

Media Release

The Hon Wade Noonan MP
Minister for Industry and Employment
Minister for Resources



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THE FUTURE OF SOCIAL ENTERPRISE: MORE JOBS, GREAT CAUSES

Australia's first-ever strategy for social enterprises has been unveiled by the Andrews Labor Government to strengthen the sector and create more employment opportunities for disadvantaged Victorians.

Minister for Industry and Employment Wade Noonan today launched the *Social Enterprise Strategy* while meeting workers at Yarra View Nursery in Mount Evelyn – a wholesale supplier of tens of thousands of plants for the re-vegetation of the Bayswater Level Crossing Removal Project.

Victoria is now home to Australia's largest collection of social enterprises, with more than 5,000 operating state-wide, employing more than 75,000 Victorians.

They're addressing the biggest social and economic challenges in our community by offering products, skills and training, and creating new jobs for disadvantaged Victorians.

The *Social Enterprise Strategy* identifies key areas for action including increasing the impact and innovation of social enterprise, building business capacity and skills, and improving market access.

The Labor Government will spend \$5 million to implement eight key initiatives including:

- establishing a new Social Enterprise Network across Victoria to better connect the sector
- building an online market to connect buyers with social enterprises
- training opportunities and support for more than 100 social enterprises to expand their business

A new social procurement framework will also be developed to allow government contracts to purchase goods and services from social enterprises.

The Government has consulted with more than 160 social enterprises and stakeholders to ensure the strategy reflects the needs of the sector.

You can access the *Social Enterprise Strategy* at www.economicdevelopment.vic.gov.au/social-enterprise

Quotes attributable to Minister for Industry and Employment Wade Noonan

"Victoria has a nation-leading social enterprise sector, and the future of this industry couldn't be brighter."

"This is a landmark strategy that supports initiatives to grow jobs, boost market access and support the growth of social enterprises."

Quote attributable to Minister for Finance Robin Scott

"We want to encourage more social enterprises into the market by giving the Government greater access to their goods and services."

Quote attributable to Member for Monbulk James Merlino

"Yarra View Nursery in Mount Evelyn is an outstanding example of a social enterprise making a huge difference in the local community – creating jobs for disadvantaged Victorians and producing high quality plants."

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