

SVA EMPLOYMENT DIALOGUE 2014 COMMUNIQUÉ

**Brighter Futures: Building better futures for those
experiencing long-term unemployment**



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Social Ventures Australia works with innovative partners to invest in social change. We help to create better education and employment outcomes for disadvantaged Australians by bringing the best of business to the social sector, and by working with partners to strategically invest capital and expertise. SVA Consulting shares evidence and knowledge to build social sector capacity, while SVA Impact Investing introduces new capital and innovative financial models to help solve entrenched problems.

MISSION AUSTRALIA

Mission Australia is a non-denominational Christian community service organisation that has been helping people to regain their independence for over 155 years.

Independence is something we all strive for, but life rarely turns out as planned. We've learnt the reasons behind a loss of independence and the paths to getting it back are different for everyone.

This informs how we work to reduce homelessness and strengthen communities across Australia, through homelessness initiatives and affordable housing, early learning and youth services, family support, and employment and skills development.

Our nationwide team of over 3,500 staff applies different approaches, inspired by Christian values. We are joined by government, our corporate partners and everyday Australians who provide generous support.

Together, we stand with Australians in need until they can stand for themselves.



The Brotherhood of St Laurence began during the Great Depression, as the vision and creation of Father Gerard Tucker, a man who combined his Christian faith with a fierce determination to end social injustice. Based in Melbourne, but with a national profile, the Brotherhood continues to work for an Australia free of poverty.

We undertake research, develop and deliver services, and engage in advocacy. Our aim is to address unmet needs in innovative ways and translate our learning from research and services into new policies, new programs and practices which can be implemented by government and others.

Our vision is to see a fairer Australia by enabling people in need to find pathways to a better life.

Our vision: an Australia free of poverty.

INTRODUCTION

Despite a sustained economic boom, long-term unemployment is a stubborn, persistent and growing problem in Australia. The onrushing wave of technological advance combined with changes to Australia's economic and demographic make-up will have major implications for the workforce, especially for those experiencing long-term unemployment.

In 2014, the number of people unemployed for more than a year reached its highest level in a decade.¹ Particular communities are at risk of entrenched employment exclusion, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, refugees / humanitarian migrants, single parents and people with disability.

The slowing of economic growth combined with the fragmented nature of the education, training and employment systems means that transitioning young people from school to work is not happening effectively, creating the risk of a 'lost generation'. New approaches are required to support those young people who are long-term unemployed to secure a foothold in the labour market. Alongside this, the closure of traditional industries means that mature-aged workers are now facing greater risk of exiting the workforce.² The evidence shows us that for people trapped in a cycle of long-term unemployment, a 'one size fits all' approach to tackling employment exclusion does not work.

We know the world of work is changing. There are potential opportunities within growth industries, whilst existing industries are experiencing a skills gap and labour shortages. With the possible decline of the "middle-skills job" through technological advancements, we are facing unprecedented obstacles for people who are experiencing long-term unemployment.

Entrenched long-term unemployment has broad economic and social impacts. Businesses are missing out on a potential pool of talent to fill a growing skills gap; government is facing higher welfare bills and lower revenue, while individuals risk social and economic exclusion, with repercussions across the community. Unemployment is a challenge that has significant financial, as well as personal costs, which is why it is important for business, government, philanthropy and the non-profit sector to work together to address it in a strategic and systemic way.

The SVA Employment Dialogue, in partnership with Mission Australia and the Brotherhood of St Laurence, sought the experience and insight of key leaders across the sectors focused on what innovation is required to combat long-term unemployment as industries change and the job market continues to evolve.

Held at ANZ Melbourne on 5 June 2014, the conversation captured the voices and experiences of over 100 people from differing backgrounds, who are dedicated to tackling long-term unemployment.

Some of Australia's largest employers and employer groups provided important insights on the day including Jennifer Westacott (CEO, Business Council for Australia), Craig Laslett (Managing Director, Leighton Contractors) and Lincoln Crawley (Managing Director, Manpower) along with Renee Leon from the Department of Employment and a number of pioneering non-profit organisations including Jan Owen (CEO, Foundation for Young Australians), Matt Little (CEO, Job Futures) and Suzanne Colbert (CEO, Australian Network on Disability).

Whilst the Dialogue was focused more broadly on identifying solutions for people who are long-term unemployed or at significant risk, the major theme that emerged was the need to tackle the growing challenge of youth unemployment. The conversation highlighted the significant impact on and the need to both prepare and support young people in securing ongoing employment. SVA, Mission Australia and the Brotherhood of St Laurence are focused on developing best practice models in this area, some of which are documented in this Communique which contributes to the growing evidence of what works in supporting young people into work. Building on this learning we need to develop a more concerted youth transitions strategy to effectively tackle this issue.

There was a consensus that Australia's employment system must become more collaborative and flexible if we are to solve the dual challenges of a growing skills gap and increasing youth and long-term unemployment.

We know that with a tighter fiscal environment, there is a need to have more efficiency in how funds are allocated and this should be based on the evidence of what works in tackling entrenched employment exclusion. The existing system must also embrace innovation to continuously improve to meet the challenges ahead.

