

SOCIAL ENTERPRISE
JOBS SUMMIT 2025



SUMMIT PROGRAM



11-12 JUNE 2025

PRESENTED BY:



white box
ENTERPRISES



08:00AM – 09:00AM Registration		
09:00AM – 9.30AM Welcome + Welcome to Country		FORUM
<p>Jess Moore, Social Enterprise Australia</p> <p>Mark Daniels, White Box Enterprises</p>	<p>Mark Daniels and Jess Moore will kick off the conference, setting the tone for the next two days as we explore how to build common ground to shift systems and create a future where everyone has access to decent work. Jess will also introduce key themes we'll unpack across the summit: what makes or breaks a jobs-focused social enterprise, the challenges and gaps in the ecosystem, the real cost of impact, the urgency of this moment, and the opportunity of a national strategy.</p>	
9.30AM – 9.45AM The power of social enterprise employment		FORUM
<p>Mel Sass, Beacon Laundry</p>	<p>Jobs-focused social enterprise is a powerful way to create opportunities for people shut out of mainstream employment. To remind us why we're all here, Mel Sass will share their story. A former family services practitioner and the self-appointed poster child for adversity, Mel now thrives as part of the team at Beacon Laundry. Drawing on lived experience of addiction and recovery, they'll remind us why decent work is about so much more than a job.</p>	
9.45AM - 10:45AM Starting real: The rollercoaster of running a jobs-focused social enterprise		FORUM
<p>Bec Scott, STREAT</p> <p>Geoff Smith, Australian Spatial Analytics</p> <p>Glenda Abraham, Laynhapuy Homelands Aboriginal Corporation</p>	<p>We're putting practitioners front and centre in a series of short, sharp talks that share the highs and lows of running a jobs-focused social enterprise. What's working and what's not? What hard-earned lessons are worth sharing? What keeps them going? And if they had their time again, what would they do differently?</p>	
10.45AM – 11.15AM Morning Tea		

11:15AM – 12.05PM How can we scale the impact of work integration social enterprise? What the research shows so far

FORUM

Professor Jo Barraket AM,
Melbourne Social Equity Institute

Dr Chabel Khan,
Melbourne Social Equity Institute

How can we get more people into decent, meaningful work? What makes a jobs-focused social enterprise model scalable, replicable, and effective—and under what conditions?

In 2024, a research team from the Universities of Melbourne and Queensland led by Professor Jo Barraket, began exploring these questions through research funded by an Australian Research Council Linkage grant*. The study is investigating the role WISEs can play in improving the employment futures of people experiencing disadvantage.

Find out what insights the team have uncovered so far and what you can take back to your own organisation.

**In partnership with White Box Enterprises, Westpac Foundation, Outlook Australia and STREAT*

12:10PM – 1.00PM Lessons from France: Insights from a \$2B organisation

FORUM

Frédéric Bailly,
Groupe SOS

Luke Terry,
White Box Enterprises

Professor Jo Barraket AM,
Melbourne Social Equity Institute

What are the conditions that enable a social purpose organisation to grow to over 750 entities, employing 22,000 people and reaching more than 2 million beneficiaries — while addressing exclusion, delivering essential services, and driving innovation across social and environmental challenges?

Frédéric Bailly will share insights from this extraordinary organisation including its many jobs-focused models. He'll then be joined by Luke Terry from White Box Enterprises and Jo Barraket from Melbourne Social Equity Institute to tease out how this non-profit group has achieved such phenomenal scale, and what support the French Government provides.

1.00PM – 2.00PM Lunch

2.00PM – 2.50PM **Parallel sessions**
Are Payments by Outcome the systemic change we need?
FORUM 1

Judi Drown, Social Enterprise Australia
Amber O'Connell, Department of Social Services
Ben Gales, Office of Social Impact, QLD Treasury
Mark Daniels, White Box Enterprises

Unlike other organisations in the employment ecosystem, most jobs-focused social enterprises aren't funded for supporting people into work. Payment By Outcomes (PBO) is a new model being trialed where social enterprises are paid directly for the outcomes they steward. But what's the reality of these models? How do they land differently in different contexts? Is your organisation the right fit? And is this the mechanism to take us to a model of ongoing systemic change?

Your time
FORUM 2

Need a moment to not be sitting? To move after lunch? This is your space, with three options.

1. Get creative with social enterprise Bayley Arts (limited spots, sign up at registration desk on arrival).
2. Get moving with social enterprise Mosaik Experiences.
3. Organise a 1:1 with someone you've been meaning to catch.

Short and sharp. Stories from the front line
FORUM 3

Steph Say, HoMie
Bianca Stern, All Things Equal
Rebecca Crawley, Thamarrurr Youth Indigenous Corporation

Stay sharp after lunch with a round of lightning talks and conversation sharing bold ideas, honest lessons, and fresh inspiration.

2.55PM – 3.45PM **Parallel sessions**
The good, the bad, the ugly: the double edged sword of social procurement
FORUM 1

Tara Anderson, Social Traders
Nicole Donnison, Icon
Jono Coker, Bama Services
Edwina Walsh, Assembled Threads
Dr Admiral Manganda, University of Melbourne

Social procurement can be a catalyst for many jobs-focused social enterprises. But along with the opportunities, what should you look out for? What stage of growth does it suit? How do you spot and negotiate an unforgiving contract or consider unintended consequences? And what do corporates and governments need to consider?

