

Youth Connectors

Young people have been hit hard by job losses during COVID-19.

Nearly 1 in 5 young people aged 15–24 lost their job.

But young people have told us *they want to work* and need *help to get work*.

Especially help that understands them and connects them to local work.

Young people are really trying to get work but
the demand for employment support has grown exponentially.

The number of young Tasmanians under 25 years engaged with jobactive has
increased by 66.2%
between December 2019 & June 2020.

There are **6,822** young Tasmanians looking for work.

And they're only the ones we know about.

A PRACTICAL SOLUTION:

**Create YOUTH CONNECTORS in
Tasmanian Government Employment Hubs.**

We know young people need services that:

- Support them
- Set them up for success
- Engage them
- Help them grow skills
- Connect them to training, employers and mentors

YOUTH CONNECTORS in the South East and Glenorchy Employment Hubs, and any future Hubs, can meet these needs.

YOUTH CONNECTORS will ensure young people:

- Are better prepared for work
- Undertake relevant training for local work opportunities
- Have strong entry-level skills that employers are looking for
- Are connected to employers and local jobs
- Receive support to stay employed

THE ASK:

FOUR YOUTH CONNECTORS

@ \$98,917 each can make a difference to the lives and futures of

UP TO 900 YOUNG PEOPLE EVERY YEAR

THE NEED

About 1 in 8 people in Tasmania are young people aged 15-24¹. They are our sons, daughters, nieces, nephews, neighbours and friends. They are Tasmania's future – young people who have the potential to thrive – and change Tasmania's trajectory of widening disparities with mainland Australia on too many key indicators².

Yet our youth unemployment rate is stubbornly high and worsening³, almost one in five young people have lost their jobs due to COVID-19⁴. Even before the pandemic hit, in 2019 Tasmania had three of the worst youth unemployment hotspots out of Australia's top 20⁵ – South East, Hobart, and West and North West Tasmania.

According to the Productivity Commission, the unemployment rate is not the best measure of the current jobs market – it's *underemployment*⁶. The national youth underemployment rate is 19.6%. If this rate is extrapolated to Tasmania, 12,407 young Tasmanians are currently underemployed⁷.

Young people are feeling demoralised. As of June 2020, their labour force participation rate was sitting at 61.4%⁸ and the demand for jobactive services increased massively – up 66.2% since December 2019⁹.

There are now 6,822 young people aged 15-24 years engaged with jobactive¹⁰ who are not receiving a youth specific approach to gaining employment. Young people have told us that jobactive services are sub-optimal for meeting their needs and that additional support is required to enter the workforce.

THE SOLUTION

The Solution builds on and strengthens the Employment Hub already established in South East Tasmania and the soon to be established Employment Hub in Glenorchy. The Solution is to add two youth specialists – Youth Connectors – to the teams at each of these locations, four in total.

The Solution supports Recommendation 40 of the Premier's Economic and Social Recovery Advisory Council (PESRAC):

“ The State Government should drive the development of effective job placement approaches that enable regional led solutions and provide for employer and job-seeker matching at a local level.¹¹ ”

The Solution also draws on knowledge and understanding gained through the Australian Government's Innovation in *Youth Employment Services Forums*¹². The Forums found young people had the following key needs:

BUILD STRONG SERVICE DELIVERY CAPABILITY TO SUPPORT ME

- Know what works for people like me
- Co-design your service with me
- Hire and support the 'right' staff
- Build partnerships that better support me

SET ME UP FOR SUCCESS

- Build rapport and get to know me well
- Challenge me so I can grow
- Help me overcome barriers

HELP ME GROW MY SKILLS

- Help me build my employability skills
- Expose me to on-the-job learning

ENGAGE ME

- Tailor services to my needs and interests
- Interact with me where and when I'm comfortable
- Keep communicating and connecting with me

CONNECT ME

- Help me connect with employers
 - Help me connect with mentors who can guide me
 - Help me connect with other young people
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The Youth Connectors will deliver specialised skills to meet these identified needs more effectively, as well as build on the experience of the South East Employment Hub with its individualised focus, transport and training opportunities¹³. Youth Connectors will broaden the understanding of young people in relation to sustainable, real job opportunities in the local market and the processes for obtaining employment in emerging industries in their region.