INTRODUCTION CONTINUED

The Dialogue identified six principles for the innovative approaches that will be critical in designing a system that reaches its full potential. A system that creates sustainable employment for people in a rapidly changing environment. Those six principles are:

1. **A specialist approach for youth with complex needs**
2. **Better, earlier and more comprehensive careers education**
3. **Connecting education and training to sustainable jobs**
4. **Scaling effective cross-sector collaborations and partnerships**
5. **Creating local solutions with national employers**
6. **Local solutions for local communities**

These principles are discussed in more detail throughout the Communique. We need to look seriously at broader systems change if we are to see real and lasting progress. Innovation, collaboration and evidence are essential to support continuous improvement.

We hope the ideas developed from the Employment Dialogue will enable you to have new conversations, inspire new practice, and energise new partnerships. We look forward to working with you to make the Australian employment system the best we believe it can be.



Tony Nicholson
Executive Director,
Brotherhood of St
Laurence



Catherine Yeomans
CEO, Mission Australia



Rob Koczkar
CEO, Social Ventures Australia

BUILDING BLOCKS FOR A SUSTAINABLE EMPLOYMENT SYSTEM

Within Australia there are pockets of society experiencing or at risk of experiencing permanent employment exclusion. Youth unemployment is double the overall rate³. One in six Indigenous people are experiencing unemployment⁴ and rates of participation for people with disability are in decline. These problematic figures indicate that we need broad systemic change to stem the rise in joblessness in Australia.

While we can't predict the future, we do need to think about how current economic and social trends may contribute to what the world of work will look like a decade from now. By focusing on approaches to tackling long-term unemployment we are at a critical point where we have an important opportunity to prepare for what lies ahead.

Collaboration between the sectors and innovative ways to reduce the layers of system complexity that prevent the provision of targeted services will be important features of a sustainable employment system.

We recognise that there are existing programs that are making a positive impact and improving outcomes for marginalised job seekers. One challenge as we look ahead will be effectively sharing 'what works' in order to spread good practice and maximise impact.

Youth unemployment is a key issue that requires specific solutions. For young people the loss in experience or skills and extensive time out of the employment and education system can be devastating. Studies have shown that this can lead to a 'scarring' effect that can have severe impact on their ability to secure meaningful work in the future. There is also significant impact in terms of personal wellbeing with many young people experiencing reduced self-confidence and self-esteem and potential increase in health and/or mental health problems. This raises fears of a 'lost generation'.

At the same time we have a paradox where employers are unable to fill entry-level vacancies due to a lack of skills. A recent report by McKinsey showed that even though 72% of education providers believed young people were graduating well-equipped for the workforce, only 44% of employers felt the same way.⁵ Furthermore, less than half of young people themselves believe that they are ready for the workforce upon graduating.

The 2014 Employment Dialogue aimed to identify big ideas to tackle the challenges ahead. Yet throughout the event the focus returned to the urgent need for action to also tackle the immediate issue of rising youth unemployment. As the big ideas were generated, this led to in-depth discussions on the principles of an effective employment system that is fit for purpose both now and for the challenges ahead.

This Communiqué details these six principles that we believe will help us to build a more collaborative and flexible employment system that meets the needs of people who are experiencing long-term unemployment. Within these six principles, we have included examples of specific initiatives that we believe are working or provide clues on how the system can fully support both business and job seekers. This is obviously not exhaustive but helps to provide practical examples of the principles identified.

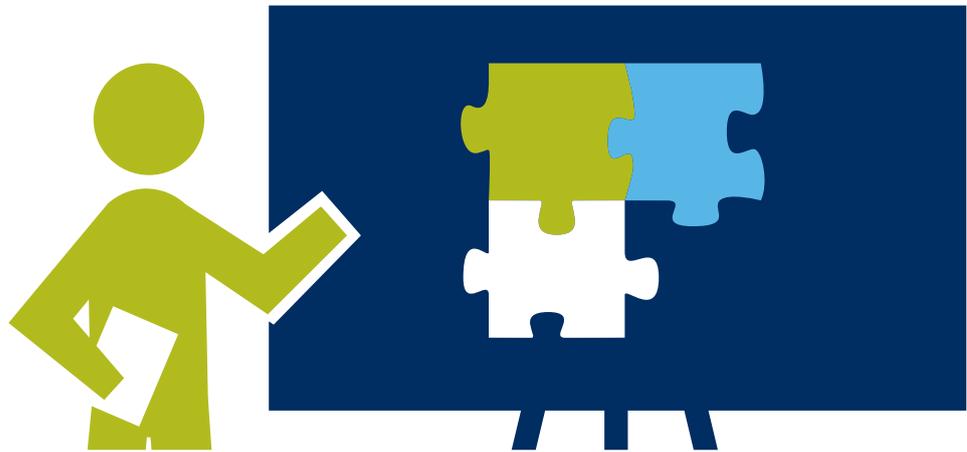
While the world of work is changing we have a unique opportunity to prepare now and create collaborative partnerships and invest in innovative best practice to create a workforce for the future.



Kevin Robbie
Executive Director,
Social Ventures Australia

PRINCIPLE 1

A SPECIALIST APPROACH FOR YOUTH WITH COMPLEX NEEDS



Unemployment for the majority of young people is not driven from a lack of desire or aspiration. It is linked to the fact that some young people have very specific and complex needs and there is a distinct lack of support within Australia's employment system. Greater emphasis is also needed to ensure young people are equipped and have the appropriate skills within a changing economy, particularly in relation to the knowledge and service industries.

