

JOBS FOR YOUTH

MPDF ROUND 3 PROJECT



■ OELLEN



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Executive Summary

Outer Eastern Local Learning and Employment Network (OELLEN) partnered with, Yarra Ranges Tourism, Yarra Ranges Council, Knox Council, Maroondah Council, Ringwood Central Learn Local, Box Hill Institute Skills and Jobs Centre and Swinburne Skills and Jobs Centre to deliver on the Jobs for Youth project. The project objectives were to deliver a social media campaign to promote opportunities for the matching of local employers with young job-seekers, staging of jobs events for local employers and young job-seekers and the creation of 50 jobs for young people in the region. As a result of the engagement activities outlined in this report, OELLEN achieved 48 confirmed jobs in the outer east for young people with four more apprenticeships in negotiations at the time of writing because of the Apprenticeship and Traineeship Expo. OELLEN and partners delivered 12 events targeting young job seekers between June 2021 and October 2022.

OELLEN and partners have taken on many valuable lessons from the Jobs for Youth project. By pushing ourselves to explore new ways and formats for delivering events and communicating, we have developed a greater understanding of how to engage with local young people to bring to them the services and information they need to make important career decisions. Employers are desperately seeking employees in this current market, and it is abundantly clear to them and OELLEN that traditional methods of recruitment are no longer sufficient to attract quality candidates. Strong partnerships and connections with local industry are crucial, particularly in times of high employment.

Introduction

The Eastern Metropolitan Partnership is an advisory group established by the Victorian Government to advise it of the top priorities for jobs, services and infrastructure across local government areas in Knox, Manningham, Maroondah, Monash, Whitehorse and Yarra Ranges. The Eastern Metropolitan Partnership's vision is for a region with excellent connections between people, places and jobs with a focus on Jobs for Youth as an identified issue in the region.

OELLEN is a community organisation funded by the Victorian Government to develop networks with schools, employers, community, and families across the local government areas of Knox, Maroondah and the Yarra Ranges. We have a vision of improved education, training, and employment outcomes for young people in the Outer East of Melbourne, which aligns with the vision for the Eastern Metropolitan Partnership.

The strong alignment between our two groups has led to OELLEN's ongoing involvement in the Jobs for Youth initiative and a recommitment to these goals as part of this latest project.

One of the Eastern Metropolitan Partnerships six priority outcomes is "Jobs for Youth" to improve the transition from secondary school to meaningful training and employment for the region's young people. As we emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic, it is clear in our region that many young people are continuing to be disengaged from both education and employment.

Prior to the project, in June 2020, the unemployment rate of young people aged 15–24 was 16%, an increase from 12% in 2019, and the highest rate since 1997. The rate peaked at 16.4% in July 2020 and was 11% in April 2021.¹

In 2021, when the jobs for youth project commenced, the youth unemployment rate in Australia decreased to 10.8 percent.² In June 2022 the youth unemployment rate decreased to 7.9%. which was 3.7 pts lower than March 2020.³

As this data shows, over the period of late 2020 to early 2021, when the Jobs for Youth project was being devised, the youth unemployment rate was very high creating an expectation that this might continue. However, by June 2021 when the project commenced, the youth unemployment rate had dropped to 10.8 % and by June 2022 it had further declined to 7.9%, lower than immediately pre-COVID-19 rates (March 2020). This may account for some of the low attendance rates at events in early 2022. Many people were still wary of attending events at this time of the pandemic.

Anecdotally we know that despite this change, there are many young people in our region who are not employed or engaged in education. Data is difficult to obtain as many of these young people have simply not reengaged with school or job seeking. While the landscape has changed over the course of this project, the original need for greater support for young people transitioning from school to work has continued.

OELLEN has committed to the following outcomes:

- The establishment and administration of a governance group to support the employment of 50 young people (under 25s)
- A social media campaign to promote opportunities for the matching of local employers with young job-seekers
- Staging of a jobs event for local employers and young job-seekers
- Tracking of employment outcomes for young people
- Evaluation of the pilot including financial accounting for the project funds expended
- Formation of governance body with a focus on the outer east of Melbourne to facilitate cooperative service operations across the region including careers advice and enhanced training and employment outcomes.
- The target group for this project was young people across the outer east of Melbourne aged 15-25 who were not actively engaged in education or employment.

