

Media Release

The Hon Ros Spence MP
Minister for Multicultural Affairs
Minister for Community Sport
Minister for Youth



Thursday, 4 November 2021

OPPORTUNITIES FOR REFUGEE AND MIGRANT WOMEN IN GEELONG

Refugee and migrant women in Geelong are taking up training and job opportunities thanks to a new Andrews Labor Government-backed sewing hub in Norlane.

Government funding of \$188,000 has enabled social enterprise Assembled Threads to open the regional hub, paying for sewing machines, fabric, training and employee wages at the new site.

Ten women have begun two weeks of paid intensive training in garment production, which will lead to an Industry and Skills Certificate 3 Training qualification from Holmesglen Institute.

Once training is complete, the new employees will start producing environmentally sustainable and ethically sourced garments including face masks and PPE which can be ordered now by local businesses.

Assembled Threads provides training and employment opportunities for people from diverse backgrounds who may encounter barriers to employment due to limited English language skills and qualifications not being formally recognised in Victoria.

The Norlane hub is Assembled Threads' second location alongside its Moonee Ponds site, which opened in November 2020.

The project is being funded through the Government's Priority Response to Multicultural Communities During Coronavirus grants, which support multicultural and multifaith communities to respond to the challenges of the pandemic and promote COVIDSafe behaviours.

Previous funding rounds have supported more than 320 culturally and linguistically diverse community organisations with funding totalling \$17.5 million.

Applications for funding are still open to support emergency food relief for multicultural communities. Further information can be found at: vic.gov.au/priority-response-multicultural-communities-during-coronavirus-covid-19.

Quote attributable to Minister for Multicultural Affairs Ros Spence

"Women from migrant and refugee backgrounds face additional barriers to finding a job, so we are working with organisations like Assembled Threads to provide that first step on the ladder."

Quote attributable to Member for Lara John Eren

"We are proud to support training and employment opportunities for Geelong's northern suburbs, while helping boost ethical manufacturing."

Quote attributable to Assembled Threads Founder and CEO Edwina Walsh

"We are so excited to announce our newest hub pilot will be held here in Geelong. Holmesglen will deliver a National Skills Set to 10 candidates, with further skills training supported by industry experts."

Media Contact: David Donaldson 0400 881 562 | david.donaldson@minstaff.vic.gov.au