Working with young people to understand their individual barriers to the job market is crucial. Through taking a 'preventative' approach we need to prepare young people more effectively for work through the reform of careers education. In providing a 'cure' for those already experiencing long-term unemployment we need to invest in evidence based interventions to support young people back into work. This will help them gain skills and confidence needed to find and keep a job.

The "high volume, low margin"⁶ nature of the current employment system presents a barrier to tailoring services to suit the individual needs of young job seekers who are particularly disadvantaged in the labour market.

Less than a third of all disadvantaged job seekers find employment, and nearly a third of these end up back in the employment services system within six months.⁷

Brotherhood of St Laurence, Investing in our Future

PRINCIPLE 1 CONTINUED

The current employment system is not equipped to support Australia's young people into sustainable work with an individualised approach to job readiness beginning too late. If we are to lift young people out of experiencing long-term unemployment, a preventative, flexible and tailored approach is needed.

Investing in youth specific programs that provide careers and training guidance, supported work experience as well as access to coaching, mentors and local employers will address the "scarring" effect of long-term joblessness on young people.

Youth transitions programs, built upon a strong evidence base that offers a suite of services appropriate to the very individual needs of young people should be deployed. Some young people will only need careers guidance to find and sustain a job, while others may require more intensive support to build their job-readiness and to integrate back into the workforce. Active intervention should begin early by providing a suite of services that help to boost employment outcomes.



Case study STREAT – supporting young people into work

STREAT is a social enterprise that provides a highly supported pathway for homeless and disadvantaged young people to enter the hospitality industry. As a model, STREAT has successfully scaled as a social enterprise while maintaining high levels of 'wrap around' support to their employees.

Homeless young people have not only endured difficult situations that have led to homelessness, but most have no formal education or training qualifications. With such diverse and complex needs, intensive and integrated support is required to equip these young people with the social and employment skills needed to lift them out of disadvantage.

STREAT recognises that creating job opportunities is only part of the solution to youth homelessness and disadvantage. It has designed a tailored program, incorporating specialised staff, with a unique fusion of business disciplines, work experience and complex social support to provide a pathway for young people into the hospitality and other industries.

STREAT helped me realise my potential in life and has given me the push start I needed to get my life back on track.

STREAT trainee

PRINCIPLE 1 CONTINUED

Case study Brotherhood of St Laurence - Youth Transitions Program

The Brotherhood's Youth Transitions Program, which operates in areas of Melbourne experiencing high rates of youth unemployment, has successfully connected 70% of their participants into training, education and work.

The program focuses on the development of employability skills, work experience, 'on the job' learning, individual career advice and planning, coaching, connections to jobs and post-employment support.

Organisations including the Brotherhood of St Laurence and STREAT demonstrate how individualised support can improve the lives of young people by helping them find work. We therefore need a specific youth transitions strategy that will deliver evidence based approaches creating sustainable employment outcomes for Australia's young people. Innovative finance models, such as Social Impact Bonds (SIBs), also present an opportunity to provide alternative funding mechanisms for best practice programs that tackle youth unemployment through proven, evidence-based models of success.

It's important to recognise that what's needed to boost participation in the workforce will be unique to different communities and individuals, and that the system needs to be responsive to this. This might involve utilising a broker-style arrangement within local communities, or having staff that specialise in working with different candidate groups, like young people, migrants, or people with disabilities.

Kevin Robbie, Executive Director, Social Ventures Australia

PRINCIPLE 2

BETTER, EARLIER AND MORE COMPREHENSIVE CAREERS EDUCATION



The norms of work are changing rapidly. It is expected that young people will have between 15 and 20 jobs in their lifetime.⁸ To ensure young people are ready for the jobs of the future, they will need to receive guidance on the range of career options available to them earlier and more effectively.

Even though educational attainment for young people has increased significantly, we still face the issue of an unemployment rate that is at its highest in more than a decade.⁹ Opportunities to take up work placements are becoming more and more difficult to come by and young people are increasingly taking up casual work or work unrelated to their field of study.¹⁰

Navigating work options can be confusing for most young people, and for youth at risk the journey may be especially complex. For example one in seven young people¹¹ live in households where their families have experienced entrenched unemployment and this challenge becomes even greater for them. Those young people whose families are not working are less likely to gain work experience while studying, less likely to plan post-secondary education and more likely to feel dissatisfied with their studies.¹² This lack of work experience, knowledge of the job market and consequently job networks contributes to young peoples' disadvantage when searching for work.¹³

Around 50% of young people in jobless families don't feel confident about their ability to get a job.¹⁴ Early careers learning and work exposure will be particularly important for these young people who are at risk of falling out of the education and employment system. Work exposure opportunities have the potential to make a big impact on future job outcomes for young people.¹⁵

There are many ways that young people can fall through the cracks. We need to have conversations and walk alongside them and point them towards basic training options. This does not necessarily mean pointing them in a linear direction, but showing them the options available to them.

Catherine Yeomans, CEO, Mission Australia

It was identified that careers education and workplace exposure starts too late, often not beginning until Years 10, 11 or 12. Even then the link between curriculum and industry is limited; a recent survey suggested that only 4%¹⁶ of employers engage with education providers to align careers advice to their needs.

