and other specialist advisories

HOW HIRING WORKS — A FIVE-STEP PROCESS

1. **Target the Big Four's climate practices —** Deloitte, EY, KPMG and PwC each run a dedicated climate change/sustainability services team apply directly to that stream on the firm's own graduate careers page, not just the general graduate program.

2. **Prioritise vacation programs —** Vacation (clerkship-style) programs run 6–12 months ahead of the graduate intake and are the strongest entry route a strong vacation placement very often converts into a graduate offer.

3. **Prepare for a multi-stage process —** Expect an online application, psychometric/aptitude testing, a written case study, and one or more interview rounds practise case-style reasoning even for climate-specific roles.

4. **Track intakes across platforms —** Consulting recruitment tends to open earlier than other sectors follow GradConnection, Prosple and each firm's own "students & graduates" hub so you don't miss an opening date.

5. **Go direct for specialist advisories —** Firms like ERM, WSP, Aurecon, GHD and Point Advisory hire more informally approach them directly and lead with technical credentials (GHG accounting, EIA, TCFD/ISSB familiarity) over a generic cover letter.

WHERE TO APPLY

Deloitte Students & Graduates · EY Climate Change & Sustainability Services · Prosple Australia · GradConnection Australia

> *CEnvP certification suits environmental consultancies; the GARP SCR certificate suits climate risk advisory; ISSB/GRI training supports ESG advisory roles.*

SECTION 02 · SECTOR 4 OF 4

NGOs & Not-for-Profit Pathways

Drives advocacy, research and community climate action — hiring is direct, relationship-driven and mission-focused.

ORGANISATIONS TO KNOW

Climate Council · Australian Conservation Foundation · WWF-Australia · Beyond Zero Emissions · Greenpeace · philanthropic foundations

HOW HIRING WORKS — A FIVE-STEP PROCESS

1. **Set alerts on the sector's main board —** EthicalJobs.com.au carries the large majority of Australian NGO, advocacy and community-sector roles create a saved search for "climate" and "environment" and check it several times a week, since roles close quickly.

2. **Follow target organisations directly —** Climate Council, ACF, WWF-Australia, Beyond Zero Emissions and Greenpeace Australia Pacific often post first to their own careers page and LinkedIn before (or instead of) a job board.

3. **Build a volunteering or internship track record —** NGOs weigh demonstrated commitment heavily and prefer to hire people they already know a few months of volunteering or a campaign internship is a legitimate, common way in.

4. **Write a genuinely tailored cover letter —** Explain specifically why that organisation's mission and current campaigns matter to you a generic "I care about climate change" letter is the most common reason applications are screened out here.

5. **Move quickly once you see a fit —** Roles are often advertised for a short window and close as soon as a strong pool is reached have a current resume and cover-letter template ready so you can apply within a day or two.

WHERE TO APPLY

EthicalJobs.com.au · Environment & Sustainability Jobs · Climate Salad Jobs

> *Campaign & organising training (e.g. Australian Progress) is directly useful for advocacy roles; grant-writing courses strengthen philanthropic applications.*

SECTION 03

A Seven-Step Job Search Method

Run steps 1–4 in parallel across two or three sectors, then move through 5–7 as applications progress — and loop back to networking after any setback.

1 — Clarify your niche
Map your degree, coursework and experience against the job categories. Write a one-sentence value proposition.

2 — Map the landscape
Build a target list of 20–30 organisations across at least two sectors. Note grad program timing.

3 — Build application assets
Keep one master resume, tailored per sector. Prepare STAR-format selection-criteria responses.

4 — Activate your network
Request informational interviews. Join Climate Salad and alumni sustainability networks.

5 — Apply strategically
Track grad program windows (most open Dec–May). Apply broadly and early.

6 — Prepare for assessment
Practise psychometric tests, case studies and STAR-format interviews.

7 — Evaluate & keep building
Weigh mission fit, growth and pay together. Keep networking after any setback.

BEST-PRACTICE TIPS THAT APPLY EVERYWHERE

- Use the STAR method (Situation, Task, Action, Result) for any behavioural or selection-criteria question
- Choose one recognised credential matching your target category — it signals commitment
- Keep a simple tracker: organisation, sector, role, date applied, status, next action
- Treat every unsuccessful application as feedback — ask for it directly where you interviewed

SECTION 04

Microcredentials & Specialist Short Courses

Beyond major professional certifications (CPEng, CEnvP, PLT, the GARP SCR certificate and similar), Australian universities and private training providers now offer a large, growing market of short, stackable microcredentials from a few hours to a few months, far cheaper and faster than a further degree.

The following pages shortlist five of the strongest options a mix of university microcredentials and private-industry short courses for each of the nine job categories.

Course names, providers and availability change frequently use this as a starting shortlist and confirm current details, cost and intake dates directly with the provider before enrolling.

