

Media Release

The Hon Gayle Tierney MP
Minister for Skills and TAFE
Minister for Water



Tuesday, 28 October 2025

SUPPORTING ASYLUM SEEKERS INTO WORK

The Allan Labor Government is supporting refugees and asylum seekers to access free or subsidised training, helping them gain meaningful employment and build new lives in Victoria.

Minister for Skills and TAFE Gayle Tierney yesterday announced a \$3 million investment for the Asylum Seeker VET program, including support for the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre (ASRC) to continue its work.

The Asylum Seeker VET program provides access to skills and training for people who have been forced to flee their home countries, helping them succeed in Victoria. Many choose to give back to their new communities – some of the most popular courses are in childcare, community and disability services, and nursing and allied health.

By supporting refugees and asylum seekers to enrol, the program gives them access to vocational training like Free TAFE and Skills First courses.

Since December 2024, the Labor Government has supported more than 950 asylum seekers to study at TAFE, supporting their job search and financial independence. The ASRC has supported more than 250 people in the past year to study at a TAFE, university or training provider.

The \$3 million funding being provided through the *Victorian Budget 2025/26* will enable the ASRC to continue its work through the *Asylum Seeker VET* program and offer more wraparound support and follow-up services.

This follows the Labor Government's recent announcement of an additional \$48 million investment in its Reconnect program, ensuring it continues to support people who are not engaged in education, employment or training, for a further four years.

The Reconnect program includes early school leavers, people experiencing long-term unemployment, asylum seekers, young people affected by the justice system, and people with current or previous experience in out-of-home care.

To learn more about the Asylum Seeker VET program, visit www.vic.gov.au/asylum-seeker-vet-program.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Skills and TAFE Gayle Tierney

"This program helps asylum seekers build a new life in Victoria, giving them the chance to learn new skills, start rewarding careers and contribute to their community – no matter their background or circumstances."

"This training is creating employment opportunities in areas where we know we have a high demand for skilled workers – like childcare, aged care and nursing."

Quote attributable to Member for Footscray Katie Hall

"We're proud to support this program and the ASRC, because it gives people in our local community the chance to build new skills, find meaningful work and contribute to the vibrant, diverse inner west we're so proud of."

Quotes attributable to CEO and Founder of the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre Kon Karapanagiotidis OAM

“The ASRC wants to thank Minister Tierney and the Allan Government for making it possible for our newest Victorians to fulfil their potential, contribute meaningfully to our economy and community and move from surviving to thriving. You have forever positively changed the lives of hundreds of refugee families by breaking the cycle of poverty, marginalisation and exclusion and championing social cohesion, inclusion and our multiculturalism.”