



CONNECT

MAPPING INITIATIVES TO
EMPOWER YOUNG PEOPLE
INTO THE WORLD OF WORK



2018 INNER NORTHERN YOUTH EMPLOYMENT TASKFORCE RESEARCH REPORT

Connect: Mapping Initiatives to Empower Young People into the World of Work

2018 Inner Northern Youth Employment Taskforce
Research Report

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Acknowledgements

In response to a growing youth unemployment rate, the Inner Northern Local Learning and Employment Network (INLLEN) established a cross-sectoral taskforce in 2014 to investigate youth employment issues. Known as the Inner Northern Youth Employment Taskforce (INYET), the aim was to develop a regional youth employment strategy. This 2017 report has built on the initial research from 2014 and has gathered information from young people, identifying issues they feel are affecting their employment opportunities.

INYET has utilised local partnerships to undertake much of the data collection for this project. Significant assistance was provided by local youth agencies in promotion of the survey and in the facilitation of focus groups to obtain more in-depth research of young peoples' views and opinions on youth employment. The consultation also provided young people with the opportunity to identify the solutions to the challenges they face upon entering the job market. Vicinity Centres (operators of Northland Shopping Centre) was also very supportive in allowing INLLEN staff to survey young people at their Jobs Fair event, held at Northland in early September 2017.

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INYET has created a platform that has engaged stakeholders and increased opportunities for young people in our community. The Taskforce's momentum provides a significant opportunity to further develop the report's recommended strategies and implement a youth employment action plan across the region for the next three years.

Our young people need the wider youth employment ecosystem's support, which can only be achieved if we collectively mobilise our resources, thereby fostering and developing a shared-value community to help the transition journey of young people from school and education into sustainable employment.

The INYET presents this report to the local community and wider youth employment ecosystem for their consideration.



David Kennedy
Chair
Inner Northern Youth Employment Taskforce

Executive Summary

The Inner Northern Youth Employment Taskforce (INYET) was established in mid 2014 as a strategic high-level initiative with the strong support of the region's three councils (Darebin, Moreland and Yarra) as major employers and civic leaders within the region. In 2017 the Taskforce consists of 20 member organisations.

The 2014 Research Report developed for the INYET made 22 recommendations within a change framework consisting of four key change elements, or pillars. These were:

- Building the skills, knowledge and attitude of young people
- Building the capacity of local business to support young people into work
- Building stronger connections between business, schools, education providers, and community organisations
- Increasing access to employment

Nineteen of the 22 recommendations from the 2014 Research Report have now been implemented, supporting a coordinated and strategic approach across the region. Key initiatives that have resulted include:

- Delivery of the Jobs for Youth Campaign (2014-17)
- Development of an Employer Pledge model (2015-17)
- Expansion of the Real Industry Job Interviews (RIJI) program
- Establishment of a Vocational Mentoring Exchange Pilot program (2017)
- Creation of an Industry Speaker Bank (2017); and
- Commissioning of a Youth Enterprise and Entrepreneurship Research Report providing recommendations for action in 2018-20.

Significant momentum has been established through these initiatives. More than 2000 students from 25 schools have participated in the RIJI work-related interviews. In excess of 500 employers have provided pledges of support, while additionally 17 representatives from the Industry Speaker Bank have presented to more than 800 young people.

The findings of the research in 2017, combined with feedback from young people indicated that:

- a region-wide coordinated approach to deliver information and suitable programs that can help develop their job search skills, resume writing, application capabilities and interview techniques should be continued
- young people are seeking support and mentoring opportunities from business and industry
- it is important to continue to improve the connection of young people to business and industry through a range of activities including an enhanced work experience and work placement model, and
- a deeper investigation of the patterns of students enrolled in the compulsory education system as well as part-time work is needed.

The recommendations in this report are based on the finding of this research.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Coordinated Regional Approach

- 1.1 INYET to continue to deliver a strategic and coordinated youth employment strategy across the region for a further three years.
- 1.2 Retain the four key elements of the 2014-17 youth employment strategy as an outline for the delivery of a new 2018-20 youth employment strategy, underpinned by a comprehensive evaluation and impact assessment structure.
- 1.3 Continue to deliver the Jobs for Youth Campaign (2018-20) across the three council regions utilising social media and website platforms linking young people to employment, training and employment opportunities.

Recommendation 2: Industry Connection

- 2.1 Build on the current 'Employer Pledge' business engagement model by extending the pledge online, enabling more businesses to support young people by streamlining the pledge process.
- 2.2 Establish a comprehensive data collection project to enable the development of a shared understanding of the nature and extent of student part-time employment, the use of work experience and the use of Structured Workplace Learning (SWL) in the region.
- 2.3 Utilise and engage the expertise of local education and economic development organisations in the region's three councils to deliver an annual forum to advise school leaders, education providers and the community on regional youth employment growth and transition opportunities in the region.

Recommendation 3: Strategic Entrepreneurship Platform

- 3.1 Establish a strategic entrepreneurship platform to develop the capabilities of organisations who work with young people. This will lead to the establishment of suitable enterprise and entrepreneur programs; providing professional learning opportunities, resources, tools and support materials.

Recommendation 4: Create Youth Employment

- 4.1 Explore the implementation of 'youth employment dividend' procurement processes that support direct and indirect youth employment across the three local governments and other business sectors.
- 4.2 Promote engagement between local employers/ businesses and young people to improve entry employment opportunities into the workforce.

Recommendation 5: Youth Capacity Building

- 5.1 Support further development of a regional vocational mentoring exchange focused on connecting young people to businesses and employers.
- 5.2 Promote and assist young people to effectively access and use the current media platforms specialising in information about events, training and employment opportunities that is accessible to young people.
- 5.3 Build the capacity of local organisation and schools to promote and effectively use the current media platforms to source information on events, training and employment opportunities for young people.

1. Introduction

This research report has been developed on behalf of the Inner Northern Youth Employment Taskforce (INYET) to provide an understanding of the current status of youth employment in the inner northern region's cities of Darebin, Moreland and Yarra.

The research undertaken for the project builds on, and updates, the Youth Employment Research Strategy Report that was produced in 2014.

The purpose of the research has been to gather information from young people that will help to identify change and data trends from 2014 to the present time. The report incorporates an updated literature review, online surveys and focus groups with young people, as well as informal 'vox pop' discussions with the public. The report then provides a number of recommendations to inform the future work of INYET for the period 2018 to 2020.

The research has the twin objectives of:

- Identifying changes and data trends that may have occurred in the period between the 2014 INYET research and the present time.
- Investigating what young people see as the potential opportunities, aspirations and solutions for their future employment prospects. That is, what will make a difference?

Acknowledgements

The Taskforce has relied on local partnerships to undertake much of the data collection for this project.

Particularly valuable assistance has been provided by local youth agencies in promotion of the survey and facilitating the organisation of focus groups to undertake more in-depth research of young peoples' views and opinions on youth employment, the opportunities and solutions to the challenges they face entering the job market.

The focus of this research is on the cohorts identified below and utilises a number of methods to gather relevant information.

Survey and Focus Group

The survey provides a snapshot of the employment landscape from the perspective of young people.

Young people (aged 15-25) who were surveyed and/or invited to focus groups included:

- unemployed and early school leavers
- school students variously enrolled in VCE, VETiS and/or VCAL programs
- students enrolled at universities and training providers; and
- some young people working in their first job.

The survey was completed by 143 young people from the identified cohorts. However, the majority of those completing the survey were still enrolled in secondary school.

Young people were asked about their perceptions, opinions, beliefs, and attitudes towards potential opportunities, aspirations and solutions for their future employment prospects.

Literature Review

A literature review of current research reports was designed to complement (rather than replicate) the work undertaken for the previous INYET Strategy Report that was completed in 2014.

2. Review of the Research

2.1 The decline in employment prospects for young people in Australia since the 2008 Global Financial Crisis

Young people are struggling with challenging pathways into work. Nearly one in three young people are currently unemployed or underemployed.¹ A recent estimate indicated that up to one quarter of young Australians aged 24 were disconnected from education and training and at risk of long-term marginalisation from the workforce.²

On top of this underutilisation of young talent, around one in seven young people who are not studying have stepped out entirely from the labour force and don't appear in the unemployment figures. For those who are working (and not studying), the work is often part-time. More than one in three 15-19 year olds (39%) who are not studying and one in four 20-24 year olds (26%) are in part-time work. (*calculation using ABS Catalogue 6291.0.55.001, June 2015 figures.*)

In the early 1990s, Australia had one of the highest youth unemployment rates among English-speaking Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries (and higher than the overall OECD average). Two decades of subsequent economic growth reduced the youth unemployment rate to the lowest in the OECD by 2007. While unemployment generally increased after the Global Financial Crisis, the rise in the youth unemployment rate in Australia from 2008 to 2011 was also much lower than in most OECD countries.

Since 2011, the youth unemployment rate has continued to increase in Australia while falling in other English-speaking OECD countries.³ After a steady decline in youth unemployment (15-29 year olds) in the 16 years from 1992 (when it was 16.4%) to 2008 (when it was 7.1%), the share of unemployed youth out of all active youth rose again to over 10% in 2015.⁴

In 2016 there has been a small decline in youth unemployment of 15–24 year olds from the high in December 2014 of almost 14%.⁵

The rate of youth employment dropped by over 4 percentage points between 2008 and 2015 (from 69.8 to 65.5%), while those not in employment, education or training rose by 1.4 percentage points (from 10.4 to 11.8%).⁶

First-time jobseekers are likely to find themselves at a substantial disadvantage when competing for increasingly scarce employment opportunities with a rising pool of more experienced (and recently unemployed) jobseekers. Those young people already in the labour market with temporary jobs are facing a bleak short-term outlook, being among the first to lose their jobs. Low-skilled youth, who faced multiple barriers in finding work before the crisis, are now at particularly high risk of long-term inactivity and exclusion.⁷

As young people are new to the labour market and are generally less skilled than older workers, they are more affected by changes in labour market conditions than the general population. Youth are also more likely to work in industry sectors which are more sensitive to economic conditions (such as hospitality and retail) or external shocks (such as tourism)⁸.

