

Media Release

The Hon Jaala Pulford MLC

Minister for Employment

Minister for Innovation, Medical Research and the Digital Economy

Minister for Small Business

Minister for Resources



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RENEWING SUPPORT FOR VICTORIA'S SOCIAL ENTERPRISE SECTOR

Victorian social enterprises and the people they support will benefit from a renewed focus on sustainably growing the sector, with the Victorian Government launching the new *Social Enterprise Strategy 2021-25* today.

The Strategy will help social enterprises create greater opportunity and inclusion for Victorians and has been developed after extensive consultation with the sector and the wider community.

The key focuses of the strategy will be building the skills and capabilities of businesses, increasing access to appropriate financing and strengthening connections between social enterprises across Victoria.

The Strategy is backed by a \$2.9 million investment to support its implementation and will help underpin the Government's focus on buying goods and services from social enterprises, worth millions of dollars to the sector.

A social enterprise is a business that trades to tackle social problems, improve communities, provide access to employment and training, or help the environment.

In the 2019-20 financial year, the Government spent \$14.1 million with 79 certified social enterprises. The Strategy will help to increase the spend with social enterprises in the future.

One of the thousands of social enterprises to be involved in the new strategy will be Preston-based CERES Fair Food, which delivers organic groceries to households across Melbourne, sourced from more than 150 ethical suppliers.

The profits from CERES Fair Food's work go back into educating children about the importance of sustainable farming and healthy living. The organisation also focuses on employing asylum seekers, with almost half of their 67 staff seeking asylum or recently migrating to Australia.

There are more than 3,500 social enterprises across the state, employing about 60,000 Victorians and contributing more than \$5.2 billion to the economy every year. For more information or to see the *Social Enterprise Strategy 2021-25*, visit djpr.vic.gov.au/about-us/overview/strategies-and-initiatives/social-enterprise.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Employment Jaala Pulford

"Social enterprises are vital to the strength and values of our communities and create so many positive benefits, including jobs for thousands of Victorians, including those who face barriers to employment."

"I'd like to thank Parliamentary Secretary for Jobs, Jane Garrett for leading the development of this new and exciting strategy in partnership with our social entrepreneurs."

Quote attributable to SENVIC CEO Nick Verginis

"This strategy provides a timely roadmap for community-led recovery. It will create new opportunities for growth and will enable the sector to play an even greater role in building a fairer and more inclusive economy."

Quote attributable to Parliamentary Secretary for Jobs Jane Garrett

"We're committed to growing a fairer and more inclusive economy that benefits all Victorians and social enterprises are vital to achieving that goal."

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