¹ <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/children-youth/engagement-in-education-or-employment>

² <https://www.statista.com/statistics/811644/youth-unemployment-rate-in-australia/>

³ <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia/jun-2022#:~:text=unemployed%20people%20decreased%20by%2054%2C300,unemployment%20rate%20decreased%20to%207.9%25>

To deliver on these objectives, OELLEN partnered with

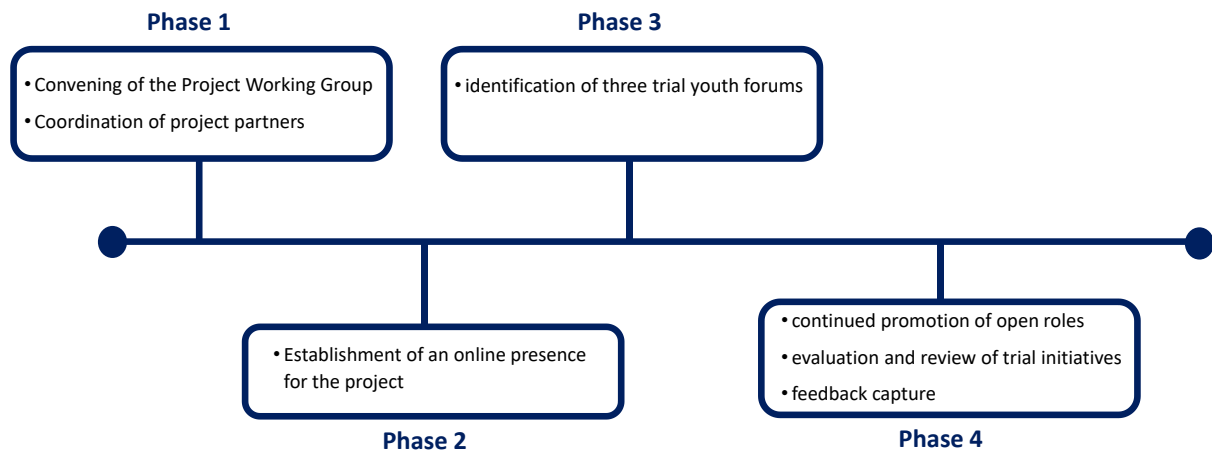
- Yarra Ranges Tourism
- Yarra Ranges Council
- Knox Council
- Maroondah Council
- Ringwood Central Learn Local
- Box Hill Institute and Swinburne Jobs and Skills Centre’s
- Empowered Women In Trades (EWIT)
- WPC

Many other organisations were involved as exhibitors at events.

Project Delivery

❖ Project Stages

The delivery of the Jobs for Youth project was broken down into 4 stages.



The first stage was to convene the Project Working Group and gather support from the project partners and develop a timeline of expos, events and communications.

