

Media Release

The Hon Ben Carroll MP
Minister for Industry and Innovation
Minister for Manufacturing Sovereignty
Minister for Employment
Minister for Public Transport



Friday, 8 September 2023

MORE FUNDING TO SUPPORT ETHICAL TEXTILE MANUFACTURING

The Andrews Labor Government is backing the clothing manufacturing sector to grow and support its workers through its support for Ethical Clothing Australia.

Ethical Clothing Australia provides accreditation to textile, clothing and footwear manufacturers to ensure compliance with strict standards including paying workers fairly and providing safe working conditions.

The *Victorian Budget 2023/24* invested \$4 million to ensure Ethical Clothing Australia can accredit and monitor more businesses, as well as providing new educational materials to ensure workplace safety. To gain accreditation, a business's manufacturing operations are audited from design to dispatch.

Minister for Industry and Innovation Ben Carroll visited social enterprise Clothing the Gaps to see the support Ethical Clothing Australia is giving to its co-founders Gunditjmara woman Laura Thompson and Sarah Sheridan.

Based in Brunswick, Clothing the Gaps is a fashion label that celebrates Aboriginal people and culture through its designs and products, creating merchandise with meaning.

The company's retail and distribution space is a hub of Indigenous employment, providing valuable work opportunities and supporting people's careers and ambitions.

It's just one of the more than 125 businesses accredited by Ethical Clothing Australia, alongside local companies like Assembled Threads and the Arc Clothing Co.

The Labor Government continues to support local workers through the Local Jobs First and the Fair Jobs Code.

To learn more about Ethical Clothing Australia visit <https://ethicalclothingaustralia.org.au/>.

Quote attributable to Minister for Industry and Innovation Ben Carroll

"By backing Ethical Clothing Australia, we're supporting fair and safer conditions for our textile industry and support workers."

Quote attributable to Member for Northern Metropolitan Sheena Watt

"Clothing the Gaps is another local manufacturing success story and we are backing the growth of the sector and supporting workers by investing in Ethical Clothing Australia."

Quote attributable to Ethical Clothing Australia National Manager Rachel Reilly

This funding boost will not only enable ECA to continue to expand the accreditation program in Victoria to protect, uphold and safeguard the rights of Victorian garment workers, but will provide the opportunity to elevate and amplify the voices of business owners, particularly women, of a female dominated industry."

Quote attributable to co-founders of Clothing the Gaps – Laura Thompson and Sarah Sheridan

"Clothing the Gaps is glad to see further investment in Ethical Clothing Australia as we believe in backing local supply and ensuring the sector is growing, and that people are being protected in manufacturing processes."

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