



INNER NORTH
COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION

2023

PATHWAYS TO EMPLOYMENT GRANTS PROGRAM

Supporting prosperous, connected and cohesive
communities in Melbourne's Inner North since 2007.



A note from IntoWork Group CEO

Poul Bottern

IntoWork has been a proud supporter of the Inner North Community Foundation for 15 years, founding the philanthropic entity in 2007, with the Pathway to Employment Grants Programming enabling Vibrant Futures for employment and social inclusion in Melbourne's Inner North.

In May of 2022, this support was reaffirmed with a 30-year partnership between IntoWork and the Foundation. The collaboration, which includes Darebin City Council, Merri-bek City Council and Yarra City Council, will build a lasting legacy for the community of 500,000 people who call the inner north home.

All the programs this year focus on addressing poverty and inequality – through the lens of improved employment pathways. These groups include those experiencing socio-economic disadvantage, people with a disability, at-risk youth, LGBTQI+ people, and First Nations people. Nearly half of the programs primarily support people seeking asylum, refugees, migrants and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

One third of grant applications have been funded for more than five years. Responding to the deep knowledge and expertise held within local community service organisations, the Foundation's recent move to include a multi-year funding stream is enabling established programs to do more within today's tough operating environment.

Programs such as Outer Urban Projects have been able to build on their success in the first year of funding and work with individuals on long-term goals to effectively create new pathways to employment for under-represented young people. This year, Free to Feed and The Social Studio will also be supported through multi-year grant funding streams.

For single year funding, we are proud to support creative industry programs, including The Boîte and Youthworx. The Boîte was founded in 1979 and will work with 40 musicians from diverse backgrounds, while Youthworx will support young people in the completion of an accredited Certificate III in Screen & Film Production. These programs are designed to provide pathways to the most vulnerable in our community through engaging content in a nurturing and supportive environment.

The enduring community asset that is the Inner North Community Foundation continues to strengthen and grow through generously donated funds by hundreds of businesses, families and individuals. I congratulate the Foundation Chair Carolyn Phiddian, Executive Officer Ben Rodgers and the whole team for their deep collaborations and partnerships with community groups so that the Foundation may effectively fund these change-making programs which remove the barriers individuals may face in finding meaningful employment.

Thank you for supporting the Foundation to support your local community.

Poul Bottern

Group CEO, IntoWork Australia

Foreword from Foundation Chair

Carolyn Phiddian

It is with great pleasure that the Foundation is announcing our fifteenth year of Pathways to Employment grants for the Inner North of Melbourne. Thanks to the ongoing generosity of IntoWork, in collaboration with our City Councils of Darebin, Yarra and Merri-bek, we continue to support our wonderful community organisations who keep finding innovative and practical ways to assist people on their pathways to finding work. This is a long-term need, and we are committed playing our role in achieving long term improvements in work participation, that will in turn keep our communities strong and resilient.

We would not be here without the tremendous support of IntoWork and we congratulate Poul and his team on their ongoing leadership and success in providing employment opportunities nationally.

We thank and acknowledge everyone who puts in their time, skills and energy in our 898 not-for profit organisations which are in the Inner North. It is a privilege to be living in this caring community.

This year we are providing grants to ten organisations, with eight new ones being announced this year. The projects cover across the Inner North and are described further in this booklet. The existing two grants are to meet our commitment from last year of multi-year grants. We are working continually to improve our granting in ways that increase both certainty to the recipients and community impact, while supporting new ideas as they arise. We always wish we could do more.

We thank and congratulate all those who have been successful this year and thank all our supporters and partners who make this possible.

Carolyn Phiddian

Chair, Inner North Community Foundation



Pathways to Employment 2023

- GRANTS OVERVIEW





Creative play.

BREAKAWAY YOUTH

PROJECT TITLE:

FOCUS FOR LIFE

After operating for more than 30 years, *Breakaway Youth* has been able to assist 80-90% of program graduates into employment, with others going on to higher education and training. This is even more significant because most of these young people are the first in their families to become employed.

