

Want to get into the Sport & Recreation industry?

Want to be part of a winning team? The Sports & Recreation industry presents many opportunities to achieve your career goals. As Australia gears up for the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games and the men's AFL season kicks off, how can you make your mark in this rapidly evolving industry?

The latest data from SEEK Employment Trends shows opportunities in Sports and Recreation are on the rise. Prospects were up by 2% year-on-year in February and the average advertised salary was \$64,887. For the three-month period of December to February, coaching and instruction presented the most opportunities with 20% year-on-year increase. Management roles grew by 12% over the same period and fitness and personal training was up by 4%.

Australia's golden moment

The Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games (GC2018) will be Australia's biggest sporting event of the decade when it begins on 4 April. More than 6,600 athletes and team officials from 70 nations will be competing in 18 sports and seven para-sports and over one million tickets have been sold for the event.

At its peak, the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games Corporation (GOLDOC), the organisation charged with delivering the event, will employ more than 1,600 people and will deliver the Games with the support of 15,000 volunteers, known as 'Games Shapers'.

Jessica Platts, Head of Head of Workforce at GOLDOC, says delivering GC2018 requires skills from a wide range of backgrounds and sectors, including media, hospitality, venue management, event management, catering, security and cleaning. "GOLDOC has 42 functional areas, so it is a very dynamic environment where employees need to adapt to change along with the ebbs and flows of delivering a major event," she says. "The ability to work as part of a team, respond to changing priorities

and a focus on delivering outcomes are key attributes.”

The recruitment program for GC2018 has been in place since 2012. Almost 1,000 people joined GOLDOC in late 2017 and early 2018 following two recruitment phases delivered in association with SEEK. More than 47,000 people also applied to volunteer at. Platts says 21,000 were interviewed through the Volunteer Selection Centre.

“Another 45,000 contractors will be working alongside staff and volunteers,” she says.

“Being part of GC2018 is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to further your skills and deliver a major global event. It can lead to future work in a wide range of sectors, including major events and the commercial sector.”

More than a game

Platt says GOLDOC is committed to developing a diverse workforce. “We apply the principles of equity, fairness and transparency to all recruitment and selection processes,” she says.

Paul Bruce, Managing Director at sports recruitment company Left Field Sports Solutions, says more sporting organisations are looking to recruit people who represent the breadth of their fan base. “Sporting associations are casting the net much wider today,” he says. “They are looking for the best person for the job and work environments are much more inclusive.”

The AFL is a great example. The 2018 season kicks off this month and the league’s strong workforce presence across the country is key to its success. Sarah Fair, AFL’s General Manager People, says that representation from diverse groups is vital to the AFL’s success. “The face of Australia is changing and if we want to continue to be the number one sports and entertainment business, we know we need to change with it. We want the AFL to be for everyone, no matter who they are or where they are from.”

Fair says inclusive practices must be embedded in everything the AFL does. “We offer great flexible work options for all our people, so they can ‘play the day their way’, whether it be working remotely, starting at different times of the day or simply wearing clothing that express who they are. Our flexible working is about encouraging our people to work in a way that brings out their best.”

Giving yourself a sporting chance

Building a career in the Sports and Recreation industry requires commitment.

“Employers in the industry are taking a far more professional view of the workplace,” says Bruce. “Candidates need to be prepared to roll up their sleeves as, depending on the sporting association, resources can be limited. It often requires long hours and weekend work. Employers are also looking for people who can work well with volunteers as they are so crucial to sport.”

Platts says a passion for sport is valuable but communication skills are also vital. “We look for team players, problem solvers and positive attitudes,” she says.

Teamwork is also important at the AFL. “Our aim is to ultimately create a great team of talented people from diverse backgrounds, who love what they do, are aligned to our values and have the capability to deliver on what’s most important.”

It’s shaping up to be a big year for sport in Australia and with more opportunities in the industry on SEEK, you may soon find yourself in that winning team.