

Local Jobs Plan

North Eastern Melbourne Employment Region | VIC | February 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 [North Eastern Melbourne Employment Region](#)

Local labour market challenges in the region

- Continued barriers to inclusion of people with lower participation in employment, such as people with a disability, culturally and linguistically diverse people, disengaged youth and First Nations people.
- A lack of alignment between business expectations of applicants for entry level roles in high demand sectors such as retail and hospitality, and the skills and experience of the broad range of cohorts that make up current employment services provider caseloads at the Australian and State government levels.
- An unpredictable post COVID-19 labour market impacting business engagement, service provision and individuals' participation rates.
- Known and predicted skilled worker shortages in sectors such as care and support, manufacturing and construction.
- Fragmented awareness of the wide range of available skills, training, and employment support pathways introduced to aid economic recovery and increase economic participation rates post COVID-19, with both factors leading to a reduction in program uptake.
- Limited transport options for those living outside of main transport hubs, particularly in peri-urban and rural areas with dispersed populations. This is even more difficult for individuals looking to travel north-south and east-west across the outer suburbs.

Local jobs and skills priorities and strategies in the region

Priority 1 – Addressing barriers to labour market participation

What are our challenges and opportunities?

The current labour market has created opportunities for many individuals with historically low unemployment rates, including those facing barriers. Businesses are looking at reforming their recruitment practices to support a wider range of individuals, although some businesses require assistance with this transition.

How are we responding?

The Employment Facilitator in North Eastern Melbourne is:

- Working closely with employment services providers to understand the nature of barriers facing individuals in a rapidly changing labour market to provide timely localised support.
- Working with First Nations groups to support meaningful and culturally safe employment for First Nations peoples, and to empower local First Nations organisations to support their community.
- Funding projects through the Local Recovery Fund to provide support and vocational training to individuals facing barriers to employment.
- Working with businesses who have integrated inclusive hiring practices into their business models and sharing their stories of success, and the range of benefits that come from it.
- Engaging businesses that offer entry level roles across several sectors to assist them in adopting inclusive and diverse recruitment practices.
- Promoting social enterprises as a pathway to private-sector employment, especially for businesses with social procurement or social inclusion hiring targets.
- Working with local culturally and linguistically diverse community groups to better understand the unique nature of the challenges faced by each community, and the ways these challenges can be overcome.
- Meeting with local TAFEs and Skills and Jobs Centres to develop and promote innovative training programs to assist individuals facing barriers to participation.

The Local Jobs and Skills Taskforce is collaborating with State and local governments in creating programs which educate businesses. This includes the benefits of hiring from a wider range of individuals, and how roles and requirements can be adjusted to suit a wider range of people, with minimal impact to output.

Priority 2 – Care and support sector (aged, disability and early years)

What are our challenges and opportunities?

With an aging population and a growing shift to support home-based care models, the care and support sector is forecast to require many additional staff over the next 10 years. The sector's ongoing reform is disrupting traditional employment pathways, with many choosing to engage sub-contractors.

How are we responding?

The Employment Facilitator in North Eastern Melbourne is:

- Convening a care and support sector working group in North Eastern Melbourne consisting of local businesses, support service providers and community organisations to support the sectors' local workforce needs. The working group is running a series of events to bring businesses, individuals, training providers and service providers together, including at jobs expos and facility open days.
- Keeping abreast of aged care workforce funding and initiatives at a Commonwealth level to attract programs to our region.
- Working with businesses and training providers to explore innovative models of recruitment.
- Developing a business resource pack to assist with developing recruitment and retention strategies.

The Local Jobs and Skills Taskforce is supporting the development of supported learning models that will allow a broader cohort of participants to engage with training providers and businesses in the sector.

Priority 3 – Skilled trade workers (construction and manufacturing)

What are our challenges and opportunities?

A boom in domestic and commercial construction, combined with several major infrastructure projects, reduced migration, and difficulties retaining skilled staff, has led to unmet demand for skilled trade workers in both construction and skilled manufacturing. Traditional training programs are slow to produce qualified workers, and generally draw from limited groups of the population, leading to difficulties filling skilled roles when required.

How are we responding?

The Employment Facilitator in North Eastern Melbourne is:

- Working with businesses and training providers to correct misconceptions about trade careers and promote the wide range of skilled trade pathways available.
- Working with businesses undergoing structural adjustments to ensure skilled staff are redeployed.
- Exploring innovative expedited upskilling and reskilling programs to fill urgent skilled worker shortages.

The Local Jobs and Skills Taskforce is:

- Actively promoting the substantial social inclusion hiring targets placed by major projects and working directly with project recruitment teams, such as those at SPARK Consortium, lead builder of the North-East Link Project, to create accessible pathways into trade roles for a wider range of individuals.
- Hosting tools skills days to create pathways to trade careers for women and non-binary individuals.

Priority 4 – Accessible and responsive transport

What are our challenges and opportunities?

Limitations in transport availability has led to businesses in transport-poor areas struggling to attract new staff and has created limitations on individuals who lack transport security. These challenges are especially evident in outer-suburban and peri-urban areas where public transport services are poorly connected and limited, and taxi and Uber services may not regularly service or be cost effective. Transport challenges are further compounded for roles outside of standard business hours.

How are we responding?

The Employment Facilitator in North Eastern Melbourne is:

- Working with local governments to identify the exact nature of current transport infrastructure and exploring the gaps in service delivery this leaves.
- Investigating the use of state government 'Flexible Transport' funding to enhance employment-based transport services in our region.
- Liaising with the VicTas Community Transport Association to explore the use of community transport models in the employment sector.
- Working with the Northern Councils Alliance and the Eastern Transport Coalition to explore existing transport research through an employment lens.
- Working with other regions' Local Jobs teams to identify best practice transport models for comparable localities.

The Local Jobs and Skills Taskforce is providing feedback on how planned future transport infrastructure can be structured to maximise transport benefits.

Priority 5 – Responding to emerging regional needs

What are our challenges and opportunities?

As the region continues to recover from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, unpredictable political and economic conditions, the impact of natural disasters and unprecedented labour market conditions, there is a continued necessity to quickly adapt. Sudden changes in demand have placed strain on businesses, training organisations and service providers alike, leading to rapid expansion in some cases, and loss of high value roles in others.

How are we responding?

The Employment Facilitator in North Eastern Melbourne is:

- Utilising current staff demand as an opportunity to encourage businesses to adopt inclusive hiring practices which will benefit the broader labour market, even if unemployment rates return to pre-COVID-19 levels.
- Providing strategic advice to Australian and State government bodies on updated labour market developments to inform future policy.
- Continuing to work with local governments and community organisations to promote resilient community building in the wake of recent natural disasters.
- Intervening in several retrenchments to help workforces transition smoothly to new employment, and to ensure skilled workers are not lost from high-demand and high-value industries.
- Exploring predicted sector recruitment trends and providing information and strategic direction to local governments, businesses, and employment support organisations.
- Providing a range of educational support services to employment service providers who are working with an increasingly complex caseload to assist effective delivery of services.

Want to know more?

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- Visit: [Local Jobs](#) or [Workforce Australia](#)