PRINCIPLE 2 CONTINUED

Fewer than half of young people are making well informed decisions when choosing what to study¹⁷ and even after entering the job market, fewer than half of young people were happy with the career path their studies had led them to¹⁸.

There is a disconnect and mismatch in the market between what employers want and expect and what's happening for young people as they are being educated and transitioned out of school. We are unprepared for a rapidly changing world of work for every young person, not just for young people who are disadvantaged.

Jan Owen, CEO, Foundation for Young Australians

There is an opportunity to better prepare young people for the world of work. Career guidance has a positive impact on short-term learning and a young person's attitude and motivation.¹⁹

For many young people having more targeted guidance that is linked to local industry is critical to increasing their understanding of the breadth of career options available, and to then transitioning effectively into work, further education or training. Through building 'on the ground' relationships between the education, training and business sectors, workplace learning can be developed providing attractive and alternative pathways to work for young people.

Case study **Beyond the Classroom**

This innovative idea is an integrated model of careers learning that starts earlier, brings employers into the school and provides young people with tangible, practical and deeply informing work exposure. Beyond the Classroom will use a body of best practice experience internationally, and from smaller scale Australian programs which have an evidence base of success.

Evidence shows that introducing young people to the world of work from Year 7 can have a profound impact on young people's labour force outcomes. The Foundation for Young Australians, Beacon Foundation and Social Ventures Australia are developing a model of careers learning that aims to prepare young people for the world of work by starting work exposure earlier and bringing together the key stakeholders that need to be involved to successfully transition young people into meaningful jobs.

The model will be coordinated at a school level by Local Champion Groups, made up of educators, employers, parents and young people and through bringing the following key elements together, navigating the school to work transition will become an easier process for young people:

- Careers learning audit tools to assess strengths, needs and opportunities for individuals, schools, community and employers.
- Integrating Careers Learning into the classroom, providing students with lessons developed by employers and crystallising the connection between school and work for students.
- Providing young people with work exposure throughout their high school years and time out of the classroom to build skills and networks that enhance their employability.
- Identifying, developing and practising employability skills within a work context.
- School-industry networks aim to connect the gap between employers and students by equipping teachers with the knowledge to provide career advice and potential employer expectations to students.
- Parent engagement strategies to support their children's decision making and post-secondary planning.

PRINCIPLE 2 CONTINUED

Young Australians are not just the workers of the future; they are the employers, the leaders, the changemakers, the people who will tackle the unprecedented social, economic and cultural challenges that lie ahead.

Jan Owen, CEO, Foundation for Young Australians



Case study Beacon Foundation - creating Collaborative Classrooms

The Beacon Foundation works with students, schools, businesses and the community through a range of school based programs, providing purpose and motivation for students to explore a positive pathway for the future. Their approach to tackling youth unemployment is to embed positive careers learning in the school curriculum, particularly at vulnerable transition points.

Business Blackboards is one of Beacon's key programs which brings business into the classroom to deliver industry focused lessons. The program is designed to bring the curriculum to life and show students how their studies link with the real world of work. Business Blackboards create an ideal learning environment where students can increase their awareness of employer needs and practices in a classroom environment as well as career opportunities and pathways.

Beacon traditionally ran the Business Blackboard program for year 10 students, but recently uncovered the benefits of running the program as early as Year 7 and 8 at Ashcroft High School in Sydney. Beacon partnered with Hong Kong Aviation, whose practices and school curriculum are strongly linked.

This was rewarding for both the students and Hong Kong Aviation, giving the business an opportunity to address their future skills needs.

The industry representatives brought in so many amazing examples of Maths and it all just spring boarded from there... they helped us to discover spots within the syllabus that we can link and bring into the classroom.

Megan Boltze, Head of Mathematics at Ashcroft High School

In trying to tackle youth unemployment you need careers education front and centre in schools. Starting in Year 7 expose young people to the world of work straight away. Have greater industry engagement to the point of even having employment consultants in schools, ensuring young people are supported to on go on that positive pathway.

Scott Harris, CEO, Beacon Foundation

PRINCIPLE 3

CONNECTING EDUCATION AND TRAINING TO SUSTAINABLE JOBS



There are over 1.6 million Australians who are out of work or want more work²³, yet Australia is also facing a skills shortage. Employers are facing a talent mismatch with less than half citing young people as prepared for the world of work, in contrast to 72% of educational providers.²⁴ This coupled with a number of economic, technological and social issues means that the system needs to be able to respond and react to a constantly changing environment.

There is an increasing emphasis on qualifications as a prerequisite for work, and a growing demand for higher skills. It is predicted that 70 per cent of the new jobs created by 2017 will require at least a Certificate III qualification, with more than half requiring a diploma-level qualification or higher.

Brotherhood of St Laurence, Investing in our Future

The shift from manufacturing and agriculture to a service based economy will require responsive systems to mitigate the risk of people falling into long-term unemployment. Studies on industry shut downs have shown that around a third of the workforce will end up long-term unemployed.²⁵

We are going to go from low to high value jobs and we have got to get the skills system to run with it. So, what we have to make sure is that we don't end up with high levels of inequality and we don't end up with jobless growth.