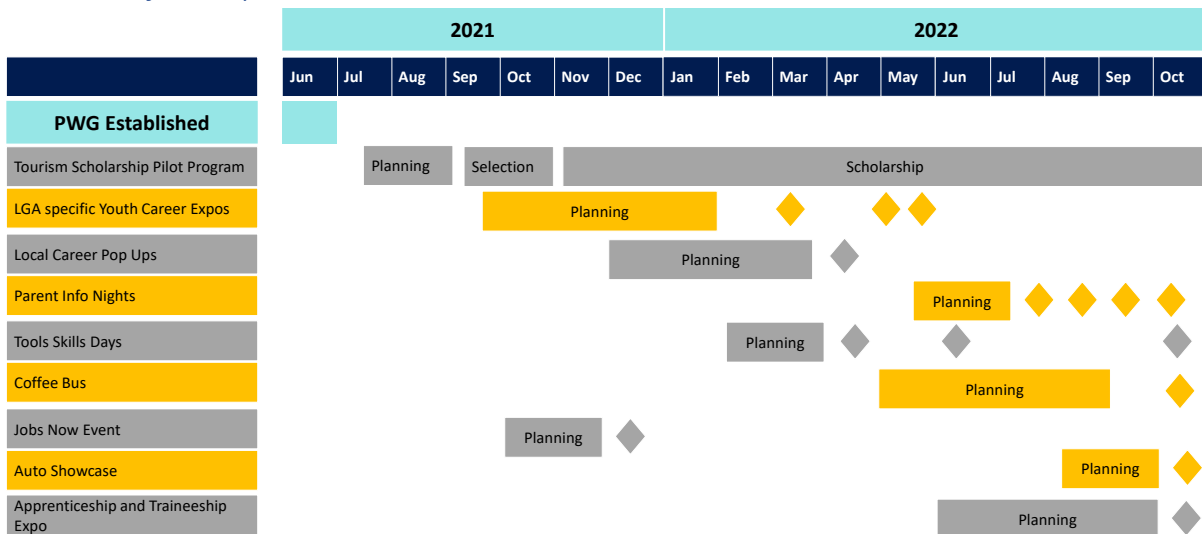
The second phase involved establishing an online presence for the project via the creation of a Jobs for Youth page on the OELLEN website. This page provided a space to share information about the project with stakeholders and interested parties and to capture local open roles from employers. These roles would contribute towards the creation of 50 local jobs for youth.

The third phase consisted of identification of three trial youth forums and the mapping of a calendar for implementation of these events

- Youth Career Expos
- Apprenticeship and Traineeship Expo
- Youth Careers Pop Ups
-

The fourth and final phase focussed on continued promotion of open roles, evaluation and review of our trial initiatives and feedback capture.

❖ Project key milestones



❖ Contributing Organisations

The organisations that contributed to the governance and delivery of this project was Outer Eastern LLEN. The Project Working Group (PWG) was made up of the following members:

- Fiona Purcell OELLEN
- Simon O’Callaghan Yarra Ranges Tourism
- Susan Maastricht Community Member (former TAFE Executive)

❖ Delivery Partners:

The BHI and Swinburne SAJCs, The Jobs Advocate Program, Employment Services, DES providers, Group Training, Apprenticeship Centres, Engineering Women In Trades (EWIT), local industry, TAFES, schools.

Industries were identified with local skill shortages for the pilot

- WPC and Ringwood Training for Auto.
- Yarra Ranges Tourism for Tourism Scholarship
- Manufacturing
- Hospitality

Project challenges and strategies

A significant challenge faced by the Jobs for Youth project was the evolving COVID-19 pandemic. The project commenced in June 2021 when Melbourne was still experiencing frequent lockdowns of varying length. These lockdowns, especially the lengthy one from August 2021- October 2021, inhibited our ability to deliver the project in six ways:

	COVID Challenge	Response	Outcome
1	In person events had to be suspended indefinitely	OELLEN pivoted to online webinars where possible	Lower attendance was achieved but quality conversations took place
2	Employers were under significant strain and had reduced capacity to engage with young people and to offer roles for people who would require supervision/training as they were understaffed across all levels of experience	OELLEN maintained regular contact with employers known to us through our SWL program throughout lockdowns. Questions shifted from availability of placement opportunities to employer wellbeing.	Strong positive relationships were maintained with local employers which translated to a revival of placement opportunities post lockdown and a willingness to participate in our Career and Apprenticeship Expo events
3	Young people expressed increased apathy towards employment and education with an overwhelming sense of hopelessness and isolation	OELLEN continued to facilitate connections between young people and employers even when participation rates were low. We have continued to communicate with schools and local councils to explore how to better engage young people. OELLEN has sought to support schools wherever possible in the reengagement of students	Participation numbers have continued to rise across 2022, especially where we have repeated instances of events like the Tools Skills days. Positive feedback to schools from initial conducts of this event has translated to requests for repeat local events. Strong relationships with schools have led to increased promotion of and advocacy for attendance at our events Young people who are no longer engaged in school continue to be the hardest to reach group

