

Media Release

The Hon Natalie Hutchins MP
Minister for Jobs and Industry
Minister for Treaty and First Peoples
Minister for Women



Wednesday, 24 April 2024

SUPPORTING MIGRANT AND REFUGEE WOMEN AT SISTERWORKS

The Allan Labor Government is helping migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women build skills to find work in hospitality.

Minister for Women Natalie Hutchins today visited the SisterWorks Abbotsford Empowerment Hub to meet women taking part in the Crafted Culture Hospitality Employment Pathways Project.

SisterWorks received \$100,000 in the *Victorian Budget 2023/24* to support 60 women to gain hands-on vocational training and employment opportunities through the project.

Since 2018, the Labor Government has invested more than \$1 million in SisterWorks programs to economically empower migrant and refugee women, as part of the Government's work to address structural barriers to women's participation in the workforce.

Migrant, refugee and asylum seeker women can be excluded from employment opportunities due to a lack of local relevant experience, qualifications and language barriers.

Women from culturally diverse backgrounds are overrepresented in insecure and low-paid work. They also experience higher rates of unemployment.

Training in the hospitality program takes place as an eight-week course at the SisterWorks' Abbotsford Empowerment Hub and Crafted Culture Café in Richmond, which officially opened in April last year.

Once training is complete, women graduates receive ongoing support including placement with SisterWorks' partners and an opportunity to work at the Crafted Culture Café.

This builds on the Government's funding for SisterWorks' social enterprise expansion project, which last year supported the renovation of Crafted Culture Café's commercial kitchen, expanding the café's catering service and training in food production.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Women Natalie Hutchins

"We are proud to support these programs which not only help women from migrant and refugee backgrounds find work and expand their skills, but may inspire them to start up their own initiatives, run businesses and advance their leadership aspirations."

"Everyone should have equal opportunity – and supporting these programs is about working towards a fairer and more equal Victoria for women and girls from all backgrounds, because they deserve every opportunity to succeed."

Quote attributable to Parliamentary Secretary for Jobs Bronwyn Halfpenny

"We are so pleased to invest in the results of these programs for local refugee, migrant and asylum seeker women."