The organisation's Focus for Life program takes a holistic and whole of life approach to addressing the factors that lead to intergenerational unemployment and welfare dependence. This includes attitudes to employment and the social, interpersonal, and technical skills needed to gain and maintain employment.

With a strong belief that early intervention is vital to reducing problem behaviours, the program involves at-risk adolescents referred by local schools and the Department of Health and Human Services.

These young people gain access to an inclusive space, positive and lifelong learning experiences, and trusted adults who understand the disadvantage they experience, and the supports necessary to unlock their potential.

In groups of ten young people aged from 10 to 16, participants will take part in six weekend camps before coming together for a five-day program at the Licola Wilderness Village. During these times, the young people will take part in a schedule of outdoor recreation, team collaboration, creative activities, skill building, goal setting and reflective sharing.

Significantly, they will also be part of a broader six-year mentorship which will help to develop interpersonal and life skills, healthy self-worth, and confidence to move through school to employment.

Further highlighting the success of the program, many former participants have returned as volunteer leaders to champion the next generation of young people experiencing socio-economic disadvantage.



Make it Work beneficiary Maria, employed with King & Godfree's Carlton store.

CARLTON NEIGHBOURHOOD LEARNING CENTRE (CNLC)

PROJECT TITLE:

MAKE IT WORK

Being able to work one-on-one and utilise local networks are proving to be the keys to the success of the *Carlton Neighbourhood Learning Centre's* Make it Work program.

Supporting migrants and refugees living in local public housing, the program found employment for 70% of its 140 clients in its first 12 months, with 92% of clients reporting that they were happy with their experience of the program.

Some 3500 residents live in the public housing estate serviced by the program, with 30% living on an income of less than \$300 per week.

The targeted and individual approach of this program helps the client base - who are mostly female, a range of ages and come from a range of countries.

The program works with clients on developing resumes, interview coaching, job placements, career coaching and job seeking. Some 60% of participants said that their involvement with the program had led to them feeling better able to write resumes and complete job applications and interviews.

Strong local networks with community agencies for local employment and referrals are also contributing to the program's success in getting people jobs.

Having identified what program participants need, the program helps them to access training if required, including subsidising education and training for those who cannot otherwise afford to take these pathways. Some participants are now in courses such as Bachelor of Education, Early Education, Graduate Training Program, NDIS Support and Nursing.

One participant said after the program, they felt "confident". "I feel like I can get a job anywhere."



Photo of a trainee and trainer at home.one Café.

Photo credit: Janna Bennett

FOR CHANGE CO

PROJECT TITLE:

PATHWAYS TO CHANGE

For Change Co. has developed a paid, on-the-job employment and training program designed for and in collaboration with young people experiencing homelessness. And it has proved highly effective with 84% of trainees successfully transitioning into ongoing employment or education, and 89% of graduates moving into independent housing 12 months after completing the program.

But this effectiveness has not stopped *For Change Co.* going back to its community of young people to further improve the program. Graduates and members of FCC's Youth Advisory Program - all with lived experience of homelessness - have analysed the program and provided recommendations.

For Change Co. believes that this focus on supporting trainees to give feedback and be involved in such a process further grows their skills in advocacy. Trainees also gain confidence and other skills needed to transition into ongoing employment and out of the cycle of homelessness.

Pathways for Change's Brunswick program is based out of the home.one café, in connection with local specialist housing services such as Melbourne City Mission and Launch Housing.

In addition to providing work experience and skills, the program also works to break down stigma about young people who have experienced homelessness. Using a strengths-based approach to demonstrate the resilience and strength of this cohort to customers and suppliers, the local community gets an opportunity to see the potential of young people, who could otherwise be so easily pushed aside.



Young interns plant seedlings while training at Oakhill Farm.

SUSTAIN: THE AUSTRALIAN FOOD NETWORK

PROJECT TITLE:

URBAN FARM, FOOD JUSTICE AND TRAINING NETWORK

Sustain's Urban Farm, Food Justice and Training Network is firmly focused on both the future and the present. Seeking to play a local role in securing a more climate resilient future, the program is grounded in training young people in the northern suburbs who are currently hit hard by under and unemployment.