There are a multitude of causes for this sustained growth in youth unemployment, including a non-buoyant labour market for young people post-Global Financial Crisis (GFC), a downturn in the number of entry-level

¹ New Work Order, Foundation for Young Australians, 2017

² Lamb et al., 2015

³ Productivity Commission, Migrant Intake into Australia, 2016

⁴ Investing in Youth: Australia, OECD 2016 p. 210

⁵ Youth Unemployment Hotspots Snapshot, BSL March 2016 p. 2

⁶ OECD 2016

⁷ International Labour Office (ILO), Increasing the Employability of Disadvantaged Youth, 2011

⁸ Productivity Commission, 2016

positions and apprenticeships available, the casualisation of the workforce and the reality that older employees are not transitioning to retirement at the same rate as pre-GFC.⁹

The continuing decline in employment prospects for young people raises the prospect of significant financial and social costs to government and community if the disconnect between young people and employment continues to widen.¹⁰

Immediately prior to the 2008 Global Financial Crisis, a young person spent an average of 13 weeks looking for work and less than 20% of this group were classified as long-term unemployed. By February 2014 this had increased to an average of 29 weeks spent looking for work (ABS, 2014), and over 55% were classified as long-term unemployed. Many of these young people spent up to 52 weeks looking for employment, more than triple the amount prior to 2008 (Borland, 2014).

Many young people use further study to improve their credentials as a pathway to finding long-term employment, permanent roles or secure incomes. But in the current economy, these pathways are not as reliable as they once were. For instance, in 2016, the full-time employment rate for bachelor graduates was 71%, compared to 85% in 2007.¹¹

2.2 15-24 year olds are the highest risk age group for unemployment

Young people aged 15–24 have a significantly higher risk of unemployment than any other age group. In January 2016, the youth unemployment rate was more than twice the overall unemployment rate (5.8%) and more than 2.5 times the rate among adults aged 25 and older (4.6%).¹²

Among the 15-24 year age group, in early 2016, more than 258,000 young people in the labour market were still unable to find a job.¹³

There are many causes for this sustained growth in youth unemployment. Aside from the Global Financial Crisis, additional factors include:

- a downturn in the number of available entry-level positions and apprenticeships
- the casualisation of the workforce, and
- older employees not retiring at the same rate as before the GFC.

While this impacts all young jobseekers, unsurprisingly the impact is felt the greatest by those young people considered at risk of or already experiencing long-term unemployment.¹⁴

The rising youth unemployment rate has also coincided with a growing trend of underemployment. The number of young people in work who would like to be working more hours exceeds 17%.¹⁵ The increase in underemployment is a result of the growth in part-time employment over the last decade, outstripping the number of full-time jobs created during the same period. The underemployment rate rose 6.3 percentage points from 11% in February 2008 to 17.3% in June 2015.¹⁶

There are just generally fewer employment opportunities for young people. This is evident in the slowdown in hiring within industries with typical concentrations of young workers, such as retail, manufacturing and construction, and a growing likelihood for employers to recruit at higher skill and educational attainment

⁹ SVA Fundamental principles for youth employment 2016

¹⁰ SVA Fundamental principles for youth employment 2016; Young People and Unemployment in Melbourne's North, paper prepared by the National Institute of Economic and Industry Research (NIEIR) on behalf of NORTH Link, April 2015.

¹¹ Torii, K. and O'Connell, M. 2017, Preparing Young People for the Future of Work, Mitchell Institute Policy Paper No. 01/2017. Mitchell Institute, Melbourne

¹² Youth Unemployment Hotspots Snapshot, BSL March 2016 p. 2

¹³ Youth Unemployment Hotspots Snapshot, BSL March 2016 p. 2

¹⁴ SVA Fundamental principles for youth employment 2016

¹⁵ SVA Fundamental principles for youth employment 2016

¹⁶ ABS data, June 2015 reported in SVA Fundamental principles for youth employment 2016

levels than possessed by many young people.¹⁷ Furthermore, many low skilled, entry-level jobs previously available in Australia are now being sent offshore.¹⁸

This reduction in the actual number of job opportunities available to young people is having a significant impact.

The youth share of total employment fell from 18.1% in January 2008 to 15.6% in December 2015. The decline in the youth share of employment since 2008 has been broad-based across industries, occupation and regions.¹⁹

2.3 Projected future costs of unemployment

A recent estimate indicated that up to one quarter of young Australians aged 24 were disconnected from education and training and at risk of long-term marginalisation from the workforce.²⁰ A 2017 Mitchell Institute study has found that over 13% of young people will experience this long term, for more than half of their adult life, struggling to find work and unable to find their way back into education.²¹

Youth unemployment costs the Australian economy through foregone tax, reduced productivity, high welfare spend, cost of churn through ineffective services and increased demand on health, justice and community services. These costs have a compounding effect as children born into families with at least one unemployed parent have a higher chance of being welfare dependent as they move into adulthood, creating cycles of youth unemployment across generations. The loss of foregone tax revenue alone adds up to \$3.15 billion annually.²²

Both early school leaving and disengagement from education and work carry with them long term costs to the individual and the nation.

The 2015 Intergenerational Report estimated that by 2055, the working age population will have halved from 4.5 people per person aged over 65 today to 2.7 people per person aged over 65, largely due to Australians living longer and healthier lives. Higher workforce participation by young people will be needed to grow the tax base and reduce welfare costs. To achieve this, Government needs to increase the supply of suitable jobs available to young people.²³

2.4 Youth unemployment is concentrated in particular regions

The national youth unemployment rate masks significant differences across regions in Australia.

The Darebin, Moreland and Yarra local government areas have significantly higher youth unemployment rates compared to the Victoria and Australian data.

¹⁷ Borland, J. (2014). Dealing with unemployment: What should be the role of labour market programs? *Evidence Base*, 2015(4): 1-27, doi 10.4225/50/558110C9B892D.

¹⁸ SVA 2016

¹⁹ Productivity Commission, 2016. p. 637

²⁰ Lamb et al., 2015

²¹ Lamb, S. and Huo, S, Counting the costs of lost opportunity in Australian education, Mitchell Institute report No. 02/2017. Mitchell Institute, Melbourne 2017

²² Foundation for Young Australians, 2014

²³ 2015 Intergenerational Report: Australia in 2055, Commonwealth of Australia, 2015.

Youth Unemployment Rates 2005 to 2015

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Darebin (C)	22.7	20.5	18.4	18.5	18.3	19.0	18.9	20.9	23.6	27.0	30.4
Moreland (C)	16.4	16.5	13.4	12.3	12.0	16.2	19.6	19.8	21.3	26.2	28.1
Yarra (C)	22.8	19.9	19.6	18.0	19.1	23.6	21.8	22.0	24.4	29.8	31.6
Melbourne's North	16.8	16.2	14.3	14.1	14.5	17.3	18.6	19.5	20.7	24.5	28.0
Victoria	14.5	14.0	13.5	13.1	13.8	16.1	15.9	16.2	17.5	19.2	21.5
Australia	13.5	12.8	12.5	11.8	12.7	15.2	15.0	15.1	16.0	17.5	19.6

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Darebin (C)	16.1	14.6	12.7	12.5	12.0	12.2	11.9	13.2	14.9	17.3	19.6
Moreland (C)	10.6	10.7	8.2	7.2	6.8	8.9	10.6	10.6	11.3	14.0	14.8
Yarra (C)	12.6	10.2	9.9	8.9	9.4	11.8	10.6	10.4	11.3	14.0	14.6
Melbourne's North	10.4	9.8	8.4	8.0	8.0	9.5	10.0	10.3	10.8	12.7	14.5
Victoria	9.5	9.1	8.5	8.0	8.3	9.6	9.3	9.3	10.0	10.8	12.0
Australia	8.7	8.1	7.8	7.2	7.7	9.2	9.0	8.9	9.3	10.0	11.3

Source: Derived by NIEIR using ABS Census, ABS Labour force Survey, Australian Government Department of Employment Small Area Labour Market Statistics.

More recent ABS estimates suggest that the 15-24 year-old youth unemployment since 2015 has continued to grow. The annual youth unemployment rate across the NE and NW of Melbourne increased in 2016 and 2017, and is nearing 18% in both regions.

	2016 Number U/E	2016 Rate U/E	2016 Number U/E	2017 Rate U/E
Melbourne – North-East	5,400	13.0%	7,500	17.6%
Melbourne – North-West	4,800	15.6%	6,500	17.9%

Youth unemployment statistics for small geographic areas: a quick guide, updated 7 August 2017. Source: ABS, *Labour force, detailed–electronic delivery, Jun 2017*, cat. no. 6291.0.55.001 (Data cube RM1) accessed 13 Nov 2017.

In the North West, the increase in unemployed youth went from 4,800 to 6,500 in that period.²⁴

2.5 Structural, societal and personal factors impact youth unemployment

There are a number of structural, societal and personal drivers that contribute to a young person gaining and sustaining a job.

Structural

The number of appropriate and accessible job vacancies is the most critical structural factor influencing the number of unemployed young people and the length of time they spend unemployed.²⁵

Societal

The community in which a young person lives delivers the support required in the form of educational

²⁴ The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) publishes regular labour force estimates through the *Labour Force Survey*. The survey is a key source of information on employment, unemployment, the labour force and associated rates and ratios. This monthly household survey is based on a sample of approximately 53,000 respondents across Australia.

²⁵ Muir, Powell and Butler, 2015

institutions, community organisations and services that assist a young person in transitioning from education to employment.

Personal

A young person's identity, aspirations, motivations, skills and capabilities impact their competitiveness and drive to compete in the labour market.

These three drivers are equally important in enabling youth employment, and are absolutely reliant on one another. The societal drivers are where most system interventions occur.

The Australian education system provides little opportunity for careers learning or work exposure while at school, and there is limited engagement between business and young people. Collaboration between government, industry and educators is the key to creating the “agile, flexible and more productive workforce” needed to reduce youth unemployment and meet its skills gaps. A more engaged business and education model would provide young people with universal and meaningful exposure to the world of work, including work experience opportunities, and relevant training and education that has a direct line of sight to employment.²⁶

Case Study

There is evidence that school-based interventions in Year 12 that prepare students' transition from school to work or study can have an impact. The 2011/12 Project Job Ready carried out by the not-for-profit BoysTown in the Brisbane South region provided 12 months of case management, including career counselling, to a small cohort of at-risk students.

