

# 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



Saturday, 2 July 2022

## SUPPORTING MORE WOMEN AT THE NEW SISTERWORKS HUB

The Andrews Labor Government is supporting more women from migrant, refugee and asylum seeker backgrounds into the workforce through the new SisterWorks Hub.

Minister for Employment Jaala Pulford officially opened the new SisterWorks Hub in Abbotsford. The new, expanded site means more 'Sisters' will be supported in gaining work and training opportunities.

SisterWorks is a not-for-profit social enterprise, empowering migrant and refugee women by connecting them with entrepreneurship and employment opportunities.

Its Empowerment Hubs are workplaces and training centres. They provide opportunities for women to share their experiences with other women and develop pathways to education, employment, entrepreneurship and leadership.

The Government has invested \$520,000 since 2019 to support economic security for migrant and refugee women through SisterWorks, supporting several projects, including the expansion of its Social Enterprise Employment Project and the move to the new site.

A further \$286,968 Microenterprise Development Grant will help SisterWorks support the creation of sustainable microbusinesses and improve the financial inclusion and economic independence of 'Sisters'.

Starting over in a new country can be a daunting experience. Many women have limited English or work experience, which can make finding work challenging. This grant ensures SisterWorks can teach women the skills they need to establish and run their own microenterprises and achieve economic independence.

Since 2011, SisterWorks has supported more than 800 women from 56 different countries with training and employment, or mental health support, including through their 'learning by doing' workshops.

The Labor Government is backing organisations like SisterWorks through investing in microenterprises and providing ongoing support to address barriers to create a more inclusive pathway to economic security.

### **Quote attributable to Minister for Employment Jaala Pulford**

*"Victoria's migrant, asylum seeker and refugee women entrepreneurs are truly inspiring and we are proud to walk alongside them as they grow their businesses."*

### **Quote attributable to Minister for Women Natalie Hutchins**

*"Connecting with other women, learning new skills and generating income are essential for women to build a life in a new country."*

### **Quote attributable to SisterWorks Chief Executive Officer Ifrin Fittock**

*"The Victorian Government has played a crucial role in ensuring that, with this new facility, SisterWorks can enable more migrant, refugee and asylum seeker women to become economically empowered. It is a testament to the commitment of the Victorian Government's support of women and the social enterprise sector."*

**Media contact:** Nadia Dimattina 0438 701 306 | [Nadia.dimattina@minstaff.vic.gov.au](mailto:Nadia.dimattina@minstaff.vic.gov.au)