

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

### *For employers wanting to know more about the Enhancing the Food Production Workforce with Neuroinclusion Pilot*

#### **What is neurodiversity and neurodivergence?**

- Neurodiversity refers to the natural differences in how people think, learn, process information, and experience the world.
- Neurodivergence describes individuals whose brain functioning differs from what is considered 'typical', including autistic people, people with ADHD, dyslexia and other cognitive differences.
- Neurodiversity recognises these differences as a normal part of human variation that can bring valuable strengths to workplaces.

#### **Why is the pilot focused on autistic employees?**

- The pilot focuses on autistic employees because autistic people remain significantly underrepresented in employment despite having strong skills and work capabilities.
- Evidence shows many autistic employees can bring strengths such as attention to detail, reliability, strong focus and different ways of thinking and problem-solving when supported appropriately.
- The structured, process-driven nature of red meat processing can align well with these strengths when inclusive practices are in place.

#### **Why is AMPC running this pilot?**

- AMPC is leading this pilot to address ongoing workforce shortages in the red meat processing industry.
- The pilot supports employers to build sustainable, inclusive recruitment and retention practices.
- It forms part of AMPC's broader commitment to workforce development, productivity, and industry sustainability.

#### **Where will the pilot initially operate?**

- Initial pilot activities and participating workplaces will be located in South Brisbane and Burleigh Heads, with opportunities to expand to additional locations over time.



### **Why should employers participate?**

- Access to an untapped talent pool to address workforce shortages.
- Improved retention, productivity and workplace culture.
- Contribution to an industry-leading, sustainable workforce model.

### **Does participating in the pilot cost employers anything?**

- There is no direct cost for employers to participate in the pilot.
- Employers receive access to tailored resources, guidance, and specialist support at no cost.
- Employer contribution is primarily through participation, engagement, and provision of suitable roles.

### **What is expected of employers who participate in the pilot?**

- Provide suitable roles and a safe, supportive workplace environment.
- Engage with the pilot partners during recruitment, onboarding and employment.
- Participate in feedback and evaluation activities to support continuous improvement.

### **Does the pilot replace existing workplace practices?**

The pilot is designed to complement existing recruitment and workforce practices, not replace them. Employers continue to make their own hiring decisions and manage recruitment and workforce processes, with additional support, guidance and neuroinclusive strategies provided through the pilot.

### **Do employers need autism or neurodiversity expertise to participate?**

- No prior autism or neurodiversity expertise is required.
- The pilot is designed to support employers at any starting point.
- Training, tools, and practical guidance are provided throughout the pilot.

### **Will employers be responsible for running neurodiversity awareness training for their staff?**

No. Employers will not be expected to design or deliver training independently.



The pilot includes a structured package of practical training and resources that will be provided to participating workplaces. Training is designed to be simple, relevant, and easy to implement within busy operational environments.

The pilot includes five tailored training streams to support all levels of the workplace:

- Executive leaders – building understanding and organisational commitment
- HR teams – inclusive recruitment, onboarding and policy support
- Supervisors and line managers – practical day-to-day strategies for supporting autistic employees
- General staff – awareness, communication and workplace inclusion
- Autistic employees – tailored support to assist successful transition, including navigating workplace culture, unwritten social conventions, expectations and routines.

Pilot partners will guide employers on how and when training is delivered, with resources provided throughout the pilot to minimise additional workload.

### **Where can employers find more information about neurodiversity and inclusive workplaces?**

Additional information, resources and neurodiversity training materials are available through the AMPC Knowledge Hub: <https://www.ampc.com.au/knowledge-hub/>. Resources include practical guidance to support neuroinclusive recruitment, onboarding and workplace practices.

### **What support do employers receive during the pilot?**

- Support to recruit, onboard and retain autistic employees, with guidance at each stage of the process.
- Access to training and information guides for executives, HR teams, supervisors, general staff and autistic employees
- Ongoing specialist support from Neurodiversity Employment Specialist - Team Cohesion, Queensland's peak body for Autism - Autism Queensland and specially created Neurodiversity Cultural Liaison Officer (NCLO) role (more information in the next question).
- The NCLO provides coordination, practical troubleshooting and regular check-ins across the pilot, backed by Autism Queensland's multidisciplinary team, to ensure any challenges are addressed early and employers feel supported.

### **What is a Neurodiversity Cultural Liaison Officer (NCLO)?**



NCLO stands for Neurodiversity Cultural Liaison Officer. Drawing on the successful PALM scheme Cultural Liaison Officer model, the NCLO works on-site to support autistic employees, supervisors, and workplaces throughout the pilot.