The program was associated with positive employment and training outcomes in the six to twelve months after school completion. A qualitative evaluation concluded that participants could have benefitted even more if the program had started at the beginning of Year 12, rather than half way through their last year of schooling.

Source: Investing in Youth: Australia, OECD 2016

2.6 Many young people don't engage with government employment support

The number of young people who are not in employment, education and training has increased since 2008 and yet, the numbers who are registered with Centrelink are actually going down!

The 2016 OECD Country Report “Investing In Youth: Australia” concluded that approximately 40% of young people (15-29) who are not in employment, education or training (for at least a three month period) are not registered with Centrelink, and so are outside the income support system. That would comprise around 200,000 young people.²⁷

Reaching out to those not engaged in employment education or training as early as possible is crucial for avoiding long-term inactivity. However, not all young people without an immediate education or employment option register quickly as unemployed with Centrelink. Hesitant to get in touch with a government agency, they may instead try to get by on their own for a while or to seek help of family and friends rather than to register and claim benefits.²⁸

2.7 The main alternative – Continue in education

With the employment market becoming more difficult, many young people take up education and training opportunities, either by choice or by necessity. Fewer opportunities for employment for people with less than year 12 education or who lack tertiary qualification and the prospect of a less secure and / or lower paid

²⁶ Kitney, 2014 (quoted in Social Ventures Australia, 2016).

²⁷ OECD 2016

²⁸ OECD 2016

employment down the track give young people a greater incentive to continue their education. Raising the minimum school leaving age, and tightening eligibility for youth access to unemployment benefits also delays employment seeking and depresses employment rates.²⁹

Young people are spending longer periods in education and many are then taking longer to find their feet in the labour market.³⁰

2.8 Youth Unemployment – What is needed?

Research in Australia and across the OECD has identified the key requirements to help young people into employment and overcome the significant issues they face competing in the labour market. These requirements are listed below.

2.8.1 Provide work experience/job placement

Researchers and policy makers have identified that assistance to the young unemployed should ideally involve a job placement. This is the best pathway to long-term employment and the best context for increasing skills. Training and obtaining a formal qualification can be an important part of improving outcomes for the unemployed, but the incentives to undertake training and the value of training are greatest when it is matched to a job placement.³¹

A prerequisite for employers to offer placements is that they want workers who already have basic capabilities needed for work. They are happy to partner not-for-profits/service providers who can do the work of giving young people those basic capabilities.

A 2014 OECD report on Local Youth Employment Strategies in Ireland notes that *“lack of work experience was perceived by employers in case study regions as a major difficulty when hiring young people due to a number of factors, one of which being the low emphasis given to work experience during school years. The education system is overly focused on higher education from an early age. The career guidance offered gives little consideration to local career opportunities and places relatively little emphasis on the preparation for vocational pathways or for work.”*³²

2.8.2 Develop Employability skills

Employability, soft or life skills are personal attributes or behaviours that are hard to define, and yet are core pre-conditions for gaining and retaining employment. All employers indicate the need for ‘employability skills’ regardless of the industry, or the level of position.³³

The most effective approach to instilling employability skills in young people is offering opportunities to practice these skills in a work context. The development of employability skills is a life long journey and it is not necessary for a young person to hold or be proficient in all of them. Skills are developed by experience, perspective and coaching and can be developed, practiced and refined at school, work, whilst travelling, volunteering, playing sports or pursuing hobbies.³⁴

2.8.3 Link education and training to the workplace

Part of the local assistance to young people making the transition to work should be a greater role for schools and suppliers of tertiary education in providing opportunities to engage with the workplace. For example, having more information on work options allows students to make better study choices and provides greater motivation for study.

Improving career exploration and career guidance options for school students to expand young people’s understanding of the variety of pathways available, the core skills and attributes needed within various job

²⁹ Productivity Commission Report 2016

³⁰ Torii, K. and O’Connell, M. 2017

³¹ Borland, J. 2014, ‘Unemployment is hitting youth hard: This is what we should do’, The Conversation, 20 June, retrieved from <http://theconversation.com/unemployment-is-hitting-youthhard-this-is-what-we-should-do-27590>

³² OECD, Local Youth Employment Strategies, Ireland 2014

³³ Social Ventures Australia, 2016, *Fundamental Principles for Youth Employment*

³⁴ Social Ventures Australia 2016

clusters, and a focus on developing young people's ability to identify their strengths and interests. This will equip them to more effectively match their strengths with study and employment opportunities and successfully navigate career opportunities.³⁵

2.8.4 Provide foundation literacy and numeracy skills

Basic proficiency in the foundation skills of reading, writing, arithmetic, speaking, listening and comprehension is critical when searching for and retaining employment.³⁶ People with poor literacy and numeracy skills are twice as likely to be unemployed and for longer than those with average competencies. A young person who left school prior to Year 12 is four times more likely to have a poor transition into work.³⁷

The importance of basic literacy and numeracy and school retention has been recognised and prioritised within education systems, which have seen Year 12 attainment rates increase over the last decade. However additional efforts are still needed in improving school flexibility, the provision of more training and support for teachers, access to alternative learning pathways, as well as earlier and more intensive tutoring and social support for young people identified at risk.

2.8.5 Allow Program flexibility

Government funding needs to support a decentralised model of assistance to the young unemployed. Any funding model should require that specified outcomes be achieved, but must also allow greater flexibility and less bureaucracy than current government schemes.³⁸

2.9 Need to share data

In Australia there has been considerable investment in developing capacity to monitor and evaluate youth employment and skills initiatives, and has recognised the need for balanced supply and demand side approaches to successfully deliver a strategy. The importance of employer involvement has been emphasised for many years (longer than in many European countries) and the geographical difference between regions and localities has also been recognised.³⁹

However, much more can be done to improve the sharing of data that would enable partners to gain a clearer picture of the pathways and progress of young people into employment. Despite the development of the OnTrack system in Victoria, the limitations of this data and the restrictions on data sharing mean that the capacity to gain a clearer understanding of the patterns and pathways of young people seeking employment remains poorly realised.

Case Study - Closing data gaps

As part of the Glasgow Youth Gateway, Skills Development Scotland (SDS) was given responsibility to lead on addressing data building and data sharing issues at both the national (Scotland) and city levels. This required work on two related fronts.

At a technical level, it required the development of a single shared management information system that could be used to track young people's progress through the school system and beyond.

On a cultural level, this work required strengthening the relationship within schools to convey the message that improving the supply of intelligence mattered and that schools were central to that process. In particular, there was a concerted

³⁵ Torii, K. and O'Connell, M. 2017

³⁶ SYC, (2014) Improved job outcomes for young people: A plan for enhancing employment services for young people leaving education and joining the workforce. Retrieved from [file:///svasydser01/users/lhook/Documents/Downloads/MFJ%20White%20Paper%20FINAL%20-%20Oct%202014%20\(1\).pdf](file:///svasydser01/users/lhook/Documents/Downloads/MFJ%20White%20Paper%20FINAL%20-%20Oct%202014%20(1).pdf)

³⁷ Social Ventures Australia 2016

³⁸ Borland

³⁹ OECD, Local Youth Employment Strategies – Ireland, 2014

effort to reduce the number of unknown destinations post-school as this had been identified as a particular flaw in Glasgow's starting point.

SDS has developed and introduced data hubs across the city, which have led to a marked increase in the quality of data available and partners' ability to share it. As part of this work there has also been a significant improvement in reducing the number of unknown destinations from city schools. The SDS data hub has been central in improving the gathering and sharing of client management information. This has enabled partners to track the progress of young people more effectively and, critically, has tackled the initial challenge around the numbers of "unknowns". As a result, partners have a clearer picture of patterns, as well as a better understanding of who is responsible for different aspects of the client journey.

Source: OECD, 2014

2.10 Transformation of work for young people

Economic changes are transforming work through automation, globalisation and more flexible work.

The Foundation for Young Australian's 2017 New Work Order Report indicates that 70% of young Australians are getting their first job in roles that will either look very different or be completely lost in the next 10 to 15 years due to automation. Nearly 60% of Australian students (70% in VET) are currently studying or training for occupations where at least two thirds of jobs will be automated. Over 50% of jobs will require significant digital skills requiring a significant shift in school delivery.⁴⁰ (FYA 2017, New Work Order)

Enterprise skills strategies are required to ensure young people are prepared for the economy of the future and equipped with the tools to drive economic and social progress. Young Australians need to learn the skills to be digitally-literate, financially-savvy, innovative and adaptable.

The occupations that have previously helped young people get their foothold in the workforce are disappearing. Around 70% of young people in Australia currently enter the labour market in jobs that will be lost or radically affected by automation over the next 10-15 years.

As pay for the skilled rises, unskilled workers will be forced to compete with low cost automation at home and foreign workers abroad. The future of work contains risks of increased employment insecurity. More than half of new jobs in advanced economies since the 1990s have been temporary, part-time or self-employed.

Young people are likely to be disproportionately hurt by automation. Young people tend to get their first jobs in fields like retail, admin, and labouring. These fields are highly exposed to the impact of technology.⁴¹

Reports from Canada paint a similar picture for youth employment, with rapid transformation of the world of work being identified.⁴²

- Young people must adapt and innovate to finance a secure future.
- The support we provide them must also evolve.

That report indicates that two words heard repeatedly in consultations in Canada were the need for "flexibility" and "fluidity." To help young people gain a solid foothold in the labour market, there is a need to teach them how to apply for a job and to adapt their soft and hard skills in a variety of circumstances over a lifetime. The support system also needs to be nimble and flexible enough to meet youth where they are.