	COVID Challenge	Response	Outcome
4	The Yarra Ranges Tourism Scholarship opened for applicants during lockdowns and recruitment consequently took longer than anticipated. Vaccination requirements limited the recruitment pool	Deadlines were extended for applicants and some successful candidates had to be removed due to non-compliance with vaccination requirements	8 out of 16 positions were filled
5	Career Expos in person held early 2021 had lower than expected attendance due to reticence to attend in person events	OELLEN forged ahead with events despite low registrations as we knew there was a community need	While attendance was low, engagement from those who attended was excellent
6	Unprecedented employer demand for workers across all b OELLEN. A lack of candidates has been a major challenge in 2022. It is pleasing to see an increase in young people seeking apprenticeships in October.	OELLEN has advertised all open role we receive on our Jobs for Youth page, in our newsletter and directly to teachers who have identified interested students	Despite our efforts to connect local youth with local roles, many open roles we have received have gone unfilled. This is only very recently starting to change, with young people attending our Apprenticeship and Traineeship Expo in October in higher numbers than since pre covid. Interviews are currently underway as a result

Communication and Engagement

❖ OELLEN Website

To generate interest in the project and provide a platform for job advertisements a subpage was added to the OELLEN website (<https://www.oellen.org.au/jobs-for-youth>).

This page contains:

An overview of the project

An avenue for interested local employers to provide job details via a webform for posting on the page

What is “Jobs for Youth”?



The Eastern Metropolitan Partnership is an advisory group established by the Victorian Government. One of the Eastern Metropolitan Partnerships six priority outcomes is **Jobs for Youth** to improve the transition from secondary school to meaningful training and employment for the region’s young people.

Building upon the findings of the Partnership’s *Jobs for Youth* research, we at the Outer Eastern Local Learning and Employment Network (OELLEN) will:

- Create 50 jobs for young people in the region by connecting young people with potential employers
- Trial three youth and industry forums to strengthen information and coordinated employment pathways

How do I get involved as an employer?

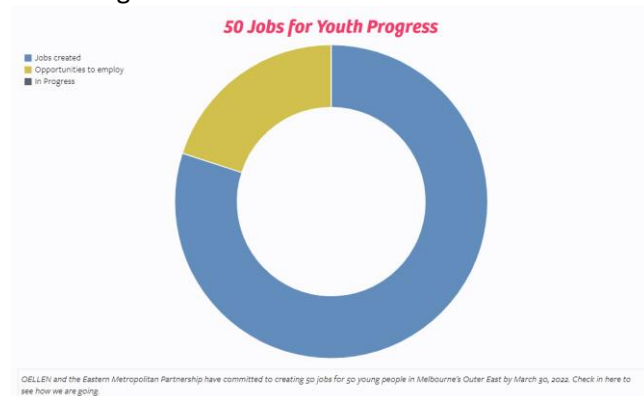


If you are an employer in Melbourne’s East and have employment opportunities for young people we can help connect you to your next valuable employee. Make contact with our team at info@oellen.org.au to have your job ad placed on this page and promoted on our social media sites. Mentoring support is available for any young people that are hired to assist in staff retention.

Contact Us

Information for young people seeking employment on how to access the local jobs advertised as well as how to attend relevant OELLEN events.

A visual counter of the progress towards our job creation goal



How can this program help me secure employment as a young person?



If you are a young person living in Melbourne's Outer East, take a look at the job opportunities below to find your next career step. We will also be hosting three youth focused career expos across March and May where local employers with active job opportunities will be available to chat to you in person. Event details will be regularly updated

[OELLEN Events](#)