They provide practical support with neurodiversity training, workplace communication, developing support strategies, recommending workplace adjustments, supervisor guidance, goal setting, problem solving, and wellbeing support to help create positive and sustainable employment outcomes.

### **What happens if workplace challenges arise during the pilot?**

It is normal for employers to feel unsure about participating in a new employment program and to want to ensure they are providing appropriate support for employees. The pilot is designed to ensure employers are not expected to manage challenges alone.

The pilot includes ongoing support and practical troubleshooting through the Neurodiversity Cultural Liaison Officer (NCLO) and pilot partners. Early communication, regular check-ins and collaborative problem-solving are used to help identify and address workplace challenges before they escalate.

Support may include guidance around communication, workplace adjustments, onboarding, routines, supervisor support, team dynamics and employee wellbeing. The focus is on practical, achievable strategies that support both operational requirements and positive employment outcomes for autistic employees and workplaces. The aim is to provide practical support that helps maintain positive workplace outcomes for both employees and business operations.

### **What kind of workplace adjustments might be needed?**

Every autistic person is different, and support needs, communication preferences and working styles can vary from person to person. It is important to ask the individual what supports or adjustments may assist them to work successfully and comfortably in the workplace.

Examples of workplace adjustments may include:

- clear written instructions
- supportive and direct communication
- predictable routines and processes
- visual supports or checklists
- access to quieter spaces where possible
- structured onboarding and training



- flexibility in communication methods
- part-time or flexible work arrangements where operationally possible

Many workplace adjustments are simple, low-cost, and can improve clarity and consistency for all employees.

### **What kinds of jobs are available?**

A range of roles may be available depending on operational requirements and business needs. Employers are also encouraged to consider applicants' skills, interests and experience when identifying suitable opportunities. Where possible, employers may explore how an applicant's strengths align with existing or emerging workplace needs. Applicants will be supported to explore roles that align with their skills, interests, preferences and support needs.

Roles may include quality control and packaging, data entry and data collection, IT and technology, administration and office roles, finance and bookkeeping, logistics and warehousing, meat processing (production), cleaning and laundry, cafeteria roles, machine operation support, and animal care.

Many roles involve structured processes, practical tasks and clear workplace expectations.

Some roles may commence as part-time positions, with the potential to increase to full-time hours over time depending on operational requirements and employee preferences.

### **What types of roles are autistic employees suited to within red meat processing?**

- Autistic employees may be suited to a wide range of roles depending on individual strengths and support needs.
- Roles with clear rules and routines, structure and predictable tasks are often well aligned.
- A few examples include: processing line work, packing, quality checking, IT and Technology, Data Collection, logistics and support roles.

### **Will supervisors be required to do extra work or reporting?**

- The pilot is designed to minimise additional workload.
- Supervisors should participate in short training sessions and provide occasional feedback.
- Clearer structures and communication often improve supervision for all staff.

### **How many employees will be involved?**



The pilot involves a small number of autistic employees across participating workplaces. This allows tailored support and close evaluation. Numbers vary depending on employer capacity and role availability.

### **How long does the pilot run for?**

- The pilot runs over a defined period to allow recruitment, onboarding, support and evaluation.
- Specific timelines will be confirmed with participating employers.
- The pilot will inform future scale-up across the industry.

### **What benefits have other employers experienced from neuroinclusive employment?**

Employers who have implemented neuroinclusive employment practices have reported a range of workforce and business benefits, including improved employee retention, reliability, reduced turnover, workforce diversification, and stronger workplace culture.

Many employers also report that clearer communication, structured processes and inclusive practices can improve the workplace experience for all employees.

### **What happens after the pilot ends?**

The pilot is designed to inform longer-term neuroinclusive workforce practices across the industry. Participating employers will retain the knowledge, resources and capability developed through the pilot, with findings helping to guide future expansion and sustainability of the program.

### **Who can I contact for more information?**

For more information contact:

Employer enquiries - AMPC: [communications@ampc.com.au](mailto:communications@ampc.com.au)

General pilot enquiries - Team Cohesion: [enquiries@teamcohesion.com.au](mailto:enquiries@teamcohesion.com.au)

*The Enhancing the Food Production Workforce with Neuroinclusion Pilot is being delivered in partnership with Team Cohesion and participating employers, working together to create more inclusive employment opportunities for autistic job seekers.*