- **Policy & Government Affairs**
- **Science, Research & Measurement**
- **Engineering & Technical Delivery**
- **Climate Risk, Finance & ESG**
- **Data & Analytics**
- **Sustainability & Net-Zero Strategy**
- **Law & Compliance**
- **Communications, Advocacy & Campaigns**
- **Project & Program Management**

Microcredentials Shortlist

Five of the strongest microcredentials and short courses per job category — course, training institution and a direct link. Confirm current cost, dates and eligibility with the provider before enrolling.

Policy & Government Affairs

- Domestic Climate Change Policy and Economics — ANU, Crawford School
- Greening Government Microcredentials — RMIT Online, with the APS
- Delivering Strategic Policy — ANZSOG
- Environmental Cost-Benefit Analysis in Business — Deakin University (FutureLearn)
- ESG Micro-credential — Governance Institute of Australia

Engineering & Technical Delivery

- Grad Cert in Renewable Energy Engineering — Griffith University (OUA)
- Renewable Energy Integration — University of Queensland (CPD)
- Design & Install Grid-Connected Battery Storage — NECA Education & Careers
- Grid-Connected Battery Storage — Design Only — Global Sustainable Energy Solutions
- Energy & Water for Offices (New Assessors) — NABERS Learn

Data & Analytics

- GIS and Remote Sensing in a Changing World — University of Western Australia
- Data Analysis with R for Environmental Science — University of Western Australia
- Meeting Australian Government Climate Targets — RMIT Online, with APS Academy
- Intro to GIS → ArcGIS Pro: Essential Workflows — Esri Australia
- Spatial Data Science: The New Frontier — Esri

Science, Research & Measurement

- Net Zero Sprint — University of Sydney
- GIS and Remote Sensing in a Changing World — University of Western Australia
- Undergrad Certificate in Climate Accounting — University of Tasmania
- Greenhouse Gas Accounting — CPA Australia / CFI
- NGERS Audit Compliance Training — Carbon Training International

Climate Risk, Finance & ESG

- Certificate in Climate-Related Disclosures — Chartered Accountants ANZ
- Sustainability and Climate Risk (SCR) Certificate — GARP
- Sustainable Investing Certificate (ESG Investing) — CFA Institute / CFA Society Aus.
- Introduction to ESG (Microcredential) — Bond University
- Grad Cert in Sustainable Finance & Investment — RMIT University

Microcredentials Shortlist

Five of the strongest microcredentials and short courses per job category — course, training institution and a direct link. Confirm current cost, dates and eligibility with the provider before enrolling.

Sustainability & Net-Zero Strategy

- **Net Zero Sprint** — Univ. of Sydney Exec Plus, with HSBC ↗
- **Introduction to ESG** — Bond University ↗
- **Foundations of Environmental Sustainability** — Western Sydney University ↗
- **ESG Micro-credential** — MSQ ↗
- **GRI Certified Sustainability Professional** — GRI (via Decarbonate) ↗

Law & Compliance

- **International Climate Change Law and Policy** — University of Newcastle ↗
- **Sustainability & Climate-Related Financial Reporting** — RMIT Online, with Deloitte ↗
- **Introduction to ESG in Australasia: Practice Guide** — College of Law (CPD) ↗
- **ESG short course** — Governance Institute of Australia ↗
- **Certified Environmental Practitioner (CEnvP)** — EIANZ ↗

Communications, Advocacy & Campaigns

- **Climate Change Communication (Microcredential)** — Deakin University (FutureLearn) ↗
- **Progress Fellowship** — Australian Progress ↗
- **IAP2A Certificate of Engagement** — IAP2 Australasia ↗
- **Strategies in Science Communication** — ANU CPAS ↗
- **PR Fundamentals** — Comms & Public Relations Australia ↗

Project & Program Management

- **Project Management: Risk & Economic Analysis** — University of Melbourne ↗
- **Becoming Climate Ready** — Griffith University / Climate Action Beacon ↗
- **Certified Practising Project Practitioner (CPPP)** — AIPM ↗
- **PRINCE2 Foundation** — PeopleCert-accredited providers ↗
- **Certificate IV in Project Management Practice** — AIM / CQUniversity ↗

SECTION 05

Before You Submit Any Application

- Tailored your resume and cover letter to this specific sector and organisation?
- Identified a training or certification that would strengthen this application?
- Addressed every selection criterion or capability listed, with specific examples?
- Asked someone else to proofread your application?
- Checked eligibility citizenship, visa status, security clearance, working rights?
- Logged the application in your tracker with closing date and follow-up date?
- Researched the organisation's climate targets, recent projects and current issues?

Climate careers in Australia are still being built — treat this guide as a starting map and confirm every detail on the employer's own website.

GOOD LUCK WITH YOUR CLIMATE CAREER

TalentCo helps Australian graduates find the organisations building the climate transition across government, industry, consulting and NGOs.