At *Sustain's* Alphington urban farm, Oakhill Food Justice Farm in Preston and Bundoora Park, the Urban Farm, Food Justice and Training Network is providing education and employment opportunities for local young people. Many are from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and culturally diverse backgrounds and are focusing on growing food which is then distributed to local people in need.

Paid youth internships are providing new job and life skills and pathways to employment, with *Sustain's* Oakhill and Alphington Farms creating six green jobs (including one previous intern) and dozens of vocational educational opportunities over the past two years.

Gearing up for a further 18 paid youth internships, 30% of these will be offered to young people with an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background to help address the high rate of unemployment and underemployment of this cohort in Darebin.

This part of the program will be run in consultation with Dardi Munwurro, an Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation in Preston.

Collaborating with Darebin Information Volunteer Resource Services, whose volunteers help manage the *Sustain* sites, helps the sites supporting 100 local families who access its food relief program weekly.

It's expected within the next 15 years, half of Australia's farmers will retire, due to the current average age being 58. Through providing accessible and local opportunities, the program is hoping to empower aspiring young farmers into this career while also addressing Australia's aging farming population.



The Boîte has been in the inner north for over 40 years.

THE BOÎTE INC

PROJECT TITLE:

PORTFOLIO 3.0

Victoria's iconic multicultural music organisation, *The Boîte*, works to help culturally diverse musicians find an audience and is more than a boost to individual careers.

The Boîte's Portfolio 3.0 program is also creating cultural ambassadors - people who can not only attract the general community to the arts, but also develop the skills and confidence to lead their own communities.

The Boîte strongly believes culturally diverse musicians possess a remarkable capacity to inspire change and drive social progress as well as providing great entertainment.

Since its introduction, the *Boîte's* Portfolio mentoring program has worked with 80 musicians from backgrounds such as Iranian, Burmese Chin, Zimbabwean and Macedonian. These artists have been part of workshops and one on one mentoring, which have guided them to build electronic press kits and take advantage of networking opportunities.

This led to performance opportunities. Colombian duo Pal Mar will play at the Melbourne Recital Centre this September. Other alumni are now taking up opportunities at festivals in Melbourne and regional areas.

Portfolio 3.0 will involve 40 to 50 new participants who will receive professional development and mentoring to take part in activities such as smaller showcase events and radio appearances. These will help them build experience and profiles.

This program has heavyweight support with industry partners such as Music Victoria, Melbourne Polytechnic, Multicultural Arts Victoria and PBS Radio. These partners contribute resources such as free membership, mentoring opportunities, venue hire, technical support and promotional assistance.



Students of Youthworx training program shooting student stories for graduation.

Photo credit: Ilana Rose (Youthworx Senior Photographer)

YOUTHWORX

PROJECT TITLE:

YOUTHWORX PATHWAYS

The *Youthworx* Pathways program utilises the attractiveness and vibrancy of the screen and creative industries as a means to engage with and facilitate employment pathways for young people who possess additional engagement barriers. Specifically working with people aged 15 to 25, the program supports people in out-of-home care, in the juvenile justice system, or who are experiencing housing instability.

Over 16 years *Youthworx* have refined their model, achieving exceptional engagement and employment rates in the screen and creative industries, through giving young people a voice, and building agency and self-determination their development of in-demand, and transferrable skills in communications, design, innovation and management.

Approximately 70 young people will be supported through the accredited Screen & Film Production Certificate III program and up to 300 young people through *Youthworx*'s open-access workshops over three years. This grant will enable the employment of a part time Youth Support Worker, which will deepen the supported beneficiaries connections in the industry, build the capacity of workplaces to successfully employ at-risk young people, and provide job readiness training and mentoring support as they progress through the program.

A key driver of *Youthworx*'s sustained impact is the active and deep involvement of young people within their team-based project learning.