⁴⁰ FYA, New Work Order 2017

⁴¹ FYA 2017

⁴² Report from the Expert Panel on Youth Employment, Canada, *13 Ways to Modernize Youth Employment in Canada; Strategies for a New World of Work*, 2017

Numerous programs and support mechanisms are available across Canada to help young people make job and career transitions. However, supply isn't always meeting demand. This mismatch plays out in the labour market with, for example, small and medium-sized businesses having difficulty finding good workers while thousands of young people are in need of jobs.⁴³

Case Study – Reporting on Youth Employment Strategies, Kingston, Ontario Canada, Youth Employment Strategy Taskforce Report 2016

In May 2015, Kingston City Council approved strategic priorities for its four-year term, including development of a youth employment strategy that would support a “smart economy”.

In June 2015, a project to develop a community-supported Youth Employment Strategy was formally launched as a partnership led by the City of Kingston and engaged dozens of community stakeholders, including school boards, Pathways to Education, Employment Ontario agencies, Chamber of Commerce, Y2K and the Children and Youth Services Planning Committee.

The Youth Employment Strategy Task Force identified a range of needs to be served and barriers to be overcome if young people were to be assisted find work and build meaningful careers. They fall into two main groups:

- **Young people who are prepared and ready with education and skills:**

These young people already have developed entry-level technical or academic skills, some work/ volunteer experience, and basic life skills: their challenges are mainly in finding suitable opportunities for work.

- **Young people who need support to become workplace ready:**

These young people may lack role models, knowledge of workplaces/career opportunities, or have basic needs (financial, housing, health, education, transportation etc) that undermine their employability. Supports are needed to help them become employable and ready to enter the labour force.

The Kingston Youth Employment Strategy identified four areas important to making a difference for the second group (those needing additional support) seeking work in their community:

a. Provide Mentoring

Mentoring can assist young people to benefit from experiences, connections and advice on how best to pursue employment opportunities. The practical preparation ranges from understanding work culture and expectations, to how to connect with others to discover and pursue opportunities, and how to skillfully manage their careers (including personal finances, dress, job interviews)

b. Make Employers Part of the Solution

When young people are skilled, ready and able, they still need job opportunities. Job structure, entry requirements, hiring practices and awareness of incentives for business are all key factors.

c. Support an Early Start

Helping young to plan and prepare early for working life can have significant payoffs – for example, learning about potential jobs and careers that might be a good fit for their interests and skills; identifying sectors with good employment possibilities; and seeking insights from informed counsellors.

⁴³ Report from the Expert Panel on Youth Employment 2017

d. Help Develop Pre-Employment Skills

Most young people have many things to learn before they start their first job – and there are many ways to learn them: online, in training programs and through youth employment programs and agency services.

The Foundation for Young Australians' 2017 Report makes a number of key proposals including:

Placing Enterprise skills at the heart of learning

Options include considering:

- Embedding enterprise skills, especially problem solving, creativity and social intelligence, in school curricula as general capabilities and in individual subject curriculum
- Training and promoting teaching methods that support problem solving capabilities

Promoting both employment-focused and innovation-focused entrepreneurship

Options include considering:

- Promoting entrepreneurship as a viable career option to school and tertiary students
- Providing strong start-up incentives for young people including income support, grants, loans with preferential terms, tax exemptions and guidance/coaching
- Making publically-funded education places in VET and university available to students wishing to undertake entrepreneurship education in facilities run by entrepreneurs
- Using public expenditure to drive demand for employment among key groups at risk of non-participation
- Providing the option for superannuation accountholders to invest some of the superannuation in a Venture Capital (VC) & Private Equity (PE) innovation stream
- Relaxing the constraints around crowdfunding

The Foundation for Young Australians argues that young people will need to be more entrepreneurial than in the past, and that a more transferable set of 'enterprise skills' will be demanded in 70% of future jobs.⁴⁴

To enable young people to adapt and thrive, "learning should promote skills of collaboration and problem solving, making and designing, empathy and emotional acuity."

The OECD also advocate for the need to rebuild school curricula and education systems more broadly to prioritise these competencies, to ensure individuals develop creative, critical thinking and collaborative skills, and build the character attributes such as mindfulness, curiosity, courage and resilience.⁴⁵

2.11 Fundamental Principles

A 2016 Report by Social Ventures Australia entitled *Fundamental Principles for Youth Employment* identifies 10 fundamental principles which are considered essential to effectively support young people into employment. These can be broadly split into two key categories:

- 1. Personal:** Young people are ready to work. The capabilities and experiences a young person needs to develop to gain and retain meaningful employment
- 2. Community infrastructure:** Collaboration to deliver employment solutions for young people. The components of a healthy ecosystem required to support the successful transitions into employment.

This principles framework can be used to guide investment decisions in employment programs, particularly in relation to the community infrastructure components of a healthy ecosystem required to support the successful transitions into employment.

⁴⁴ Foundation for Young Australians, 2015, 2016.

⁴⁵ Schleicher 2015 (quoted by Torii, K. and O'Connell, M. 2017)

Personal: Young people are ready to work				
Identity	Building aspirations	Literacy and Numeracy capability	Employability skills	Careers management
Community infrastructure: Collaboration to deliver employment solutions for young people				
Business partnerships	Early intervention	Personalised support	Alternative employment pathways	Financial support

Source: Ventures Australia, Fundamental Principles for Youth Employment 2016

Four of the 10 elements of potential relevance to INYET have been highlighted in the table above and are discussed in more detail below.

(a) Careers Management

Careers management assists young people to explore their interests, aligned career opportunities and employment pathways. The most effective approaches have been those led by industry professionals who engage directly with the young person, as they are able to present realistic information about their business, the types of jobs available and clear career pathways, as well as indicate potential employment opportunities.⁴⁶

Beyond human resources and access to industry professionals, a young person requires job search skills to identify potential employment opportunities. This includes being able to use the internet, industry publications, employment agencies, networks and community support organisations. To secure a job a young person also needs to be able to effectively present themselves to employers via cover letters, resumes and in person at an interview.⁴⁷

(b) Business Partnerships

Effective cross-sector partnerships with business can build a young person's employability skills, meet employers' recruitment and retention needs and create better employment outcomes for disadvantaged jobseekers.

Partnerships with the purpose of improving youth employment can start with careers exposure and work experience activities. The co-design and delivery of curriculum, meeting recruitment needs through partnerships with employment services and partnering with community support agencies to provide mentoring and coaching support to employees are all valuable outcomes of quality business partnerships.

The most successful cross-sector partnerships are those that provide transformative solutions for getting young people into work. These partnerships involve multiple providers and employers working within a particular industry or function working together to support young people into real employment.⁴⁸

For young people searching for work, opportunities for regular and meaningful connections to employers provide a distinct advantage over peers who don't have such exposure. A large proportion of young people engage in unpaid work just to get a foot in the door. A 2016 study found that 58% of 18-29 year olds participated in some form of unpaid work experience.⁴⁹

Examples of systematic business involvement to support youth employment in other contexts include the:

- United Kingdom's *Youth Friendly Badge* and the *Youth Friendly Charter* programs which publicly recognise companies that support young workers
- City of Toronto's *Partnership to Advance Youth Employment* as a municipal initiative that connects young people directly to business leaders for coaching and interviews; and

⁴⁶ Social Ventures Australia 2016

⁴⁷ Social Ventures Australia 2016

⁴⁸ Mourshed, Farrell, & Barton, 2012 cited in SVA 2016

⁴⁹ Torii and O'Connell 2017

- Employer- and industry-led initiatives that target and train vulnerable youth in northern America (such as NPower in Toronto, Canada, and the 100,000 Opportunities Initiative in the United States.)

(c) Personalised support

For young people who have been out of the workforce for more than 12 months, personalised support or case management can be critical in returning to and maintaining employment.⁵⁰ Personal support can involve one-on-one career management advice, coaching, mentoring, case management, counselling or psychological support.⁵¹

Personalised support provides the opportunity to clarify and assess the individual obstacles a young person is facing. Support is customised to meet the individual's needs with the intensity, timing and nature of the support varying dependent on the young person's exact circumstances.

Successful employment outcomes are often dependent on the support continuing once a young person finds a job, as they often need additional help to deal with any challenges or set-backs they might face once in the workplace.⁵²

(d) Alternative Employment Pathways

An opportunity to build experience, aspirations, confidence, knowledge and skills in a supportive working environment can be a useful bridge back into the open labour market.

Social enterprises, intermediary labour markets, employment transition programs and entrepreneurship to start a small business can provide that opportunity to gain work experience and exposure. These enterprises typically have limited financial and human resources and welcome voluntary or lower wage support, with the experience and skills gained invaluable for the jobseeker.

Experience working in such an environment can provide the basic experience and employability skills necessary to gain employment into the open labour market. Exposure to social enterprises can also encourage young people to develop their own enterprises, increasing the number of jobs available for themselves and others.⁵³

Entrepreneurship is an important mechanism for stimulating economic development, driving growth and creating jobs.⁵⁴ For many young people, encouragement to start a business and opportunities to learn the necessary skills and knowledge is a viable alternative to open employment.

⁵⁰ Beadle, 2014

⁵¹ Smith Family, 2014

⁵² Beadle, 2014

⁵³ Headley & Moffat, 2015

⁵⁴ UNCTAD, 2012

3. Summary of Youth Feedback

Young people want to work. They want to gain independence and contribute to society. Government, employers, educational institutions, unions and support services need to facilitate this outcome.

Feedback on employment-related issues were provided by online survey responses from 143 young people, a focus group of young jobseekers, and some one-on-one interviews in public places. The majority of those responding to the survey were still enrolled at school, while the focus group comprised jobseekers in the Commonwealth Government's Youth Jobs PaTH program who had already left school.⁵⁵

Confidence

More than 50% of the young people surveyed are not particularly confident about their prospects of finding paid work.

This was reinforced through discussion in the focus group. Levels of confidence about job prospects obviously vary between individuals, but their lack of experience is collectively seen to be the main barrier to employment, and opportunities to demonstrate capability are seen as highly important.

Those individuals who already hold part-time jobs are more positive about their employment prospects than their peers. They understand that obtaining some kind of initial employment makes one's resume look better. However, as the research indicates, underemployment is also a concern. Young people want more work rather than less.