Jennifer Westacott, CEO, Business Council of Australia

PRINCIPLE 3 CONTINUED

Technology is developing every day and the demand for particular skills in the labour market will continue to change with as many as 47% of jobs likely to be automated in the next 20 years. New technology will require skills that may not currently be available in the current pool of workers²⁶.

We talk about the economy being in transition; well it will be in transition forever. The difficulty we have got is when we talk about lifelong learning what do we really mean by that. So if you retool or retrain and have to take apprenticeships, you don't want people to go back to start all the time. How do you make that a continuous process where their wages and conditions don't go backwards because they have been dislocated from their industry?

Jennifer Westacott, CEO, Business Council of Australia

As the labour market evolves, a workforce based on industry needs becomes critical to economic growth. Employers often cite a lack of available or suitable applicants as the primary reason for not being able to fill their jobs, followed by lack of experience and technical competencies.²⁷

With only a third of people employed in the same occupation as their training course²⁸ there is clearly a disconnect between Vocational Education and Training provision and employers recruitment needs. Training and skills therefore need to be more agile and relevant to industry needs and where appropriate delivered with a line of sight to a job.

People need to be better prepared for the workplace and receive ongoing skills development including key transferable skills that are applicable for the future world of work. Self-confidence, communication, digital literacy, project management and creativity are some of the skills that are critical to long-term job success.²⁹ Participating in the workforce provides one of the easiest ways to develop these skills, which is why education and training providers need to place workforce exposure or placement at the core of their courses.³⁰ For people transitioning out of declining industries, a nationally recognised qualifications system which incorporate skills developed both through education and in the workforce may help prevent many of these workers falling into long-term unemployment.³¹

You can tackle youth unemployment through having the private and public sector engage with the education sector in a more meaningful way. And what is needed is skills at the school level around facilitation, collaboration, engaging with local communities and local employers to be able to bring in what's happening in the local world of work to those schools. And secondly to be able to assess the propensity, suitability or potential suitability of students for specific roles in society, you will end up with an education system which is much more aligned to the outcomes employers are expecting.

Lincoln Crawley, Managing Director, Manpower

PRINCIPLE 3 CONTINUED



Case study Engaging Employers

Germany's well-resourced Vocational Education and Training (VET) system has provided clues on how to solve other country's high rates of youth unemployment. Germany's youth labour market remained steady in comparison to other EU countries, the United States and America following the Global Financial Crisis.³²

Germany's VET system recognises high school not only as a place to prepare young people for University but to also meet the expectations of employers. Pathways to VET are widely respected within German society and around two in three young people are trained through the system, spending three or four days with an organisation throughout their studies. Adapting the German system to suit Australian needs won't come without its challenges, one of the biggest being societal attitudes towards the value of VET pathways.

Integrated work-based and school-based learning forms the basis of preparing young people for work and employers and other social partners are highly engaged with the process and take responsibility for offering apprenticeships. High school graduates are ready to work upon completion of their studies, the system is flexible and continuously improving, and adapts to labour market needs.³³

Apprenticeship models are gaining global support in developed economies as a post-school pathway for young people. While the employment related benefits for young people and employers are well-documented, an evidence base is growing which demonstrates that quality training provided in-house by employers enhances the company's ability to innovate. People who are trained within an organisation develop an in depth knowledge of how things operate and this knowledge enables workers to more easily identify opportunities to maximise efficiency within the business.³⁴

Employers continue to benefit through access to a skilled talent pool to fit their future workforce needs which will save in costs associated with talent sourcing and training.

Young people also develop personal skills development and have access to career mentors. Work experience, even when unpaid also gives young people a head start in the job market. Interactions between employers and students not only provides students with the benefits associated with workplace exposure, but gives employers access to a talent pool that builds a culture of diversity and inclusion within the organisation.

The Australian Network on Disability's 'Stepping In...' is a national paid internship program for skilled and talented university students with disability. This is a highly successful programme with 83% of students securing work in their intended career path as a result of completing an internship and receiving workplace mentoring, closing the gap between graduate outcomes for people with and without disability.

PRINCIPLE 3 CONTINUED

Case study Ganbina

Ganbina operates learning and self-development programs for young people in the Greater Goulburn Valley region, which has one of the largest Indigenous communities in Australia.

Ganbina's long-term goal is to empower Indigenous people to achieve social and economic equality within the next two decades. Their programs help Indigenous children, from a very early age, to develop and sustain the personal motivation, confidence and enthusiasm they need to ensure they reach their full potential at school.

Through this early engagement, Ganbina begins the ground work to prepare young Indigenous people for the workforce.

Their program involves a range of activities focused on education, training and personal development skills which are all essential building blocks for sustainable employment outcomes. Because the Ganbina program focuses on building potential from an early age, they have a pool of 'job ready' young people who are able to take up roles in local businesses.

Ganbina showed me how to get where I want to be with my education and they helped me sort out my goals and career aspirations along the way.