Open roles

Open Roles



Plumbing Apprenticeship

- Role Description
- Employment Type
- Contact



Tourism Enterprise Scholarship

- Role Description
- Employment type
- Contact

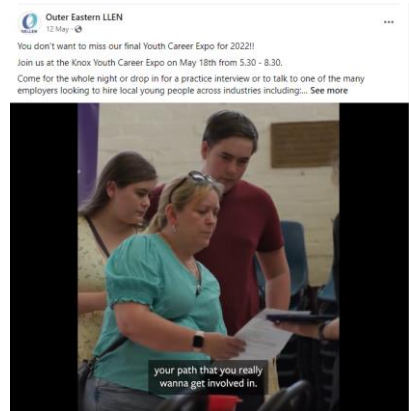
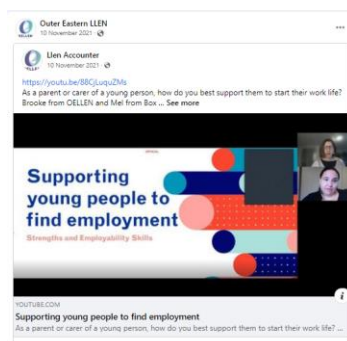
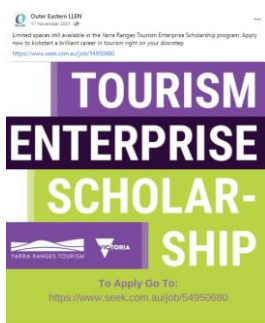


CNC Machining Apprentices

- Role Description
- Employment Type
- Contact

❖ Social Media presence

The Jobs for Youth webpage, trial events and opportunities for engagement were all promoted across the Outer Eastern LLEN social media channels on Facebook and Instagram





❖ OELLEN Newsletter

The OELLEN newsletter is distributed weekly – fortnightly to our subscriber list of over 630 Careers Teachers, STEAM leaders, Principals, Vice Principals, VCAL Coordinators, Parents and Employers from Knox, Maroondah and the Yarra Ranges. The Jobs for Youth Project, webpage and associated events were all promoted in this newsletter. The following excerpts represent a sample of the communications.



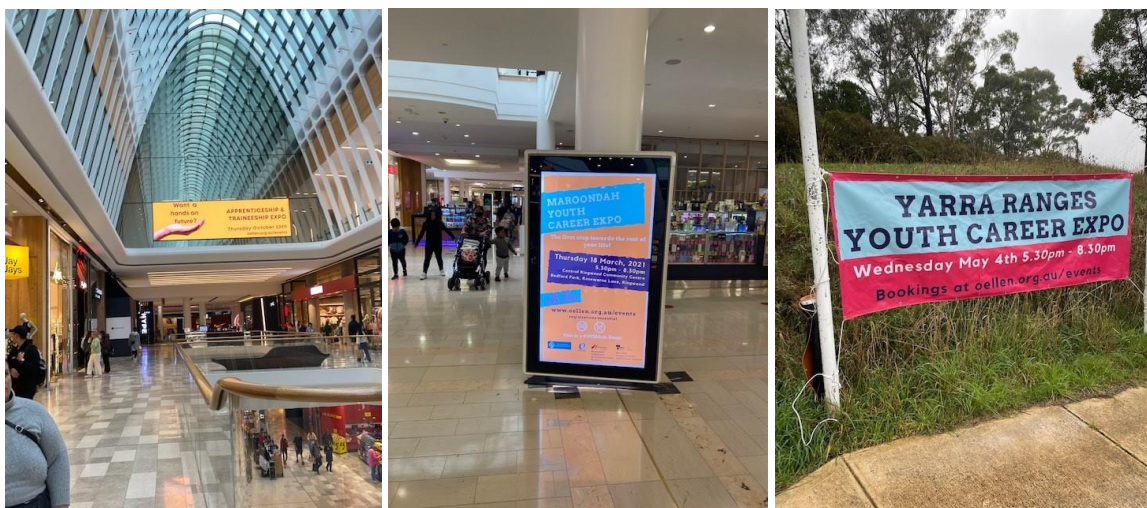


❖ LGA communications

OELLEN's strong connection with the Youth and Economic Development teams at Knox, Maroondah and Yarra Ranges councils were deployed to broaden the audience for the Jobs for youth project. Social media posts were reshared and reposted by council teams to targeted youth pages and whole of community pages to reach parents and other influences in young people's lives.

❖ Marketing billboards

Select events within the Jobs for Youth project were given an increased marketing focus with the addition of digital billboards in retail spaces and physical banners in public spaces.



