HELPING YOUNG JOBSEEKERS PUT THEIR BEST FOOT FORWARD

The Andrews Labor Government is helping to change the lives of more Victorians, announcing new funding for programs to support ex-offenders into jobs.

Minister for Industry and Employment Wade Noonan today announced up to $1.5 million for the YMCA Bridge Project, to place up to 1,500 people into sustainable work.

It brings total funding support from the Labor Government to more than $3.25 million.

The Bridge Employment Support and Training program (BEST), run by the YMCA Bridge Project, provides ex-offenders with the support, training and mentoring they need to find work.

The BEST program offers life skills and vocational training to build confidence, while also providing qualifications participants can use to find jobs.

It helps those on the program find work, keep busy and stay out of trouble – reducing the risk of re-offending and keeping the community safe.

Previously run by the Department of Justice and Regulation, BEST will now be part of the highly-successful Jobs Victoria initiative.

Transitioning the BEST program will support closer ties with other Jobs Victoria programs and create even more employment opportunities.

Since 2006, the YMCA Bridge Project has helped more than 440 people find work, while more than 100 Victorian businesses have provided support and jobs to the program.

Jobs Victoria helps Victorians from all backgrounds who face barriers to employment, including Aboriginal communities, refugees and other culturally diverse jobseekers.

More than 1,550 jobseekers have been placed into work over the past 10 months.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Industry and Employment Wade Noonan

“The YMCA Bridge Project is an inspiring organisation. We are proud to make them part of the Jobs Victoria network to continue their amazing work.”

“We want to end the cycle of reoffending, and that starts with giving people purpose, and an opportunity to contribute to the workplace.”

“Jobs Victoria will help thousands of Victorian jobseekers who face barriers to work find and keep a job.”

Quotes attributable to YMCA Bridge Project Manager Mick Cronin

“The YMCA Bridge Project is all about second chances. Sometimes even a third or fourth.”

“By giving people who have been involved in the criminal justice system the support, training and mentoring they need, we’re helping them get their lives back on track.”