Ganbina participant



PRINCIPLE 4

SCALING EFFECTIVE CROSS-SECTOR COLLABORATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS



The current employment system does not create optimum conditions for effective cross sector collaboration and partnership. Employers have a significant opportunity to create jobs for people who are long-term unemployed; however most currently operate outside of the employment system, with only 7% of employers using the Job Services Australia system as a means of recruiting staff.³⁵

However there were a number of examples at the Employment Dialogue of best practice in this area where employers, non-profits and government have effectively worked together to create employment opportunities through building trusted relationships. These include Leighton Contractors' pioneering work with Beacon Foundation and CareerTrackers; Toll Group with Whitelion and Beacon Foundation; and Brotherhood of St Laurence and ANZ's joint commitment to providing work placements to refugees. The Australian Government has also worked with a hotel group to create employment opportunities for mature age workers.

However, all too often these partnerships are opportunistic, small scale and are operating outside of the system. A key challenge that was identified was that employers need to be able to understand which successful programs exist in the market and how they can effectively connect with them. Alongside this, non-profit organisations need the support to be able to scale their opportunities to meet employer demand.

Case studies Increasing impact through collaboration between sectors

The right partnerships can create sustainable employment opportunities for people who are long-term unemployed. Trust, deep engagement and values alignment are critical to their success.

Toll Group and Whitelion – providing flexible workplaces

Toll's Second Step program is linked with Whitelion, a not-for-profit organisation that broadens opportunities for at risk youth. The collaboration between Toll Group and Whitelion has resulted in a specialist employment service, targeted towards improving outcomes for people with histories of criminal offences or addiction by providing a flexible work environment to support their transition to mainstream employment. By partnering with Whitelion, Second Step can provide a coordinated combination of services spanning medical assessments and interventions, mental health nursing, treatment programs, psychological and legal services.

Each year, 40 people are enabled to re-establish the routines of work. The program's success is an example of how to align business and social needs through partnership.

PRINCIPLE 4 CONTINUED

Leighton Contractors and CareerTrackers – partnership built on trust

Successful collaboration has contributed to both Leighton Contractors and CareerTrackers strategies, increasing their impact supporting Indigenous graduates into the workplace. Both parties are clear on the 'why' behind their work together. The partnership forms part of Leighton Contractors' Indigenous Participation and Engagement Strategy.

CareerTrackers is a sensational example of supporting Indigenous graduates into the workplace. We have signed a 10 year commitment which builds up on the excellent relationship we have developed. A relationship built on mutual trust, which provides us quality graduates, provides indigenous students and CareerTrackers support for a sustainable future.

Craig Laslett, CEO Leighton Contractors



Brotherhood of St Laurence and ANZ's Given the Chance program

Given the Chance (GtC) is an employment program that creates supported pathways for refugees to secure and maintain work. Brotherhood of St Laurence has worked with a number of employers, including ANZ, and adapted the program to suit the employer's needs.

With the support of Brotherhood of St Laurence, ANZ now offer six month paid work placement opportunities to refugees, with a high proportion of participants securing ongoing work with ANZ.

PRINCIPLE 4 CONTINUED

Beacon's Real Futures Generation

Establishing strong partnerships with community stakeholders sits at the centre of Beacon's strategy to open up the doors to meaningful work opportunities for disadvantaged Australians. Real Futures Generation (RFG) is a place-based, collaborative initiative that brings employers to the classroom to motivate and inspire young people to take measures to prepare for their careers.

RFG builds student pre-employment capacity and work readiness skills to help them make a smooth transition from school to work by securing industry partners to introduce different career options to students in Years 10-12. All young people who engage in this one year program have the opportunity to participate in a diverse range of business-led curriculum focused classroom lessons (known as Business Blackboards) linking literacy and numeracy skills to local and regional career and employment pathways. The students also have the opportunity to visit industry workplaces or shadow an employee as well as complete an employability skills development program acquiring transferrable skills which will be of benefit in their future studies or career progression pathways.

Industry partners, including Leighton Contractors and Toll Holdings have pledged a number of jobs in communities where Beacon operates, committing to a supportive pathway into the workplace for students. By creating a link between students and the workplace, this collaborative effort has improved employment outcomes for young people.

Beacon Foundation transitions the most vulnerable young people into employment and further study by getting industry and the community rallying behind schools to support and ensure young people get the right opportunities.

Scott Harris, CEO, Beacon Foundation

NAB and Jesuit Social Services' African Australian Inclusion Program

The African Australian Inclusion Program is a professional training program for qualified African-Australians, providing six months paid workplace experience. To date 137 participants have gone through the program, with 83% securing ongoing employment at National Australia Bank (NAB) across many roles including finance, technology and business administration or in other companies.

WISE Employment support from Telstra

WISE Employment run a number of social enterprises providing valuable services to customers and provide jobs and training for 200 people who may not have otherwise had the opportunity to participate in the workforce. Telstra are a client of several of WISE Employment's social enterprises, including Clean Force, a commercial cleaning service.

The Telstra and Clean Force partnership is an example of how social procurement, an under-utilised tool to deliver both business and social benefit, can run successfully.

Clean Force have always been very professional in their dealings with Telstra and their prices have been competitive and their quality of work is of a high standard. As an organisation we are proud to be associated with Clean Force who provide the bridge for people to enter the workforce who without that assistance would often remain excluded. Based on our experience we would have no hesitation recommending Clean Force to supply similar services for other organisations.³⁶

Michael Marrett, National Contract Specialist, Telstra

PRINCIPLE 4 CONTINUED

ANZ partnership with the Willing and Able Mentoring program

Through the Willing and Able Mentoring program (WAM) ANZ connects industry experts to people with disability. The program gives participants an insight into the work environment, including practical advice on when and how to disclose their disability to open discussions on workplace modifications and support. Mentoring opportunities are an important source of job contacts that young people, especially young people with disability, need to pursue meaningful careers.