Event summaries

❖ Tourism Scholarship Pilot Program

- Following a recruitment period from September 2021 - January 2022, 10 Scholarships were offered as proposed in the Program funding application with Eastern Metro Partnerships.
- Two candidates withdrew from the program once they started, whilst one candidate never started after delaying their acceptance of the offer.
- All candidates who registered for their Cert 3 in Tourism training in 2021 were able to make the most of the free Tafe subsidy. However, *this course was removed from the eligibility by the State government in 2022*. Coincidentally, the three candidates who withdrew from the program were being subject to the full Tafe fees, which would have simply been paid for by their \$8,000 scholarship.
- Of the seven remaining candidates, the *majority have largely had a positive experience*. A couple didn't get the level of diversity in their job experience placements that the program promoted. This was due to a small number of employers leaving them in one role e.g. Table service in the restaurant, and not exposing them to other facets of the tourism enterprise such as accommodation, events or cellar door.
- Many of the candidates *expressed interest in going back for their third placement* to their first placement employer. This was supported if they were taking on a different role. Two candidates were removed from work placements due to a mismatch in expectations.
- The *mentoring program saw more mentoring interest than candidates* in the program. As such, this has highlighted an opportunity to think about this in the future for the region to increase leadership within the sector. This aspect of the program was supported through the Jobs for Youth program and involved three formal training days for both the mentees and mentors. With the expectation that the mentees and mentors would meet monthly. Mentoring ceased with candidates who withdrew from the program. However, training was still offered to the mentors to take back learnings to their workplace.
- To date, *around 12 different employer businesses have participated* in the program host work placements.
- *Four candidates have participated in several ambassador roles* presenting to students and employers about the benefits of the program and the initiative.
- The development of this program has *strengthened the visibility and services* of Box Hill Institute in the regional tourism industry, as a major Tafe trainer. While this has been a positive start, there could be a much higher presence of the Institute in working with industry to further support this competitive strength in the Yarra Valley and Dandenong Ranges of the Outer East.

❖ Career Expos





❖ The Maroondah Youth Career Expo

The career expo consisted of resume reviews, practice Interviews, breakout presentations, a panel discussion and a Job services marketplace.

Feedback - *“The evening had a great buzz with many valuable conversations taking place.”*
 The on-camera interview of an attendee by our videographers lead to a workplace placement at the video production company for that student!

Number of people impacted - Registrations – 95

Attendees – 50 attendees

Ad ons - 18 practice interviews and 15 plus many walk ups

❖ Knox Youth Career Expo

The career expo consisted of resume reviews, practice Interviews, breakout presentations, a panel discussion and a Job services marketplace.

Feedback - 25 exhibitors took part in the event, *11 local employers looking to recruit young people as well as educate about the breadth of roles available in their industry* and 14 employment related services including apprenticeship providers, RTO's, Social Enterprises, Employment services, volunteer organisations and legal advice services. This was our largest stall holder turnout and the most employers

CVGT successfully signed up a young man looking for a horticulture apprenticeship on Wednesday night. He had two job interviews lined up the next day and was offered one with a landscaper of the year recipient by Friday. He has since been offered the second position and is currently weighing his options including staying at school and taking on one role as an SBAT

MAS reported many great career pathways conversations with students and parents including one with a young lady interested in becoming a motorcycle mechanic. They discussed career pathways through apprenticeships and the value of undertaking a school-based apprenticeship to get a real head start on her career. Steve was also able to assist a parent, a mature age gentleman who was looking at a career change into light automotive. He was provided with advice around considering a pre-app to get some industry experience to hit the ground running.

Many parents approached us over the night to thank us for the event and to comment on the wide range of exhibitors and the valuable content delivered in the presentations across the night.

Interchange Outer East shared the feedback that the event was perfect for their agency looking for young volunteers into the disability support space. They attend many expos and tell us this was one of the best they've been to!

Two young ladies from Rowville Secondary connected with Ren from EWIT and are now coming to the Tool Skills day promoting women in trade

Employers *shared very positive feedback* about the opportunity to expose young people to their industry and the variety of roles as well as identifying some potential candidates.

Number of people impacted - Registrations – 130

Attendees – 80

Ad ons - 11 practice interviews and 16 resume reviews were pre booked however we estimate 20 sessions in total took place with some of the registered participants not attending and others stepping to gaps in the schedule.