The new JobTrainer package adds to these opportunities, providing free or low-cost retraining and upskilling in sectors with job opportunities, as well as for apprentices. Youth Connectors will ensure **relevant** training in useful and applicable skills, connecting young people to a pipeline that takes them from unemployment to work; a critical point raised in conversation with the Tasmanian Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

The principles of the Youth Connector model are drawn from Social Ventures Australia's *Fundamental principles for youth employment*¹⁴. They are:

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

THE ASK

To improve the lives of young Tasmanians for the long term, it is imperative to get as many of them into relevant training and work as possible. Starting work successfully builds life-long habits, better health and wellbeing, and essential role modelling for the next generation as these young people become parents.

The "Ask" is for two Youth Connectors at the two Employment Hubs – South East and Glenorchy. A total of four Youth Connectors at a cost of \$98,917 each¹⁵ including on costs.

It is strongly recommended that any future Employment Hubs integrate the model into their costing and operation.

THE RETURN ON INVESTMENT

One Youth Connector is expected to manage a caseload of up to 40 young people, offering potential support to 120 young Tasmanians at any given time. Youth Connectors have the potential to deliver outcomes as follows:

	PLACEMENTS PER ANNUM @ 10 PER MONTH	TRAINING/ APPRENTICESHIP PLACEMENTS/ RETENTION PER ANNUM @ 2 PER WEEK
One Youth Connector	120	100
Two Youth Connectors	240	200
Four Youth Connectors	480	400

As a result of this solution, it is expected that up to 900 young people annually will be placed in employment, will continue their apprenticeship or be undertaking relevant training that will lead to secure employment.

Social Ventures Australia reports that analysis of the Social Return on Investment (SROI) for youth programs based in its established principles can be as high as \$6.70 for every \$1.00 invested¹⁶.

References

- 1 Australian Bureau of Statistics 2020, 3101.0 Australian Demographic Statistics. Table 56. Accessed 29/07/2020.
- 2 Tasmanian Chamber of Commerce and Industry 2019, *Tasmania Report 2019*.
- 3 Australian Bureau of Statistics 2020, 6202.0 Labour Force, Australia. Table 16. Accessed 29/07/2020.
- 4 Premier's Economic and Social Recovery Advisory Council 2020, Interim Report, Tasmanian Government. pp. 25.
- 5 Brotherhood of Saint Laurence 2019, *Smashing the Avocado Debate: Australia's Youth Unemployment Hot Spots*, March 2019, Fitzroy, Melbourne.
- 6 de Fontenay C, Lampe B, Nugent J & Jomini P 2020, *Climbing the jobs ladder slower: Young people in a weak labour market*, Productivity Commission Staff Working Paper, Australian Government.
- 7 Number of underemployed young Tasmanians extrapolated using ABS 2020, 6202.0 Labour Force, Australia Table 22 and ABS 2020, 3101.0 Australian Demographic Statistics. Table 56.
- 8 Australian Bureau of Statistics 2020, 6202.0 Labour Force, Australia. Table 16. Accessed 29/07/2020.
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- 10 Australian Government 2020, *Labour Market Information Portal: Employment Region Data: jobactive Caseload by Selected Cohorts Time Series*.
- 11 Premier's Economic and Social Recovery Advisory Council 2020, *Interim Report*, Tasmanian Government.
- 12 Australian Government 2018, *Innovation in Youth Employment Services: Summary*, Department of Jobs and Small Business, Canberra.
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- 14 Social Ventures Australia 2016, *Fundamental principles for youth employment*, Australia
- 15 Based on the Labour Market Assistance Industry Award 2020, Training and placement officer, grade 2
- 16 Social Ventures Australia 2016, *Fundamental principles for youth employment*, Australia