Major considerations for young people when assessing employment opportunities are:

- issues relating to ease of travel
- rates of pay
- the match between their skills and the job, and
- the working hours required

The major employment-related consideration of the PaTH participants – many of whom have been job-seeking for some time – is primarily financial viability. That is, they need an income and are not too concerned what kind of job will provide that income.

Work Experience

Of those young people responding to the survey, 78% had completed some work experience (and another 20% were still in Year 9 when surveyed, with work experience still ahead of them). 82% indicated that they found work experience to be highly useful, very useful or fairly useful to them.

Only 17% indicated that it was not very useful or not useful at all.

The majority of respondents who undertook work experience indicated that they selected an area of potential interest to them for future employment (though in some cases the experience resulted in a change of direction). Work experience is generally purposeful and seen as valuable.

When asked what they learnt through work experience, 23% of respondents explicitly talked about gaining "employability" or "soft skills", while others indicated that they gained a general sense of what the workplace is like. The value of learning some basic technical skills was also a factor for some.

Suggestions put forward to make work experience even more valuable include:

- placements of longer duration
- making multiple placements available
- providing for more flexible hours (to suit employers and also students)
- using teaching time to conduct more research about it beforehand.

⁵⁵ The PaTH program (Prepare, Trial, Hire) aims to provide young long-term unemployed with employability skills before they apply for an internship.

Exposure to employer networks

2012 research in the UK⁵⁶ reported that young people who have no contact with employers while at school are five times more likely to become disengaged from employment and education compared with others holding the same qualifications. It is therefore important to note that young people completing the INYET survey reported that:

- 35% had never been on an industry visit or tour while at school
- 33% had no experience of mentoring
- 26% had no experience of participating in practice job interviews
- 45% of students indicated that they also had part-time jobs, while 55% did not. (Research indicates that part-time employment while a student is a strong predictor of a smoother transition into post-school employment).

Capacity building

Careers assistance provided through schools remains focused on those on the pathway to further education, whilst the minority of young people who are seeking direct entry into the workforce report very limited assistance available to them.⁵⁷

When asked about which career planning activities they had found most useful, survey respondents indicated that hands-on skills development rated the highest, along with gaining experience developing resumes and job applications. This was also reflected in the focus group, where participants indicated that assistance with resumes, practice with job interviewing, and general activities to help build confidence would all be valuable.

Of those at school, a quarter indicated that they had no experience of doing practice job interviews, which highlights the value of programs such as the Real Industry Job Interviews (RIJI) program.

Job-seeking

Young people are aware of the importance of their personal networks in the search for employment, citing the use of personal connections (including employer contacts made through work experience) as key job-seeking approaches. They also make extensive use of online job portals.

They are also aware that most jobs initially available to them will be either part-time or casual. Asked what type of employment that they might be seeking, 62% of respondents indicated part-time work and 40% casual employment, while only 38% said they would be seeking full-time work.⁵⁸

Not all are seeking to work for others. 13% indicated they were after either self-employment or to provide services as an independent contractor.

Benefits to employers of hiring young people

The four participants in the focus group considered the issue of what benefit there was to employers in hiring young people, given their relative lack of experience in the workplace. Benefits to the employers that the young people identified were that:

- employers will provide lower wages to younger staff for a period of time
- young employees are likely to provide more flexibility
- young employees are likely to provide strong computing and IT skills
- young employees may have greater energy and fitness levels; and
- the employers will be seen to be “investing in the next generation”

For details on the survey and focus group responses, see Attachment 1.

⁵⁶ “It’s who you meet: why employer contacts at school make a difference to the employment prospects of young adults”, Education and Employers Taskforce, London, (2012).

⁵⁷ Feedback from 25 September, 2017 Young People Focus Group conducted as part of INYET 2017 youth consultations. See Attachment 3 for more details.

⁵⁸ Note that respondents could select multiple options on this question.

4. Discussion of Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Coordinated Regional Approach

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 INYET to continue to deliver a strategic and coordinated youth employment strategy across the region for a further three years.
- 1.2 Retain the four key elements of the 2014-17 youth employment strategy as an outline for the delivery of a new 2018-20 youth employment strategy, underpinned by a comprehensive evaluation and impact assessment structure.
- 1.3 Continue to deliver the Jobs for Youth Campaign (2018-20) across the three council regions utilising social media and website platforms linking young people to employment, training and employment opportunities.

DISCUSSION POINTS

Continue the coordinated effort of the regional youth employment ecosystem to foster and support the transition journey of young people from school to employment.

The Inner Northern Youth Employment Taskforce (INYET) has created a platform that appears to have engaged stakeholders and increased opportunities for young people. The momentum of the Taskforce provides a significant opportunity for further development.

The four key elements of the Youth Employment Strategy, for 2014-17 have been:

- Building the skills, knowledge and attitude of young people
- Building the capacity of local business to support young people into work
- Building stronger connections between business, schools, education providers, and community organisations
- Increasing access to employment

These pillars were based on principles which sought the active engagement of the main stakeholders in youth employment, including the requirement for the active involvement of young people, schools and community in the development of initiatives, as well as full employer involvement as both partners and participants.

In addition, the strategy sought to build on existing partnerships at both strategic and operational levels that could incorporate all local players as well as government agencies. Also underpinning the pillars was the an intent to develop integrated packages of initiatives, rather than standalone programs that addressed only one aspect of the youth employment issue.

The INYET developed the Job for Youth (JFY) Campaign 2015-2017 which has strongly engaged local stakeholders and increased opportunities for young people. The momentum of the JFY Campaign provides a significant opportunity for further development in 2018-2020. As reported in the JFY Campaign Evaluation reports (2015-17) over 7500 young people have been impacted with support from over 300 organisations. The Real Industry Job Interview program has had 391 people volunteer over 2300 hours to interview 2200 students. The Employer Pledge has received 550 pledges since its introduction in 2015. The JFY Campaign has mobilised the community through a coordinated campaign which has brought people together with a common cause to achieve greater collective impact.⁵⁹

⁵⁹ 2015-2017 Jobs for Youth Campaign Reports, available to read at inllen.org.au/initiative/youth-employment-taskforce/

Recommendation 2: Industry Connection

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Build on the current ‘Employer Pledge’ business engagement model by extending the pledge online, enabling more businesses to support young people by streamlining the pledge process.
- 2.2 Establish a comprehensive data collection project to enable the development of a shared understanding of the nature and extent of student part-time employment, the use of work experience and the use of Structured Workplace Learning (SWL) in the region.
- 2.3 Utilise and engage the expertise of local education and economic development organisations in the region’s three councils to deliver an annual forum to advise school leaders, education providers and the community on regional youth employment growth and transition opportunities in the region.

DISCUSSION POINTS

Extend the work of the Industry Engagement Working Party to coordinate a high profile Employer Pledge campaign

Even if young people are skilled, ready and able, they still need job opportunities. Job structure, entry requirements, hiring practices and awareness of incentives for business are all factors in the employment of young people.

The 2014 Inner Northern Youth Employment Taskforce survey of local employers found that more than 50% of the businesses did not employ anyone who was aged 15-19, while a further 20% of businesses employed only one or two staff in this age group.

In the 20-24-year age group, 23% of businesses reported no employees in this age group, and a further 34% reported having only one or two. But there were twice as many businesses employing five or more 20-24 year-olds as were employing 15-19 year-olds.

Unsurprisingly, there are more employment opportunities for the 20-24 year-old age group than there are for the 15-19 year-old age group (as well as it being likely that more individuals in the older age group are seeking work).

Almost none of the businesses involved in the study in 2014 had any policy on hiring young people. As one employer noted *“completing this survey is a dawning realisation that we generally have an older and more mature workforce. Not through deliberate design but rather circumstances. We pride ourselves on the diversity of our employee base, but this is a realisation that our diversity does not extend to young people.”*

Those that do employ young people frequently note that there are important benefits for the business such as the enthusiasm, vitality, and energy that young employees bring to their workplaces. There are also benefits of having fresh eyes looking at issues, as well as the general capacity of young people to deal with IT, social media and technology.

Employers can be encouraged to do more to assist young people prepare for work. The Real Industry Job Interviews (RIJI) program builds the capacity of young people still at school to learn how to apply for a job. The RIJI program has been operating for more than ten years, and is a major work-readiness activity delivered in 20 of the schools across the region. In 2015 there were more than 100 people from businesses and organisations involved and over 500 young people participating. Numbers of both students and businesses participating have increased significantly over the last three years. The program is a crucial milestone in the job-readiness journey of participating young people in Years 10, 11 and 12.

The 2016 Inner Northern Youth Employment Taskforce established an Industry Engagement Working Party to identify key strategies to improve industry engagement – and designed an ‘Employer Pledge’ model for business participation. Since then, more than 500 employers have provided pledges of support.

The Employer Pledge offers six ways that employers can assist young people to develop skills, experiences or employment. These have been through engagement in:

- The Skills Friendly Championship
- Real Industry Job Interviews
- An Industry Speaker Bank
- Workplace Learning (SWL)
- Vocational Mentoring
- Talent Community (the Jobs for Youth jobs portal)

Employer commitment has been strongest in the RIJI program (in excess of 100 commitments have been received), and significant numbers also pledged to participate in Workplace Learning with approximately 40 placements on offer.

There remains strong value in working with businesses to commit to providing young people with exposure, experience and ultimately employment opportunities. In particular, there is potential to strengthen the use of work experience and work placements for young people in the region.

The Employer Pledge could be strengthened if it had a visible online presence. The existing Employer Pledge – already implemented in the inner north over the last two years – would be enhanced if activated through an online presence; potentially mobilising and energising the strategy through an accessible and public focus.

It is suggested that INYET consider the approach of the United Kingdom’s **Youth Friendly Badge** and **Youth Friendly Charter** programs as an example of a public promotional campaign recognising companies that support young workers. Businesses that commit to youth employment within the UK scheme post online requests to their suppliers, contractors and partners to participate in the program on a cost-free basis. There are three steps for business involvement:

1. The business signs a ‘positive youth charter’
2. The business commits to undertake at least two activities from a menu of offerings that provide support to young people (these include involvement in giving talks, site visits, work experience, mentoring etc.)
3. The business self-assesses its ‘youth friendly’ business behaviour against criteria,

The framework of their potential involvement in helping young people is to:

- Provide exploration (taster days; world-of-work visits; coffee and chat sessions; other short interventions)
- Provide experience (work experience; traineeships; two to six week placements)
- Provide support and networks (mentoring exchange)
- Provide employment (apprenticeships; entry-level roles; graduate roles)

Once established online, the Employer Pledge offers an opportunity to connect with other programs and sectors. For example, implementation of a regional online charter should explore potential partnerships around information and resources with state and regional industry bodies such as NORTH Link, local councils, Small Business Victoria and the Municipal Association of Victoria.