❖ **Yarra Ranges Youth Career Expo**

The career expo consisted of resume reviews, practice Interviews, breakout presentations, a panel discussion and a Job services marketplace.

Feedback - Engagement in the main panel was fantastic at this event with young attendees and parents really participating in a group conversation about job seeking, how parents can help and breaking down some misconceptions young people hold

A young man who attended alone and was the first to arrive and last to leave, took the initiative to approach our panellist, Miles from Activity Playgrounds, and they are now working out the details for a work experience placement

An attendee with autism bravely took up the offer for a one-on-one chat with our positive psychology expert about how to sell her strengths and proudly wear her identity when job seeking

One young attendee came alone but was so enthused about the discussions she was having she called her mum to come up and join before the panel started so they can both hear the information and discuss it later.

Number of people impacted - Registrations – 101

Attendees – 45

Ad ons - 6 practice interviews and 6 resume reviews were pre booked and roughly this number took place, our lowest uptake for this offering

❖ Apprenticeship and Traineeship Expo



Focused on apprenticeships and traineeships, this event comprised employers, GTO's and AASN providers hosting marketplace stalls to answer questions about apprenticeships and their industries. Open roles were available for application at the event.

Feedback - AASN - I think the expo was a great success. There were a lot of people who showed interest (*We've got 13 people to reach out and have conversations with!*), the time and timeframe was perfect and the set up was easy to navigate for attendees

One of the *better expos* I've been to in a long time.

Employer - We enjoyed the experience and are delighted that we have a job interview booked in tomorrow with one of the attendees. Fingers crossed that we have found a perfect match!

Number of people impacted - 133 attendees. 123 were registered and this is the first-time attendance has surpassed registration

❖ Auto Industry Career Showcase

WPC with FutureGen partnered up with OELLEN, Ringwood Training and Nissan to organise a 3 day showcase of the automotive industry.

The 3 days consisted of developing the young people's skills in interviews, resume writing, personal effectiveness, and goal setting.

The group was also treated to a day at Nissan HQ seeing the latest technology in EV and hearing from a 2nd year female apprentice and former race car driver. They also got insights into the auto industry and what the future may look like.

Feedback – Seven participants have *potentially secured an apprenticeship* with brands such as Nissan, Porsche and BMW.

Number of people impacted - 16 students

❖ Tools skill days



Partnering with EWIT, Box Hill Institute Skills and Jobs Centre OELLEN connected females to non-traditional trades through a ‘women in trades’ initiative. Participants had a hands-on experience to try different trades and tools.

Feedback - Feedback was very positive *for the networking session* in particular - the participants found it very beneficial to *connect with local employers especially learning about their career pathways and what they may look for from candidates* as part of the recruitment process.

Schools’ tools skill day June –Feedback from students and teachers was extremely positive, the highlight of the day was when the students got to have some *hands-on experience* with various trade tools (e.g., stripping electrical cables, joining plumbing pipes)

Schools’ tools skill day October - Students had a *fantastic day learning* about plumbing and building and construction and taking part in some hands-on activities as well as a positive mindset session. Students were assisted in these activities by industry workers and other young females in the careers of plumbing and building and construction. The feedback at the end of the day was very *positive with many female students considering or contemplating a pathway or career in trades.*

Number of people impacted- 50 attendees at employment networking day (April)

24 attendees at the schools’ tools skill day June

60 attendees at the schools’ tools skill day October

❖ Healesville Coffee Bus

After a generous donation of a commercial coffee machine to Healesville High School, the Outer Eastern LLEN along with Healesville High School developed a program to establish a social enterprise that builds young people’s employability skills, practical skills and self-confidence while being self-sustaining with profits of coffee sales covering the training costs yearly.

Phase 1 of the program for 2022 was to complete barista training with interested students from year levels 9,10,11 and 12.

Feedback - 32 students registered to take part in the Coffee bus project over the 2 days
30 x students achieved over 95% pass rate on their knowledge course for both Barista and Food Handlers

Number of people impacted- 30 Students from years 9, 10, 11 & 12. Many young people were able to use the training to access part time employment. Hospitality is an identified skill shortage in the area with employers desperate for staff.

