

Media Release

The Hon Gayle Tierney MLC
Deputy Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council
Minister for Training and Skills
Minister for Higher Education



Friday, 9 October 2020

PROGRAM EXPANSION TO RECONNECT VICTORIANS WITH JOBS

People who have lost their jobs due to the coronavirus pandemic or this year's bushfires will get the help they need to re-join the work force under an expansion of the Reconnect Program.

Minister for Training and Skills and Higher Education Gayle Tierney today announced \$47 million to extend the program for a further four years and expanding it to support more people looking to re-enter the workforce or connecting them with further education opportunities.

The announcement re-affirms the Victorian Government's support for the Reconnect Program and the important contribution it makes to assisting vulnerable Victorians.

The Reconnect Program is aimed at early school leavers, long-term unemployed, asylum seekers and those on Youth Justice Orders and is designed to act as a pathway to further education or employment opportunities.

The program provides students with tailored, one-on-one support and offers a range of support services – like counselling, mentoring, housing support, education opportunities, and health and wellbeing services – to school leavers, long-term unemployed, asylum seekers and those on Youth Justice Orders

The expansion offers additional assistance to those whose jobs has been affected by either the pandemic or bushfires.

The program is currently offered by 26 TAFEs and Learn Local Registered Training Organisations across 70 local government areas. Since 2016 the program has worked with 7,425 people across Victoria and seen thousands of participants transition into accredited training.

This year's forum was held virtually and focussed on the theme of Resilience and Recovery in the Context of Emergencies and Natural Disasters.

Applications recently closed for Victorian TAFEs, Learn Local RTOs, and community service organisations with a Learn Local RTO or TAFE partner to run the Reconnect Program from 2021.

For more information, visit education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/Pages/reconnect-program.aspx.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Training and Skills and Higher Education Gayle Tierney

"The Reconnect program is reconnecting people to real pathways for further education and job opportunities essential to Victoria's economic recovery."

"We are ensuring Victorians have access to quality education by partnering with TAFES, Learn Locals and community service organisations to deliver this important program as we build the Education State."