Catherine House

Catherine House ensures women feel job ready before they interview with potential employers. Catherine House provides a unique model in providing an integrated pathway for women out of homelessness, through education and into employment. The WorkNext Service is an exemplar program supporting women who have experienced a stage of homelessness and connecting them into education and employment.

These programs provide a clear evidence base of how collaboration and partnerships are delivering real and sustainable employment opportunities for people who are disadvantaged in the labour market. We need to consider how these pockets of success can be scaled and/ or replicated to support more people into work and to meet employer demand.

A key component of SVA's work is scaling innovative approaches. This has been the core of our work with social ventures over the past decade. Whilst every approach is tailored to the specific situation of the venture or project that we are working with, our broad and summarised approach has the following steps to it:

1. Working out what is working, why and what the longer-term impact will be. This is crucial to understanding the recipe for success in terms of scaling the impact of an innovative approach.
2. Identifying the key people required to scale the approach. Although the idea has to have clear potential for social impact we've learned to focus on the people that will drive the impact and support them through advice and support, talent development and access to networks.
3. Engaging philanthropy as the engine that will fuel social innovation and getting philanthropists (individuals, corporates or foundations) to back the growth of the approach.
4. Designing the approach and steps to scale impact. This often includes engaging Government as a key stakeholder in adoption of proven model as it is scaled. We invest in continuing to build the evidence of its effectiveness. Aspects of this is looking at the cost-benefit of the approach and working to ensure longer-term commitment to support.
5. SVA then works alongside the organisations involved to support the scaling of the approach as an engaged partner. Our experience is of frequent iteration and adaption of the models to incorporate learning into the process.
6. Central to the process is measuring the impact and sharing the lessons from the approach to enable others to adopt and develop.

Discussion at the Dialogue considered the challenges of scaling the initiatives that already existed in Australia. It was identified that a critical first step was to evidence what was working and why within the current initiatives and use this as evidence base from which to build scaled versions to achieve greater impact.

PRINCIPLE 5

CREATING LOCAL SOLUTIONS WITH NATIONAL EMPLOYERS



Australia’s employment and training system is working well for job-seekers who are ‘job-ready’ but approximately half a million people have been out of work for over a year.³⁷



National employers have the job vacancies and are eager to provide meaningful and sustainable employment opportunities for people who are long-term unemployed but often have difficulty in navigating a very localised, bureaucratic and fragmented employment system. This means that large numbers of entry-level jobs and career paths are inaccessible for disadvantaged jobseekers and is particularly the case for national and large employers, with large recruitment needs around the country.

Furthermore too many job-seekers undertake generic training programs that do not equip them with the skills or training needed for a specific job and as a result, end up back in the government system.

The employment system needs to be able to more effectively understand industry needs and broker relationships for national employers. This will be a co-ordinated approach that connects local communities with national employers, creating access to a new talent pool that could be developed to have the relevant skills that employers need.

Case study Connecting national employers to a local system

The Industry Employment Initiative (IEI) is designed to bridge the gap between national employers who have vacancies and the many people who are disadvantaged in the labour market and who are willing and able to work. The IEI is a collaborative approach between the Brotherhood of St Laurence, Mission Australia, Jesuit Social Services and Social Ventures Australia and supported by the Business Council of Australia, which seeks to improve employment outcomes for disadvantaged job seekers.

We know that demand-led programs can have a significant impact on the placement of disadvantaged job seekers into sustainable employment, and we need to draw upon and scale up learnings from already existing models in order to get an employment system redesign right. Cross sector, demand-led initiatives such as ANZ and Brotherhood of St Laurence's Given the Chance program have seen 78% of their participants so far gaining further employment. Another example of a demand-led model that works is the Ambition Programme in the UK, aimed at disadvantaged job seekers. The programme works with employers to identify employment opportunities as well as co-designing training and supports needed.

The IEI is unlike the existing employment system because it:

- Starts with the job first by deeply engaging national employers and working with them and service providers to tailor the support, training and work placements for disadvantaged job seekers.
- Provides holistic support services pre- and post-placement, to participating job seekers who may need them, so they can remain a long-term employee for any company.
- Provides a 'one stop shop' for national and large scale employers, alleviating the issues they face navigating multiple service providers across geographies, reducing overall red-tape and ensuring consistent service quality.
- Uses an evidence-based approach, this model will provide new opportunities for the long-term unemployed to become successful participants in mainstream economic and social life.

The IEI is piloting its model in 2014, focusing on young people aged 18-24 in partnership with a number of funders including Ian Potter Foundation, William Buckland Foundation, The Jack Brockhoff Foundation, NAB and The R E Ross Trust. These organisations are best practice examples of how philanthropy can act as the engine of innovation and social change.

The learnings from the scaled project will be used to demonstrate how demand-led employment works in practice. Following this the project will focus on working with government and Job Service Australia providers to mainstream the approach through the system.