❖ Local Youth Careers Pop Ups



Two pop up career events were hosted over the school holidays in Youth week (April 11-14) - one in Eastland and the other at Chirside Park shopping centre. Each day had a dedicated topic with relevant staff from local services manning the stalls to provide advice to young people and their carers. Topics included – Apprenticeship and Traineeship Services. Job Seeking advice including interview and resume tips, Youth related career support services including transition to work

Feedback - Our Eastland location *was not ideally placed* near stores frequented by young people. While the Chirside location was more appropriate, there was still a *general reluctance to approach* stalls from the community.

This may be in part due to *social distancing habits* or an *overabundance of mid-aisle* stalls burning out people's willingness to engage in this setting. Having items to give away was the best tool we had to engage with people, and we hope that those who did not wish to stop for a chat benefited from the resources provided in the bag,

Number of people impacted - Over 150 expo goodie bags were handed out to shoppers and staff were able to assist Maroondah and Yarra Ranges youth with their questions about career pathways.

Outcomes and Recommendations

❖ Evaluation Methods

Surveys were distributed at the end of the events outlined in this report to both participants and exhibitors. Detailed feedback on each event is provided above in the event summary section.

Across all OELLEN run events during the Jobs for Youth project a total of 548 participants were impacted. This included young people and their parents and carers. 69 job service-related exhibitors

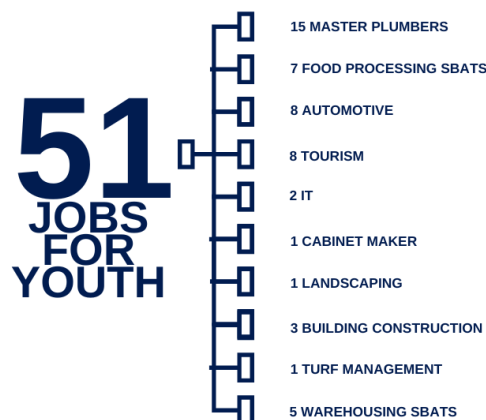
were involved in the delivery of these events and 36 employers showed up to support and recruit young people.

The most successful event was the final Apprenticeship and Traineeship Expo held on 20 October 2022. *Feedback from exhibitors was particularly positive of this event.* Most suggested that a targeted event with real jobs was more successful than careers expos. It was also noted that the timing of October was ideal for young people approaching the end of the school year and considering their options beyond school. Interesting to note that there were several parents who attended this event on behalf of their children who were resistant to participating and had been long term unemployed and disengaged from education and training. This is of a particular concern as OELLEN has a long-term anecdotal understanding that this cohort is more significant in our region than the limited data depicts.

Conversations at all events with parents and young people have reflected an evolving level of comfort with returning to in person events. Our final few events have indicated that confidence is returning with the lifting of pandemic restrictions. It was pleasing to see the numbers of young people at these final events who could articulate their objectives or were open to exploring opportunities.

Results

As a result of the engagement activities outlined above OELLEN achieved 51 confirmed jobs in the outer east for young people.



Lessons Learnt & Recommendations

OELLEN and partners have taken on many valuable lessons because of the Jobs for Youth project. By pushing ourselves to explore new ways and formats for delivering events and communicating, we have developed a greater understanding of how to engage with local young people to bring to them the services and information they need to make important career decisions. Employers are desperately seeking employees in this current market, and it is abundantly clear to them and OELLEN that traditional methods of recruitment are no longer sufficient to attract quality candidates. Strong

partnerships and connections with local industry are crucial, particularly in times of high employment.

In summary:

- What worked previously doesn't work now in terms of promotion and engagement
- Multiple angles need to be utilised in any initiative to connect with community (parents, teachers, sporting groups, in person, online)
- Partnerships between industry, jobs services, community and education and training are more crucial than ever
- Increased engagement between school and industry to support more positive pathways from school is needed. Many young people are still not aware of the opportunities in industry in their local region
- There is still work to be done to engage young people already disengaged from education, employment and training
- Both young people and employers benefit where mentoring programs are in place.
- The Tourism scholarship program highlighted the benefits of young people experiencing a range of industries opportunities before committing to a role. This enhances young people's perspective on an industry