

Workforce Australia - Work for the Dole

Information for Host Organisations

Work for the Dole is an activity that offers participants the opportunity to demonstrate their capabilities, contribute to their local community and equips them with skills to help find secure work.

As a Work for the Dole host organisation, you are a critical part of the program and can get access to an extra set of hands to undertake activities and projects that may not normally get done.

Workforce Australia Employment Services Providers (providers) in your area will work with you to identify and run suitable Work for the Dole activities, which benefit the local community.

Types of Work for the Dole activities

There are two types of Work for the Dole activities:

Work for the Dole Placements	Work for the Dole Projects
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A single participant or multiple participants doing individual tasks of the same related type, in one or more locations. Placed in the existing operations of the host organisation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specific community projects developed for the purpose of providing a work-like experience for a group of participants, working as a team to meet a common goal or deliverable.
<p>Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> retail work in the day-to-day operation of an op-shop creating website/media material and graphic designs for a community social enterprise maintaining gardens and lawns at a community facility. 	<p>Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> construction of BBQ facilities and development/restoration of a community garden area helping a social enterprise to design and prepare for a cultural festival a kitchen upgrade at a local community facility.

Work for the Dole Placements can be established for up to 12 months, with a possible extension up to a maximum of 24 months. Work for the Dole Projects must have start and end dates in the same financial year. If you wish to continue a project beyond 30 June, you must discuss this with your provider.

More than one participant may be placed into a Work for the Dole activity over this period, with each individual participating for at least 8 weeks. Your provider can help you to determine the most suitable activity for their participants and the length of the activity.



Who can host a Work for the Dole activity?

Work for the Dole activities can only be hosted by:

- not-for-profit organisations and charities
- local, state, territory and Australian Government agencies
- a not-for-profit arm of for-profit organisations.

Work for the Dole activities must not displace paid workers. Participants cannot do tasks that would normally be done by a paid worker where it impacts casual or part-time work, reduces the hours of a paid worker or reduces the available overtime for an existing employee.

What is the role of the host organisation?

As a Work for the Dole host organisation, you will provide work-like activities, with supervision and on-the-job training for participants. Where possible, you will assist participants to develop some or all of the core competencies identified by the Jobs and Skills Australia as critical to the workplace. These are teamwork, initiative and innovation, planning and organising, oral communication, digital engagement, reading, writing, problem solving, learning and numeracy.

You are also encouraged to work with your provider to include the opportunity for participants to gain a licence, qualification, micro-credentials or other recognised skill as part of the Work for the Dole activity.

It is important to remember Work for the Dole can only take place where it is safe to do so. As a host organisation, you must ensure that your activity meets all relevant work health and safety requirements.

A Host Organisation Handbook with more information is available on the department's website at <https://www.dewr.gov.au/work-dole/resources/host-organisation-handbook>.

What support is available to host organisations?

Your provider will work closely with you to ensure the success of the activity, including having participants complete any necessary training or checks before commencing, and resolving any issues that may come up.

You are eligible for assistance with some costs for running a Work for the Dole activity. The funding to support these costs will depend on the type of activity. For placements, a fee of \$534¹ is paid to the provider to support the upfront costs of placing each participant in the activity. The provider must transfer at least \$267¹ of this placement fee to the host organisation. For projects, providers will receive a notional funding allocation in the department's IT system. Once a Work for the Dole project is approved, providers will be able to draw down funds to support costs directly related to the project.

Providers are expected to clearly explain the funding available to help offset the costs of the activity when negotiating Work for the Dole activities with potential host organisations. More information is outlined in the Host Organisation Handbook.

Want more information?

Go to the Workforce Australia website at www.workforceaustralia.gov.au/r/work-for-the-dole.

Call the National Customer Service Line on 1800 805 260.

Do you need help with this fact sheet?

If you need an interpreter, please call the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) on 131 450*.

If you are deaf or have a hearing or speech impairment you can use the National Relay Service. For more information, visit the National Relay Service website at www.relayservice.gov.au.

* Note that call charges apply for calls to '13' numbers from mobile phones.

¹ Funding amount as at 1 July 2025, subject to future indexation.