Data on work experience, Structured Workplace Learning and part-time employment connected to industry

The *Global Shapers Annual Survey 2017* study produced by the World Economic Forum explores young people’s perceptions of key issues and trends in the global landscape. The target population is young people aged 18 to 35. In 2017 there were 31,495 who responded to the survey. Key findings included the following:

“Young people have deep concerns in relation to employment, predominantly the fear of rejection for not being equipped with the desired experience, or because of discrimination or competition, and not even being aware of the available jobs to apply for.

There are a variety of gaps that exist between young people and the job market. Adequate and relevant preparation are key to ensuring young people are fit to enter and contribute to their country's economy and the ever more dynamic job market".

Source: Global Shapers Survey

These concerns are also reflected in responses from young people within the inner north of Melbourne. Focus group participants were aware that a lack of relevant experience was known to be a major barrier to employment, and were unhappy that they could see no chance to demonstrate any capability. Responses to the online survey also showed that more than 50% of those young people are not particularly confident of finding paid work.

The opportunities for young people to gain employment-related experience are primarily through:

- Finding part-time work while still a student
- Undertaking work experience and work placement as part of a course or study program
- Volunteering.

Work experience usually occurs through short-term placement of secondary students in Years 9 and 10, providing students with insights into the industry and the workplace in which they are located.

Responses to the 2017 Taskforce survey of young people in the region indicate that 16% had not undertaken work experience while at school. This was also reflected in the youth focus group of PaTH program participants; again a number of young people indicated that they had not undertaken any work experience while they were at school.

There are anecdotal reports of varying policy approaches to the implementation of work experience programs in schools within the region. Some schools assist students to find placements, in others it is left up to students and families to source them. Many schools have a set time, others release small groups of students during the year and some schools encourage students to take their placements during the school holidays. (Work experience cannot be undertaken during the end-of-year holidays.) There are also some indications that work experience may now be being regarded as an optional activity in some schools.

It is also often an under-utilised opportunity. Students can do work experience for a maximum of 10 days per term or 40 days per year (but it is mostly confined to the standard five days).

Structured Workplace Learning (SWL) is for students undertaking Vocational Education and Training in Schools (VETiS) qualification as part of their senior secondary certificate. The SWL placement is undertaken in a business connected to the student's VETiS qualification over 80 hours. The work placement involves students developing industry-standard skills and competencies in a workplace setting.

Currently, the 31 Local Learning and Employment Networks (LLENs) across Victoria are contracted by the Victorian Department of Education and Training to deliver the SWL program. In 2017 the Inner Northern Local Learning and Employment Network (INLLEN) worked with 19 schools across the region which have access to the online portal. INLLEN's role is to secure suitable work placements and advertise them on the SWL online portal. Schools then work with their students to use work placements associated with their student's VETiS qualification. The SWL program's key objective is to help support students who may have difficulty to source and appropriate a suitable work placement.

Anecdotally, students who have undertaken a work placement may either be asked by the host business if they would like to be employed on a casual or part-time basis until they finish their compulsory education and then commence an apprenticeship with the business.

Part-time or casual employment while still at school provides another path to gaining experience relevant to subsequent employability. Research has established that a part-time job while at school is a strong predictor of achieving longer-term successful transition into the labour market.

Having a part-time job when at school is the most significant predictor of the amount of post-school time that is spent unemployed; in-school workers tend to experience less unemployment after leaving school than non-workers.⁶⁰

This employment data is often collected by individual schools and other providers, but is not shared and analysed to provide an overview of the regional picture.

There are opportunities to better promote and use the opportunities provided by work experience and part-time employment for school students. Some schools already collect data on the extent to which their students are also engaged in part-time employment. However, regional data would help to identify the extent of the opportunities and also make the case for focused interventions to increase the use of work experience and part-time employment.

Increase understanding of employment and labour market changes

The world of work is rapidly transforming. Economic changes are altering the labour market through automation, globalisation and more flexible work.⁶¹

The occupations that help young people get their foothold in the workforce are disappearing. Around 70% of young people in Australia currently enter the labour market in jobs that will be lost or radically affected by automation over the next 10-15 years. This could bring opportunity, but could also further disadvantage young people in labour markets.

Numerous programs and support mechanisms are available to help young people make job and career transitions. However, supply doesn't always meet demand. This mismatch plays out in the labour market with small and medium-sized businesses having difficulty finding good workers while thousands of young people are in need of jobs.

In Melbourne's inner northern region, an example of this mismatch is the extent of unfilled apprenticeship opportunities reported by Group Training Organisations.

Young people need access to practical information about work in a digestible and familiar format; a format that is concentrated, concise and immediate. Even if information is accessible to young people, they also need help to navigate the system.⁶² Additionally, teachers, students and parents all need this information.

Improved career exploration and career guidance options for school students will expand students' understanding of the pathways available to them and will equip young people to more effectively match their strengths with study and employment opportunities while successfully navigating career options.

The Inner Northern Youth Employment Strategy survey and focus group responses indicate that career advice and work preparation in many schools remains under resourced and inadequate to meet the needs of young people seeking work.

Helping young people to plan and prepare early for working life can have significant payoffs. For example, learning about potential jobs and careers that might be a good fit for their interests and skills, identifying sectors with good employment possibilities, and seeking insights from informed sources are all valuable.

Schools are not well resourced or well positioned to inform and support students to navigate the rapidly transforming nature of work and employment possibilities. School careers functions continue to place a strong priority on supporting transitions into higher education.

Specialist industry bodies such as NORTH Link as well as local government Economic Development units can provide northern region expertise in regards to the transformations occurring in work and in the nature of employment.

In late 2015 NORTH Link released the report *The Future Workforce: Melbourne's North* and provides an analysis of workforce and skills for Melbourne's eight northern municipalities to the year 2025. The first for a region in Australia, it is a particularly important resource in understanding the move away from traditional to advanced manufacturing. It was developed in collaboration with industry, education and local government

⁶⁰ Robinson, Lyn, "The effects of part-time work on school students" (1999), LSAY Research Reports

⁶¹ *New Work Order Report* (2017), Foundation for Young Australians

⁶² *Strategies for a New World of Work*, 2017, Report from the Expert Panel on Youth Employment, Canada

as a blueprint to match education and training to future industry employment and skills needs. Schools and students should be actively making use of this key resource.

Facilitating partnerships between local government and schools to inform and support schools' career education processes could provide students with access to information and increase their knowledge of the changing nature of employment.

The council's Economic Development units have untapped potential to work with school careers and guidance functions by providing information on work trends and entry-level job opportunities in the region. An annual forum designed for careers personnel could be supplemented by access to briefings, and signposting particular opportunities such as apprenticeship positions. NORTH Link's *The Future Workforce Report* could be used as a key resource for these forums.

Additional benefits could relate to improving the availability and quality of work experience and work placements, and addressing issues of the mismatch of apprenticeship supply and demand in the region.

Recommendation 3: Strategic Entrepreneurship Platform

RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1** Establish a strategic entrepreneurship platform to develop the capabilities of organisations who work with young people. This will lead to the establishment of suitable enterprise and entrepreneur programs; providing professional learning opportunities, resources, tools and support materials.

DISCUSSION POINTS

Partnerships to support more systematic development of enterprise/entrepreneurship capabilities through the VCAL

One of the main themes of the literature review undertaken in 2017 is the need to prepare young people for the changing nature of work.

Education systems were designed for the economies that developed in the wake of the industrial revolution. Education systems have not been designed to foster the types of capabilities needed to navigate complex environments and multiple careers. The basic model of education has been largely static in the face of changes in the broader economy. Many young people are being left behind, and this challenge will only intensify into the future.⁶³

For workers to benefit from the employment opportunities brought about by current and future technological developments, they will need to acquire a different set of capabilities than those currently given priority in the education system.⁶⁴

The Foundation for Young Australians argues that young people will need to be more entrepreneurial than in the past, and that a more transferable set of ‘enterprise skills’ will be demanded in 70% of future jobs.⁶⁵

Evidence from the analysis of 4.2 million job advertisements between 2012 and 2015 shows that more employers are expecting young employees to have a suite of ‘enterprising skills’, especially in such areas as digital literacy, critical thinking and presentation skills. These are skills that are being demanded by employers. For young employees, the good news is that these skills are also highly transferable – “when a person trains or works in one job, they acquire skills for 13 other jobs”.⁶⁶

Higher priority needs to be given to embedding enterprise skills, especially problem solving, creativity and social intelligence in school curricula as general capabilities and in individual subject curriculum. The curriculum needs to be supported by promoting teaching methods that support problem solving capabilities.⁶⁷

Young people themselves are gradually becoming aware of the ‘new work order’. The *2017 Youth Taskforce Survey* results indicated that 13% of the surveyed young people were seeking either self-employment or to work as an independent contractor within the ‘gig economy’.

Social enterprise projects can provide integrated learning, with students creating and designing the project. Through the project the students learn business skills including how to create business and marketing plans, budgeting skills, bookkeeping and design. In the process students build on their essential skills around numeracy, literacy, personal development and work-related skills.

They challenge students to face the changing world of work, with less opportunities for ongoing lifelong paid employment, less need for more traditional employability skills, and more need for developing flexible entrepreneurial skills more suited to changing technologies, economies and communities.