The Jack Brockhoff Foundation supports the IEI because it is persuaded that the Initiative will produce a rigorous evidence base that can be taken to government to fund a larger scale program to assist long-term young job seekers remaining in sustainable employment.

Tanya Costello, Executive Officer, The Jack Brockhoff Foundation

PRINCIPLE 5 CONTINUED



There is great opportunity for employers to get more involved in the employment and training system, to share information about what skills they require to grow their businesses, and to play a role in providing training opportunities to people wanting to fill these gaps.

Kevin Robbie, Executive Director, Social Ventures Australia

PRINCIPLE 6

LOCAL SOLUTIONS FOR LOCAL COMMUNITIES



There are particular regions in Australia that are facing high unemployment which require local knowledge based solutions. Building a ground-up whole community approach will provide solutions that are responsive to local need, are flexible and easier to navigate for the people who use them.

Place based approaches were identified in the Dialogue with a strong emphasis on the need for locally based employment services that are embedded within their community. These organisations are best placed to harness community altruism and co-ordinate efforts across employers, educators, health and welfare services and other key stakeholders (eg. service and sporting clubs).

Building a ground-up whole community approach will provide solutions that are supported by that community, responsive to local need, and are flexible and easier to navigate for the people who use them.

Where communities are already demonstrating success and driving employment solutions, effectively bringing Government, not for profit organisations and companies together, there is opportunity to build an evidence base and apply these learnings in tackling long-term unemployment in other areas. By reducing the layers of complexity, the experience of local communities positions them well to evaluate and monitor how well programs are addressing workforce participation.

This is particularly relevant as regional industries decline, and there is a growing need to learn from other communities who have recovered from periods of economic deterioration and benefit from their experiences of what did and didn't work in transitioning people into different industries.

There are many examples where communities are delivering positive outcomes and we need to look at how we understand the success factors so we can adapt, replicate, grow or scale these models to create employment outcomes in other areas of high need across Australia.

Tackling long-term unemployment, particularly in the Indigenous space requires greater consultation and the building of stronger relationships, to let the solutions come from the communities themselves.

Justine Moss, National Manager, Workplace Ready Program, Reconciliation Australia

PRINCIPLE 6 CONTINUED

Case study **Ganbina's Jobs4U2**

Ganbina undertakes a place-based approach focusing on helping young people in the Greater Goulburn valley in Victoria. Through their unique and practical work involving the whole community, Ganbina have shown that it is possible to break the cycle of unemployment and welfare dependency among young Indigenous people.

Ganbina's suite of intensive programs helps individuals to reach their full potential in education, training and employment. Their program is built upon foundational partnerships with teachers, families and employers with the community.

Ganbina's Jobs4U2 program is one of the most successful school to work transition program in Australia, with a minimum of 80 per cent of all young people who enrol each year completing their full course activities.

Ganbina's model works because it places community needs at the centre of their programs. The next step in their journey will be to take the lessons learnt from its localised approach and adapt the model to suit the needs of another community within Australia.



Case study **BoysTown**

BoysTown is an example of a successful place-based solution to address pockets of disadvantage across Australia. BoysTown operates social enterprises that provide work opportunities for socially-excluded young people in geographically determined areas of disadvantage. BoysTown modelled their program on the Intermediate Labour Market Social Enterprise Model (ILMSE) in the UK, and tailored it to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people. The program aims to improve work readiness of its participants through providing paid employment experience, qualifications and individualised support.

One of BoysTown's social enterprises operates in the remote Aboriginal community in the Tjurabalan region of Western Australia. BoysTown spent three years consulting local stakeholders to ensure their program addressed the specific needs of the area in a culturally competent way. Throughout the consultation process, relationships between BoysTown, the local community and relevant government agencies were developed which provided the backbone to the organisation's success.

LOOKING AHEAD

The SVA Employment Dialogues are designed to enable new conversations, inspire new practice, and energise new partnerships. With the world of work changing long-term unemployment will continue to be a challenging and stubborn issue that requires a different way of thinking - one that is open to innovation, flexibility and encourages collaboration. The Dialogue provided an opportunity for us to come together from across sectors and draw on our collective experiences to develop new solutions to long-term unemployment in Australia.

One of the key issues to emerge from the day was the urgent need to tackle youth unemployment and to develop solutions that moves away from a 'one size fits all' approach. A co-ordinated youth transitions strategy will be critical to tackling youth unemployment and needs to be built on evidence of what works. An approach that considers both preventative solutions such as 'Beyond the Classroom' and those that provide a cure to long-term unemployment, many of which have been discussed throughout this Communique.

We need a concerted cross sector approach that considers the individual needs of each person disadvantaged in the labour market to support them into ongoing employment.

SVA is committed to highlighting the issues, ideas and solutions discussed at the Dialogue and will be building on these themes through a series of smaller roundtable discussions and developing an evidence base of 'what works' in tackling youth unemployment.

We would like to thank everyone who contributed to this year's Employment Dialogue, with special thanks to ANZ for providing the venue, to the range of speakers that contributed expertise on the day, to the participants who engaged in lively discussion of the issues and to Mission Australia and the Brotherhood of St Laurence for their ongoing support of the Dialogues and their unwavering commitment to tackling long-term unemployment in Australia.



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