Participants are able to choose the projects they work on before planning, collaborating and executing. Upon completion, they're encouraged to reflect on the projects' outcomes. By working alongside their peers - sharing ideas, leveraging each others strengths and collectively problem solving - they develop interpersonal skills which are important for success in the workplace



Learning the recipes behind Free to Feed's signature grazing tables.

FREE TO FEED

PROJECT TITLE:

COMMERCIAL COOKING TRAINING & EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

Since 2015, social enterprise *Free to Feed* has provided people seeking asylum and refugees with the opportunity to take part in more than 40,000 paid training hours. While these hours build cooking skills, the holistic program works across the spectrum of what participants need to move into meaningful employment.

Working two shifts a week in *Free to Feed*'s catering kitchen, 30 participants get hands-on training with one-on-one translating support. Via access to mental health and social work practitioners, individually and in groups, participants gain wellbeing support throughout their involvement.

Being involved in regular social events, learning environments and culturally specific celebrations assist to reduce the social isolation commonly experienced in many asylum seeker and refugee communities.

As participants come to the end of their program, they're supported to connect with a Job Service Provider, to interview with local organisations or encouraged into further education and training.

Working in a busy commercial kitchen environment led by professional chefs, participants work to meet the discerning tastes of Melbournian consumers while gaining real-world employment experience.

With local work experience crucial to getting further work in reputable and regarded establishments, the *Free to Feed* program is also assisting people to move beyond the casualised and insecure work they might otherwise have to take.



The Social Studio graduate and staff member, Nyamal, at work in The Social Studio's Production studio.

Photo credit: Dewi Cooke

THE SOCIAL STUDIO

PROJECT TITLE:

WORK2LEARN

After more than a decade of training refugee communities, the *Social Studio* in Collingwood realised many graduates were still unsure if they were ready for the speed and pressure of real-world garment manufacturing workplaces.

Aware that demand for skilled workers in local textile production provided real opportunities for refugees, the *Social Studio* developed its Work2Learn program.

Over 12 weeks, up to six people from refugee backgrounds gain technical skills such as pattern-making, using industrial machinery and following order-of-assembly plans. They also develop soft skills such as communication, teamwork, workplace safety and punctuality.

Trainees also receive one-on-one mentoring and upskilling support from The *Social Studio*'s Production team, while the Pathways Coordinator provides information about Australian work culture, systems and linkages to industry.

The timing couldn't be better, with local clothing manufacturing growing in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and increased recognition of the need to invest in local manufacturing.

But, like so many other industries post-COVID, there is a shortage of skilled textile workers. This shortage is exacerbated by an ageing local workforce and the significant loss of local skills from production being largely moved offshore several decades ago.

With employers such as Nobody Denim reporting a strong need for experienced workers, the *Social Studio* believes it can provide a pipeline of potential workers through the Work2Learn program.



Students recording their program segment concept at Radio Station 3ZZZ.

INNER NORTHERN LOCAL LEARNING & EMPLOYMENT NETWORK

PROJECT TITLE:

VOCATIONAL MENTORING EXCHANGE

As the *Inner Northern Local Learning & Employment Network* completes its first of three years of support via this program, the benefits of bringing experienced mentors and secondary students together in the Inner North is already being felt.

The Vocational Mentoring Exchange project recruits and trains vocational mentors who can draw on their varied life and working histories to assist students to decide on, and prepare for, further education, training or employment.

With 27 new mentors recruited this year, the program can now draw on the services of 110 volunteer mentors who work individually with students to develop a career action plan, visit local business and industry, develop links and a better understanding of local employment opportunities.

Mentors have already spent more than 300 hours with students and are on track to reach a target of more than 700 hours during 2023.

Working with local secondary schools, community agencies, local employers and mentors, the Vocational Mentoring Exchange is now running

across eight schools and three community agencies. A further 220 students will be supported in the second half of 2023, with ten additional school and community-based vocational programs and 45 vocational mentors set to come on board in the remainder of this year.