⁶³ Torii, K. and O’Connell, M. 2017 Mitchell Institute

⁶⁴ Torii, K. and O’Connell, M. 2017 Mitchell Institute

⁶⁵ The Foundation for Young Australians, 2015, 2016

⁶⁶ FYA, *The New Work Mindset: 7 new job clusters to help young people navigate the new work order*, 2016

⁶⁷ FYA, *New Work Order*, 2017

A draft report on entrepreneurship commissioned by the INYET, *Youth Enterprise and Entrepreneurship Research Project*, September 2017, notes that:

The entrepreneurial movement is generally uncoordinated and disjointed in inner north Melbourne ... (it is) at an embryonic stage... growing demand for entrepreneurial skills and subsequent pressure on schools can be confronting to teachers who claim to have little or no understanding of enterprise skills and entrepreneurship but may in fact be teaching some of these skills without a broader context or knowledge. (There is a) need for existing, well informed regional partnerships to strengthen entrepreneurial eco-systems.

A school survey was distributed to all 34 secondary school principals across the three local government areas in 2017 to determine levels of entrepreneurial activity and or interest. Only six schools responded, but the ones that did respond were either well in advance in their thinking, taking a clear leadership role in the advancement of enterprise skills and entrepreneurship or indicated an interest as part of future planning.

The survey indicated that in some schools there is broad recognition of the role of enterprise skills and entrepreneurship, but also some degree of uncertainty about where or how to begin to address the need. The Mitchell Institute also reports through their recent ‘Paradigm Shifts’ pilot program in Victoria and NSW that schools and principals were unsure how to provide enterprise skills and entrepreneurial opportunities either in or outside the curriculum.⁶⁸

The VCAL provides a framework and opportunities for a coordinated uptake of enterprise and entrepreneurial learning

The structure of the VCAL provides a clear opportunity to incorporate enterprise and entrepreneurship within a curriculum and teaching framework, particularly under the personal development skills strand. Integrated VCAL programs (in which the four strands of Literacy are simultaneously addressed through opportunities to be involved in a local community activity) offer a platform to develop enterprise and entrepreneurial skills.

To do so effectively will require support from organisational partners outside schools that have the capacity to support research and resource development in support of a VCAL-based approach.

The 2017 Youth Enterprise and Entrepreneurship Research Project identified larger tertiary institutions and incubators such as Melbourne Polytechnic and Melbourne Innovation Centre as schools to participate in real world entrepreneurial culture.

The Australian Centre for Rural Entrepreneurs (ACRE) is also experienced in working on social enterprise projects with VCAL students facilitating the process from ideas to reality.⁶⁹

The Scottish social enterprise model – Social Enterprise Academy (SEA) – and its unique partnership with ACRE in North-East Victoria is worth closer examination as a model for the inner north of Melbourne given the enthusiastic response from school teachers and principals to a pilot conducted in regional Victoria. The partnership’s deliberate intention is to connect with existing curriculum and assessment frameworks and it has a demonstrated capacity to inject passion into local community solutions through experiential learning and community connections.⁷⁰ Support for the creation of social enterprise projects within VCAL programs could be piloted across secondary schools in the inner northern region.

Partnerships within the northern region could assist schools to pilot a VCAL program that develops social enterprises with the support of expert facilitation and external resources. As examples, Melbourne Polytechnic has Tech Labs that could trial the use of VCAL.

⁶⁸ Sercombe, Youth Enterprise and Entrepreneurship Research Project, Sept 2017

⁶⁹ For further details see their report by Anderson and Beavis, *Social Enterprise in Schools Program Evaluation 2017*, (ACRE)

⁷⁰ Sercombe, Youth Enterprise and Entrepreneurship Research Project, Sept 2017

Recommendation 4: Create Youth Employment

RECOMMENDATION

- 4.1 Explore the implementation of ‘youth employment dividend’ procurement processes that support direct and indirect youth employment across the three local governments and other business sectors.
- 4.2 Promote engagement between local employers/businesses and young people to improve entry employment opportunities into the workforce.

DISCUSSION

Utilise the capacity of local government for social procurement

Innovative local governments can play a valuable role in assisting young people into employment. Local government is well placed to understand and react to local labour market conditions, utilising its existing infrastructure and purchasing processes.

In Canada, the City of Toronto leverages purchasing to drive more employment opportunities for young people living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. For example, Regents Park is a significant redevelopment project in downtown Toronto and the Request of Proposal requires prospective developers to agree to hire workers from these areas. The project itself is a City-funded hub, involving a combination of commercial properties and public and private residential apartments. Once completed, the commercial leases in the shopping and restaurant areas will also require operators to hire from these areas. Large tourism developments are also to follow this approach.⁷¹

In New South Wales, the four local governments in the Illawarra region are monitoring the uptake of a strategy within local government procurement and successful tender applications that promote youth employment.

The Illawarra example involves exploring opportunities to embed youth employment outcomes in local government procurement. This also supports the concept of developing a region-wide strategy that delivers a stronger and more consistent approach to work experience, training, and employment of young people in local council workforces.

The emerging trend of social procurement offers councils an opportunity to demonstrate leadership in developing Victoria’s businesses and industries as responsible and sustainable suppliers of local goods and services. Social procurement is not a radical initiative and works effectively within current policy guidelines and regulations.

Within the region, the Darebin City Council has recently implemented a youth employment element to the council’s social procurement policy.

The council’s social procurement commitment “*involves using procurement processes and purchasing power to generate positive social outcomes in addition to the delivery of efficient goods, services and works.*” Darebin City Council has committed to six elements in its social procurement policy, the first of which is aimed towards “*delivering a ‘youth employment and participation dividend’ requiring all contracted businesses to include 10 per cent of all council related work be provided to young people aged between 15 and 25.*”

⁷¹ Dzodz J, *Strategies to Tackle Youth Unemployment in Canada*, 2013 Churchill Fellowship

Recommendation 5: Youth Capacity Building

RECOMMENDATION

- 5.1 Support further development of a regional vocational mentoring exchange focused on connecting young people to businesses and employers.
- 5.2 Promote and assist young people to effectively access and use the current media platforms specialising in information about events, training and employment opportunities that are accessible to young people.
- 5.3 Build the capacity of local organisations and schools to promote and effectively use the current media platforms to source information on events, training and employment opportunities for young people.

DISCUSSION

Vocational Mentoring

One of the recommendations of the 2014 *Youth Employment Strategy Research Report* was that an industry mentoring pilot program would provide young people with coaching, support and networks to support their career planning.

The recommendation led to further investigation of the concept summarised in the *Inner North Mentor Exchange Report* in 2016. This research reported that mentoring strategies are used in many employment and career transition programs that seek to address youth unemployment. Young people see vocational mentoring as a key valuable support in career exploration and job seeking. Vocational mentoring can help disadvantaged young people learn about the workplace, clarify their aspirations, extend their networks, and help find work opportunities.

Vocational mentoring offers a real opportunity to stimulate activity-developing regional capacity by bringing industry, schools and community closer together to support young people's more effective work transitions. Schools have established work experience and work placement systems that would benefit from linking these to vocational mentoring.

NORTH Link partners with tertiary providers for the Northern Industry Student Placement Program (NISPP). NISPP connects local businesses with tertiary students from leading higher education providers so that businesses benefit from their expertise and students gain valuable workplace experience.

In 2017 a six-week Northern Melbourne Vocational Mentoring Exchange Pilot proof-of-concept trial was developed by the INLLEN and trialled with a community agency.

The Northern Melbourne Vocational Mentoring Exchange recruited, screened and trained mentors through existing networks, many of whom had prior knowledge of youth and community issues. Approximately half of the mentors were retired and from a range of professions while the others were younger, from community organisations with a youth focus or community based businesses.⁷²

Ten school students from Brunswick Secondary College and Sydney Road Community School were matched with eight trained mentors. The VCAL students were generally 16 to 17 years of age.

The pilot reported highly positive outcomes, with the Vocational Mentoring Exchange pilot leading, in some cases, to transformed understanding and action on the part of young people. There were strong indications that the program can influence how the school relates with students and the curriculum.⁷³

The main finding was that the implementation of a highly structured, experiential, flexible vocational mentoring program that is facilitated by a Mentoring Exchange has the capacity to deliver outstanding results

⁷² Sercombe V, Northern Melbourne Vocational Mentoring Exchange, *Proof-of-Concept Pilot Report*, October 2017

⁷³ Sercombe, 2017

within a short timeframe.⁷⁴ Given this finding, a vocational mentoring program should be supported and scaled up to make it more widely available in the region.

⁷⁴ Sercombe, 2017

Attachments

Attachment 1 2017 Inner Northern Youth Employment Strategy Survey of Young People

The highest level of school that I have completed so far is:

Answer Choices	2017 Responses		2014
	%	No.	%
Year 9 or below	11.19%	16	20.10%
Year 10	32.17%	46	41.30%
Year 11	37.76%	54	26.10%
Certificate II (School Based Apprenticeship/VET qualification) or Cert III	9.79%	14	1.10%
Year 12 VCE	8.39%	12	9.80%
Year 12 VCAL	7.69%	11	
Other	4.90%	7	1.60%
Other (please specify)	4.19%	6	
	Answered	143	
	Skipped	0	

Have you or will you complete Year 12?

Answer Choices	2017 Responses		2014
	%	No.	%
Yes (now skip to Q.12)	81.12%	116	79.9%
I am still at school but do not plan to complete Year 12 (now skip to Q.9 and answer Q.10)	6.29%	9	5.40%
I have left school without completing Year 12 (go to Q.7 and complete Q.8, Q.10 & Q.11)	12.59%	18	14.70%
	Answered	143	
	Skipped	0	

If you have left school without completing Year 12, what were the main reasons?
(you can tick more than one answer for this question)

Answer Choices	2017 Responses		2014
	%	No.	%
Started a job (full time/part-time/casual)	22.22%	4	24.40%
Started an apprenticeship or traineeship	16.67%	3	
Expelled from school	16.67%	3	13.30%
Bullying	5.56%	1	6.70%
Family circumstances (i.e. family violence)	5.56%	1	17.80%
Living arrangements (including homelessness)	11.11%	2	
Family and caring responsibilities (siblings or parents)	5.56%	1	
School does not offer the subject(s) I wanted	11.11%	2	22.20%
I wasn't learning anything at school	22.22%	4	31.10%
Not interested	16.67%	3	28.90%
Issues with teachers	11.11%	2	6.70%
Medical reasons (i.e. mental health or pregnancy)	33.33%	6	

Couldn't afford to stay at school	0.00%	0	
Other issues at/ or with school (please specify)		5	13.30%
	Answered	18	
	Skipped	125	

Have you or did you complete any work experience during your time at school?

