

# Build skills in Melbourne's north: Inclusive Employment Program



A regional rollout out of the Inclusive Employment Program converts population growth into economic participation by connecting local people to local jobs. This ensures that those currently excluded from the workforce are not left behind.

## Our ask (deliverables)

We are calling on the Victorian Government to commit to a partnership with the NCA to deliver a proven, award-winning Inclusive Employment Program across Melbourne's north.

This investment would deliver:

- rollout of Banyule City Council's successful Inclusive Employment Program across all 7 northern Councils
- 8 new placements and 3 transitional placements per Council, per year, supported by an inclusive casual employment pool
- 7 dedicated Program Officers to coordinate, coach and support participants
- a dedicated Project Manager based at Banyule to oversee regional implementation and drive a community of practice
- fully-funded program operations, training and wrap-around supports
- sustained pipeline funding over 3 years to ensure impact and continuity.

## Investment required

Total investment sought: \$13.6 million over 4 years.

## It's ready to go

The model is tested, scalable and ready for immediate implementation across our region.

A complete open-source toolkit and implementation guide already exists, enabling consistent delivery and rapid rollout.

Banyule has delivered the program annually since 2018, demonstrating replicability, compliance with the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010* and strong participant outcomes.

## Why we need the IEP project now

Melbourne's north faces persistent pockets of unemployment and underemployment, disproportionately affecting our residents who experience:

- disability
- long-term unemployment
- mental health challenges
- lack of local work experience
- systemic disadvantage.

The Inclusive Employment Program directly addresses these barriers by providing:

- a paid 6-month job tailored to participants' strengths and goals
- on-the-job experience in local government
- structured coaching and wrap-around supports
- links into longer-term employment pathways.

This place based model was co-designed with our community and has proven to successfully shift people from exclusion to long-term workforce participation.

*Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, cultural and linguistically diverse people (including refugees and asylum seekers), people living with disability and young people continue to face unacceptable barriers to employment.*

## Benefits of supporting this important project

### For participants:

- increased skills, confidence, networks and real work experience
- clear pathways into sustainable employment following program completion.

### For government and the community

- 336+ inclusive job outcomes across the region over 4 years.

### For Councils:

- builds a more diverse and representative local government workforce
- enhances community connection and strengthens Councils' roles as anchor institutions
- provides a shared regional framework, reducing duplication and improving capability for the Victorian Government and our region
- reduces local unemployment and supports vulnerable residents into meaningful work
- contributes to regional economic participation, social cohesion and community wellbeing
- demonstrates government commitment to equitable employment opportunities and place-based job creation.

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*My highlights (from participating in the Inclusive Employment Program) were being part of a positive workplace culture and gaining valuable experience and confidence being back in the workforce after a break.*

Kate, previous participant