

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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MELBOURNE'S ARTISTS ADD COLOUR TO CITY'S RECOVERY

An innovative job creation program keeping artists employed during the pandemic is transforming Melbourne's laneways into some of the city's newest and most exciting public art attractions.

In a partnership between the Victorian Government and the City of Melbourne, 40 laneways are being rejuvenated by more than 150 creative professionals who would otherwise have been without work during the pandemic.

The jobs are being supported by the Government's \$500 million *Working for Victoria Fund*, which has helped more than more than 13,500 people across the state find jobs in the past 18 months

Creatives have now completed artwork and installations in 20 laneways as part of the *Flash Forward* program, with five works recently completed at Langs Lane, Rose Lane, Platypus Alley, Rainbow Alley, and Drewery Alley.

Work is now underway in other laneways around the CBD as the city prepares to welcome back visitors as vaccination targets are reached.

The program has been critical to keeping creative professionals such as Shawn Lu in paid work, who recently finished his artwork in Langs Lane. Inspired by rugged terrain, the new-look laneway draws its viewers into a fantastical wonderland, evoking memories of old European landscapes and fairy tales.

Jobs Victoria is continuing to help Victorians recover and grow through assistance for job seekers and partnerships with industry and councils.

As part of the \$619 million Jobs Victoria initiative, the Government is supporting people looking for work and connecting employers with the staff they need. For more information on Jobs Victoria visit www.jobs.vic.gov.au.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Employment Jaala Pulford

"Victoria has so many incredible artists and we're thrilled to have created jobs for 150 of them that has also added magnificent colour and life for our city laneways."

"This program is a great example of how innovative partnerships can help people looking for work, employers looking for staff, and have a positive impact on the wider community."

Quotes attributable to Lord Mayor Sally Capp

"We're doing everything we can to bring people into the city safely as restrictions ease, and what better way than by transforming the city into an outdoor art gallery."

"These new Flash Forward artworks present diverse perspectives while transforming our city with extraordinary walls of colour. If the CBD is in your 15km radius, we'd love to welcome you back to get your culture fix, off-screen."

Quotes attributable to creative professional Shawn Lu

"My normal sales and income that came from murals or commissioned artwork had completely disappeared overnight, so this initiative has been a lifesaver, and I'm not the only artist to say that."

"This has been a big help with my mental health, it boosted my confidence and helped me get back on my feet."

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