Answer Choices	2017 Responses		2014
	%	No.	%
Yes	78.32%	112	67.40%
No (if "no" skip to Q.17)	16.08%	23	31.00%
Unsure	5.59%	8	1.60%
	Answered	143	
	Skipped	0	

How useful was the work experience for you?

Answer Choices	2017 Responses		2014
	%	No.	%
highly useful	16.67%	16	29.10%
very useful	35.42%	34	29.10%
fairly useful	31.25%	30	20.10%
not very useful	14.58%	14	10.40%
not at all useful	2.08%	2	4.50%
left before completing the work experience placement	0.00%	0	6.70%
	Answered	96	
	Skipped	47	

Have you ever applied for an apprenticeship/traineeship?

Answer Choices	2017 Responses		2014
	%	No.	%
Yes (if "yes" please indicate what helped you to apply)	12.77%	12	12.60%
No	87.23%	82	87.40%
What helped you to apply for an apprenticeship/traineeship?		8	
	Answered	94	
	Skipped	49	

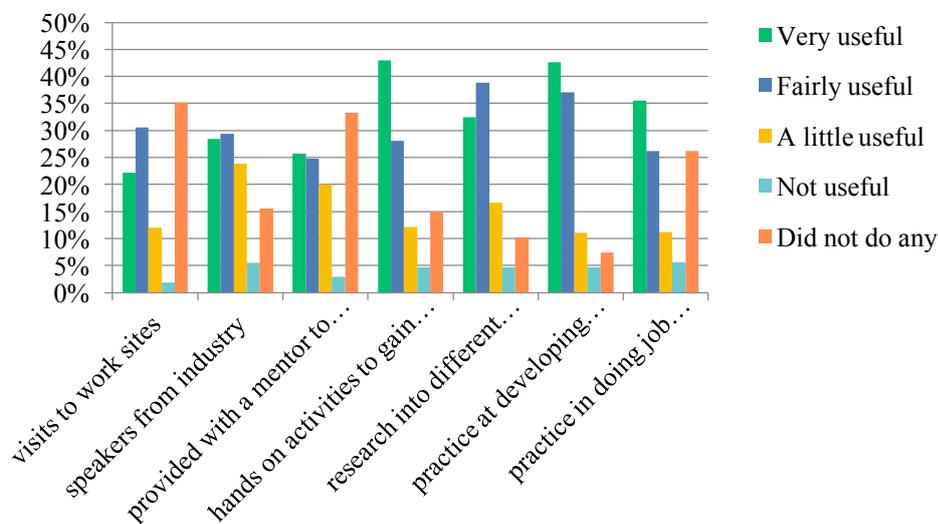
If you left school before completing Year 12, did anyone from the school or anyone else contact you after you left (as far as you are aware)?

Answer Choices	2017 Responses		2014
	%	No.	%
Yes	16.67%	4	20.40%
No	75.00%	18	44.90%
Unsure	8.33%	2	34.70%
If "yes", could you please indicate who contacted you		4	
	Answered	24	
	Skipped	119	

Do you plan to undertake any further study or training in the next 12 months?

Answer Choices	2017 Responses		2014
	%	No.	%
will enrol in a short course that may help me get a job or lead to further education	33.64%	37	31.90%
will apply for a place at university	23.64%	26	19.30%
will apply for a place at TAFE or a private training provider	15.45%	17	31.90%
will defer the place I have obtained at university/TAFE	0.91%	1	2.40%
get an apprenticeship/traineeship that has training attached to the employment conditions	10.00%	11	
cannot afford to undertake any further study	5.45%	6	2.40%
no I do not plan to undertake any further study	26.36%	29	27.70%
Please give details on why you will not undertake any further study or training		24	
	Answered	110	
	Skipped	33	

Have you done any of the following career planning activities at school or other places? (please rate how useful any were to you)



Do you already have a part-time or full-time job?

Answer Choices	2017 Responses		2014
	%	No.	%
No, I am at school but have no job	42.55%	40	46.40%
No, I have left school but have no job	14.89%	14	15.60%
Yes, I am at school but work part-time or casual (Now skip to Q.27 and then Q.29)	35.11%	33	33.50%
Yes, I have left school and have a full time job (Now skip to Q.27 and then Q.29)	2.13%	2	4.50%
Yes, I have left school and have a part time or casual job (Now skip to Q.27 and then Q.29)	5.32%	5	Incl. above
	Answered	94	
	Skipped	49	

What type of employment might you be seeking?

Answer Choices	2017 Responses		2014
	%	No.	%
Casual employment	40.98%	25	20.80%
Part-time employment	62.30%	38	38.40%
Full-time employment	37.70%	23	16.80%
Establish your own business	8.20%	5	New
Providing a service as an independent (gig) contractor (i.e. through Air Tasker)	4.92%	3	New
Volunteering	8.20%	5	New
Not seeking employment	4.92%	3	8.80%
If not seeking employment, please provide details		4	
	Answered	61	
	Skipped	82	

What would be the main reason/s to try to get a particular job? (select as many as apply to you)

Answer Choices	2017 Responses		2014
	%	No.	%
Have friends who work there	16.67%	10	44.90%
Easy to travel to and from there	53.33%	32	66.90%
The level of pay	65.00%	39	48.80%
My parents have contacts or know about this work	13.33%	8	18.10%
I did unpaid work experience in a similar job	10.00%	6	13.40%
I have the right skills for the job	63.33%	38	49.60%
The working hours suit me	53.33%	32	55.90%
The job can lead to other opportunities	46.67%	28	41.70%
I have done volunteer work in a similar position	8.33%	5	17.30%
Volunteering that leads to a job	10.00%	6	New
Workplace or business reflects my values	31.67%	19	New
	Answered	60	
	Skipped	83	

**Which of the following techniques did you or have you used to try to look for work?
(select as many as apply to you)**

Answer Choices	2017 Responses		2014
	%	No.	%
Using personal or family contacts	58.51%	55	46.50%
Following up work experience contacts	24.47%	23	38.60%
Following up a contact made during a VET course placement	11.70%	11	17.50%
Applying through a Group Training Organisation	10.64%	10	14.90%
Researching which types of industries will have the most jobs on offer	23.40%	22	23.70%
Using on-line career websites	48.94%	46	49.10%
Using newspaper career sections	8.51%	8	24.60%
Using Job Active (JA)	13.83%	13	20.20%
Using Disability Employment Services (DES)	0.00%	0	10.50%
Using a private recruitment agency	6.38%	6	5.30%
Cold calling employers directly by visiting or phone calling	22.34%	21	New
Doing the <i>Transition to Work</i> program	7.45%	7	New
	Answered	94	
	Skipped	49	

How confident are you that you will soon find a paid job?

Answer Choices	2017 Responses		2014
	%	No.	%
Very confident	18.31%	13	18.40%
Fairly confident	26.76%	19	33.60%
A bit confident	28.17%	20	26.40%
Not very confident	18.31%	13	16.80%
Not at all confident	8.45%	6	4.80%
	Answered	71	
	Skipped	72	

Jobs respondents indicated interest in

1. Cafe worker / barista (14)
2. Beauty therapist (13)
3. Accountant; Child Carer; Engineer; Events Manager, Events Worker, Sound Production, Teacher/ Trainer (all 10)

Attachment 2 Social Ventures Australia, Fundamental Principles for Youth Employment, February 2016

Recommended stakeholder activities

Employers

- Partner with schools, employment services and social purpose organisations to offer work experience, training and employment options for young people
- Invest in future employees, by engaging early to meet future recruitment and retention needs
- Trust young people as potential employees

Education (schools, TAFEs and universities)

- Partner with social purpose organisations and employers
- Prepare young people for employment by offering early and integrated careers education
- Take an early personalised approach

Social purpose organisations

- Design programs using evidence and strong measurement and evaluation frameworks
- Partner with industry and education providers
- Provide post-placement support to young people in employment

Government

- Invest in programs and models based on evidence of their success
- More funding and support for alternative employment pathways
- Encouragement and resourcing for cross-sector collaboration i.e. Brokerage

Philanthropy

- Invest in programs and models based on evidence
- Invest in programs over the long-term to build sustainability and an evidence base, beginning with early intervention

Employment services providers

- Engage with employers to offer real work experience and training opportunities
- Provide wraparound individualised support
- Ensure training has direct line of site to a job and equips young people with employability skills

Young people

- Have a belief in self, skills and potential
- Build and access support and employer networks
- Participate broadly to gain experiences

Attachment 3 Notes from Young People Focus Group (25 September 2017)

The four young people participating were involved in the PaTH program and were undertaking the employability skills component.

Themes

- Some careers assistance at schools is incredibly basic.
- Careers assistance is focused on further education, not on employment pathway.
- Work experience – half the group said that they hadn't done it – one had done work experience in an area of interest – the other looked for the easiest job to get.
- Varied experiences – one said they went to McDonalds and learnt nothing in three days; another learnt cash handling skills and dealing with the public.

Confidence about prospects?

- Levels of confidence about job prospects varied – lack of experience known to be the main barrier, and unhappy that no chance to demonstrate any capability.
- Getting interviews not necessarily the problem, but getting to the next stage is.
- Those with evening part-time jobs were more positive than the others.
- Motivation for employment primarily about financial viability – need money and not too concerned what kind of job it is.
- Underemployment a concern – want more work rather than less.
- They also understand that finding some kind of employment makes their resume look better.

Barriers?

- Travel issues if lacking a driver's licence – limits opportunities.
- Lack of experience.
- Lack of confidence.

What would help?

- Assistance with resumes.
- Interviewing practice.
- Activities to help build confidence.

Benefits to employers of hiring young people?

- Can pay lower wages.
- We are more flexible.
- "Investing in the next generation".
- Energy and fitness levels.
- Computer and IT skills.



CONNECT

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EMPOWER YOUNG PEOPLE
INTO THE WORLD OF WORK**

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