

Local Jobs Plan

Barwon Employment Region | VIC | January 2023

Workforce Australia Local Jobs (Local Jobs) is a program that supports tailored approaches to accelerate reskilling, upskilling and employment pathways in response to current and emerging local workforce needs.

Local Jobs elements

Local Jobs Plan

The Local Jobs Plan sets out the skills and employment challenges and priorities of the region, and associated strategies that will drive the design and implementation of activities to be implemented to address these challenges.

Employment Facilitators

Employment Facilitators and Support Officers support the delivery of the program by bringing together key stakeholders including businesses, employment services providers, higher education and training organisations.

Local Jobs and Skills Taskforce

Each Employment Region has its own Taskforce. Representatives include local stakeholders who have demonstrated experience in upskilling, reskilling, and an ability to represent, connect and collaborate with others in the region to meet labour market needs.

Local Recovery and National Priority Funds

The Local Recovery Fund supports projects that meet the priorities identified in the Local Jobs Plan. The National Priority Fund provides funding for innovative local solutions to address structural barriers to employment.



Explore labour market insights for the [Barwon Employment Region](#)

Local labour market challenges in the region

- **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples:** Not connected to education or employment, experience labour market dislocation. Local employers/infrastructure projects find it difficult to meet Aboriginal procurement targets and support is required for local employers to provide culturally safe workplaces for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- **Places of Disadvantage:** A large section of the region has a history of social, economic, and labour market disadvantage, including Norlane, Corio, Whittington, North Geelong, Newcomb, Moolap and Portarlington.
- **Youth:** The youth unemployment rate in the northern suburbs is higher than the Victorian average. A high proportion of young people work in the sectors of hospitality, retail and tourism, which have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic.
- **Transport barriers:** Public transport is not always available for participants, particularly in the smaller Local Government Areas of Golden Plains, Queenscliffe and Surf Coast. Obtaining a car licence can be difficult with long wait times in the northern suburbs for programs like L2P which assist young people with obtaining a driver's licence.
- **Workforce Australia Services:** A significant number of participants have been unemployed for 12 months or more.
- **People with a Disability:** A high proportion of participants identify as a person with a disability. There is a growing need for support, including utilising the assistance of community support organisations to address the increase in people experiencing Mental Health concerns.
- **Housing:** The availability of affordable housing, including public housing, contributes to greater disadvantage.
- **Apprentices and Trainees:** Additional support continues to be required for participants to commence and complete apprenticeships and traineeships across the region.
- **Mature Age:** Participants aged 50 years and above account for a high proportion of participants registered on Australian Government employment services in the Barwon Employment Region.
- **Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD):** Low education and literacy levels, and limited labour market experience within cohorts of the CALD community.
- **Labour Market Conditions:** Labour shortages exist across all industries, particularly in the rural areas. Key Industries continue to feel the effects of the pandemic, including tourism, hospitality, retail, personal services, professional services, and arts and recreation.

Local jobs and skills priorities and strategies in the region

Priority 1 – Maximising uptake of existing employment services and training programs to meet industry need

What are our challenges and opportunities?

Labour market is unable to meet the needs and expectations of industry.

How are we responding?

- Raising awareness of the benefits of existing programs and creating pathways to employment in key industry sectors in the region, including health care and social assistance, manufacturing, construction, tourism and hospitality and education and training.
- Gaining an understanding of employment and training programs currently funded by Australian, Victorian and local governments to maximise awareness of and participation in local programs.
- Creating pathways to employment and increasing awareness of the key industries listed above, as well as agriculture, renewable energy, and creative industries.
- Collaborating with key businesses from current and growth industries in tailoring initiatives to meet their workforce needs.
- Increasing business awareness of the range of supports available.

Priority 2 – Supporting major infrastructure projects and increasing apprenticeship/traineeship commencements

What are our challenges and opportunities?

Lack of understanding of projects, infrastructure, and support.

How are we responding?

- Providing linkages between local individuals and major infrastructure projects, including promotion of apprenticeship/traineeship pathways.
- Ensuring local Workforce Australia Employment Service Providers are aware of employment pathways for current and planned major infrastructure opportunities in the region.
- Supporting G21 Region Opportunities for Work in working with major infrastructure projects to engage priority cohorts in local opportunities.
- Partnering with local training organisations to provide training pathways to meet the needs of major infrastructure projects.
- Creating and delivering a suite of information sessions aimed at increasing individual and business awareness of apprenticeship and traineeship opportunities in the region.

Priority 3 – Addressing barriers for disadvantaged cohorts

What are our challenges and opportunities?

Disadvantaged participants, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, youth, people with a disability, mature age, culturally and linguistically diverse and long term unemployed, are experiencing barriers to employment, including access to suitable and affordable housing and transport.

How are we responding?

- Generating opportunities for skill development aligned to local and industry needs and focussing efforts on reducing barriers to accessing employment.
- Assisting participants to gain their driver's licence, by collaborating with agencies delivering driving related programs.
- Advocating for improved housing options to support employment in the region and increasing awareness of alternative accommodation options available.
- Identifying barriers for disadvantaged cohorts within the community and minimising the impact of barriers in accessing education and sustainable employment.
- Exploring opportunities for inclusive employment and collaborating with business to create meaningful pathways to employment for individuals.
- Collaborating with key stakeholders to explore opportunities for young people to engage in education and training opportunities.
- Identifying existing tailored one-on-one services/programs which aim to address participant's barriers.

Priority 4 – Boosting training and employment opportunities for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community

What are our challenges and opportunities?

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants in the region experience additional barriers to accessing employment opportunities.

How are we responding?

- Collaborating with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander agencies to provide sustainable employment pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants.
- Collaborating with existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to support local organisations to become culturally safe workplaces, including enabling inclusive recruitment practices.
- Partnering with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander agencies to provide information sessions to increase awareness of career pathways and employment opportunities.
- Providing links between Workforce Australia Employment Service Providers and organisations supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants to provide culturally specific support.
- Collaborating with the Geelong Aboriginal Employment Taskforce, to assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants into employment.
- Working alongside local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander agencies to create an information session for business, as an introduction to developing a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), showcasing a best practice example.
- Supporting local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander careers and employment events.

Priority 5 – Supporting a COVID-19 affected economy

What are our challenges and opportunities?

Continued impacts of COVID-19 in the region and the associated flow-on effects, including mental health and wellbeing, and the changing needs of participants, with workers seeking flexibility and the ability to have control of their career.

How are we responding?

- Supporting capacity building through Workforce Australia Employment Service Providers of individuals to successfully participate in the workforce, allowing for growth and future job creation.
- Supporting the transition of the workforce to a range of employment modes, including self-employment, home business, starting your own business, start-ups, and entrepreneurs.
- Investigating opportunities for those not currently participating in the labour force to re-engage.
- Providing linkages to existing small business and self-employment supports e.g., City of Greater Geelong Small Business Festivals.
- Investigating opportunities for unvaccinated participants to access employment opportunities, while current vaccine mandates remain.
- Creating and delivering of a suite of information sessions, featuring industry presentations aimed at increasing participant awareness of employment opportunities available in the region, including hospitality and tourism.
- Providing connections for participants and businesses to regional mental health supports and promoting mentally healthy workplaces.
- Creating resources for business to support their employees in a post COVID-19 environment.

Want to know more?

- Contact: Tracey Jeffery and Carley Brennan, Barwon Region Employment Facilitators: employmentfacilitator@barwonregionlocaljobs.org.au
- Visit: [Barwon Region Local Jobs](#), [Local Jobs](#) or [Workforce Australia](#)