A 20-person student led initiative is bringing mentors from creative industries together, many who are undertaking a Certificate III in Screen & Media. Students will explore insights about employment pathways in this sector by interviewing practicing artists and performers and visiting creative industry workplaces. They will also take part in business and enterprise workshops.

As a result of the success of the Exchange, eight vocational members are also volunteering in the Industry Speaker Bank and Real Industry Job Interview (RIJI) program, which involves 22 schools and 1500 young people.



Ruci Kaisila.

Photo credit: Meredith O'Shea

OUTER URBAN PROJECTS - ASSOCIATE ARTISTS

PROJECT TITLE:

LIVE AND DIGITAL TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT PATHWAYS 2022-2025

Having worked with more than 600 young people in performing arts activities over the past five years, *Outer Urban Projects (OUP)* knows there is an enormous amount of arts-based talent and capacity among young people in the northern suburbs.

However, limited arts funding and programming in the region, mean young artists from the north remain under-represented in the performing arts industry.

Working with many young people from culturally diverse and marginalised backgrounds, as well as those who present with a disability or mental illness, *OUP* matches emerging artists and arts workers with established artists, technicians, producers, distributors and marketers.

The live and digital work produced through these collaborations drives *Outer Urban Projects'* overall artistic program, which gives on-stage and behind-the-scenes participants the opportunity to showcase their work to large audiences.

Entering the second year of three-year Pathways to Employment funding, *OUP* is identifying, training and employing 30 diverse emerging artists and arts workers from the northern region. Each person develops a creative action plan which facilitates individual goal setting and the tracking of their skill acquisition while engaged on projects through *OUP* and other organisations. This includes their supported engagement and employment on fee-for-service gigs, tutoring, festivals, auditions, major projects and traineeship programs.

With 80% of *OUP's* artists and art workers going on to training or employment over the past five years, it's clear this project is effectively creating new pathways to employment for these under-represented young people.

Give with us

As a strong, independent and community based resource, the Foundation works to build prosperous, connected and cohesive communities. Our contributions build on the long tradition of Melbourne's north, wherein people collaborate to ensure shared opportunity and choice in life.

Our model allows local donations to be pooled to respond to emerging challenges and to have greater impact for the long term.

Over time, the Foundation has expanded its reach and relevance, with more than 740 people giving gifts, large and small, that have a positive impact on their local community. With \$10.7 million in funds currently under management, there's a growing momentum of partnership with donors of all levels of wealth, as with 38 MyFunds giving people and businesses a deeper sense of their own legacy in the region.

Over the past 15 years the Foundation has given \$5.7 million via more than 360 grants to community group across Darebin, Merri-bek and Yarra.



Get involved



TO CREATE A LEGACY FOR FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES IN THE INNER NORTH

A growing number of individuals, families and organisations have established MyFunds that reflect their sustained commitment to the Inner North of Melbourne, and express their priorities as a donor.



TO INCREASE THE IMPACT BY WORKING TOGETHER

Our donors reflect the diversity of our community. They contribute for different reasons, but are connected by a sense of the importance of place-based giving and philanthropy.

Hundreds of contributions are received every year. Such as through regular workplace donations, gifts in wills, donations to specific causes supported by MyFund or the transfer of assets prompted by wind-up clauses.



TO SHARE OUR EXPERTISE

The Foundation can point donors to opportunities to invest in our region, provide links to partnerships and programs, and help bring money to life through place-based philanthropy.



TO VOLUNTEER WITH US

Join our team of talented and committed volunteers who relish sharing their time, talent and networks, to grow the impact and strength of our Foundation community.



OK... BUT WHAT DO I DO NEXT?

Call us on (03) 8689 1967

The 2023 Pathways to Employment Grant Program is a proud partnership of the Cities of Darebin, Merri-bek and Yarra, IntoWork and the Inner North Community Foundation.

Since 2007, IntoWork has supported the 'Pathways to Employment Fund'. A new commitment in 2021 re-affirmed this partnership, with IntoWork providing an annual contribution of over \$200,000 and additional funding that contributes to the core operational costs of the Foundation.



Merri-bek
City Council







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