

Media Release

The Hon Ben Carroll MP

Minister for Industry and Innovation
Minister for Manufacturing Sovereignty
Minister for Employment
Minister for Public Transport



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EXPANDING THE PURPOSE PRECINCT AT QUEEN VICTORIA MARKET

Victoria's growing social enterprise sector is getting a major boost with the expansion of Australia's first dedicated social enterprise precinct at the Queen Victoria Market (QVM).

Minister for Employment Ben Carroll announced plans today to expand the temporary Purpose Precinct to a larger permanent site for up to 100 social enterprises to sell food, clothing, beauty products and other goods.

Developed by leading social enterprises STREAT and Good Cycles and supported by the Social Enterprise Network of Victoria (SENVIC), the Precinct opened in November and already sells goods from more than 25 social enterprises.

It is funded through the Andrews Labor Government's nation-leading *Social Enterprise Strategy 2021-25*.

As well as increasing exposure and sales for social enterprises from across Victoria, the Precinct will provide on- and off-site employment and training pathways for 75 disadvantaged jobseekers facing multiple barriers to finding work, such as marginalised young people, Aboriginal Victorians, and people who are long-term unemployed.

Jade Haenga-Stretch has worked at the Precinct since March. The 19-year-old faced barriers getting a job given their inexperience in the workforce and lack of formal training, before being referred to Good Cycles last year. Jade is now working on Sundays at the Purpose Precinct while completing a full-time Certificate IV in Youth Work.

The Precinct has a strong focus on promoting the circular economy. Surplus food from QVM traders will be collected and turned into products such as jams and preserves at an onsite kitchen.

Social enterprises are businesses that trade to help tackle social problems and improve communities, while providing people with access to employment. There are currently more than 3,500 social enterprises in the state, which employ around 60,000 people and contribute \$5.2 billion annually to the economy.

The expanded precinct will see it move from its present site on QVM's Stringbean Alley to the F Shed Laneway, with construction on the new site starting soon and completion due later this year.

Quote attributable to Minister for Employment Ben Carroll

"We're backing our social enterprises because they create positive outcomes for local workers and the community – and that's why we're expanding this precinct at one of our most iconic markets."

Quote attributable to Northern Metropolitan Sheena Watt

"Melbourne is known for its thriving social enterprise community and that's why we continue to back the sector to support jobs and change lives."

Quote attributable to Purpose Precinct worker Jade Haenga-Stretch

"It's a great place to work with amazing, welcoming people and the environment is super supportive."

Quote attributable to STREAT co-founder and CEO Bec Scott

"This is like a massive front door for social enterprises that will create visibility for the sector, which is really exciting and also great for customers who want to shop ethically."

Media contact: Anthony Templeton 0475 256 383 | anthony.templeton@minstaff.vic.gov.au