The systemic challenges of scaling WISEs: Lessons on impact, risk, and conditions
FORUM 2

Harry Sillet, Paul Ramsay Foundation
Renae Lowry, YMCA ReBuild
Kirra Johnson, Good Cycles

WISEs create great outcomes, now the system needs to catch up. A review of investment across 25 jobs-focused social enterprises shows that despite strong employment outcomes, even well-managed WISEs with strong market access can struggle to scale or survive when the broader system isn't designed to support them.

In this session, Harry will share insights and will be joined by Renae and Kirra for a candid chat on scaling a social enterprise: what it takes to lead through growth, navigate barriers, and stay mission-anchored.

How starting with self-determination can lead to culturally informed workplaces
FORUM 3

Dominic Nicolls, Mimal
Kendrick Bush, Mimal
Gebro Buli, Firesticks
Alinta McGuire, Impact North

How can the WISE model build self-determination?

Join these First Nations organisations building their own ecosystems and providing their own solutions to the complex challenges of their communities to understand the value of starting with self-determination.

3.45PM – 4.15PM **Afternoon Tea**

4.15PM – 5.15PM	Birds of a feather: connecting with others facing similar challenges	FORUMS 1, 2 & 3
	<p>When we asked people what they love most about conferences, connecting with others in the sector was consistently one of the top things. We will be hosting a series of talking circles around the venue. Make sure you sign-up for your circle of interest on arrival at the conference.</p> <p>We invite you to sit down with others in the same space as you. Share challenges, spark connections and learn from each other.</p>	
5.15PM – 6.15PM	Networking drinks	
	<p>Continue the connections with informal social connection time.</p> <p>Inspired by a speaker? Find them here. Want to bask in the energy the social enterprise sector brings? This is that time.</p>	

9.00AM – 9.50AM Parallel sessions
An honest and practical guide to how to do collaboration well.
FORUM 1

Sally McGeoch, Westpac Foundation
Dr Ingrid Burkett, The Good Shift
Dr Kate Barrelle, STREAT

Is collaboration the most overused word in our sector? Maybe, but it's also necessary to achieve our big, hairy audacious goals. And it's hard. It takes trust, intention, patience and funding.

In this interactive session explore the challenges and opportunities of collaboration through the experiences of Moving Feast and Advance to Zero Homelessness. Walk away with practical insights and some common principles to strengthen your own collaborations and start to shift the dial.

WISE start-up masterclass
FORUM 2

Luke Terry, White Box Enterprises

Shifting your mindset from social to business is hard when you're close to a cause. But it's critical to building a large-scale, profitable jobs-focused social enterprise.

In this session, Luke Terry lifts the lid on strategies that have worked and not worked when building social enterprises. Everything from capital raising, cash-flow and getting comfortable with debt, to wrap-around supports and the power of community partnerships. Special guests, Alexie Seller and Allan English will join Luke to share their insights too.

What makes a good transition model?
FORUM 3

Valerie Richards, Jigsaw
Carmen Garcia, Community Corporate
Ryan Salzke, Vanguard Laundry
Roksolana Suchowerska, Centre for Social Impact, Swinburne

What makes a good transition from a jobs-focused social enterprise into mainstream employment? We know it's not a one-size-fits all approach. These experienced speakers will share the different ways that are working for their contexts and their cohorts.

09.55AM – 10.45AM Parallel sessions
Right capital, right time
FORUM 1

Mark Daniels, White Box Enterprises
Hanna Ebeling, Sefa
Belinda Morrissey, English Family Foundation
Matt Pfahler, ACRE

Access to capital is consistently one of the highest rated needs of social enterprises. But not all capital is created equal.

What types of capital make sense at different stages of a social enterprise's journey? And how can you wean your organisation off grants and onto borrowing over time?

Join this session and learn how to find the right capital at the right time.

What's the key to good wrap around support?
FORUM 2

Dewi Cooke, The Social Studio
Jill Ashley, Shoretrack
Kendrick Bush, Mimal
Libby Ward-Christie, MBS Centre for Social Purpose Organisations

What does good support look like and how do we fund it? Wrap around support is a critical component of a WISE yet rarely discussed.

Some organisations manage this in house and others are at a size where support workers are key. If no two organisations do this in the same way, what can we learn about what best supports participants and their goals?

Digital infrastructure that scales and serves communities
FORUM 3

Christina Chun, Social Enterprise Australia
Duncan Fogg, Seedkit
Alex Hannant, Social Enterprise Australia

"If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together." But what if today demands we do both?

This session explores how we might harness developments in the digital commons, open-source design, data sharing, and interoperability to build new enabling infrastructure — transforming how we connect, learn, and drive impact.

10:45AM - 11:15AM Morning Tea

11.15AM – 12.05AM Parallel sessions

What are the industries where WISEs thrive and which ones are toughest?

FORUM 1

Grant Coker-Williams, Blueline Laundry
Neil Gonsalvez, White Box Enterprises
Frédéric Bailly, Groupe SOS
Ant Rohr, Community Resources Australia

Are there industries where running a sustainable jobs-focused social enterprise is easier? If yes, what are they?

In this session we'll explore the characteristics of the industries where jobs-focused social enterprises are most likely to thrive — and those that tend to be trickier. Find out what you should look for and how you can find the right market for your idea.

From crisis to collective strength

FORUM 2

Skye O'Meara, APY Arts Centre Collective (APYACC)
George Cooley, APY Arts Centre Collective (APYACC)

APYACC has faced intense public scrutiny and external investigations in the past two years, and emerged without findings of any wrongdoing. Skye and George share their learnings and insights on surviving an unexpected crisis.

Speak to a WISE owl

OUTSIDE IN CAFE

If there are people you've heard about, read about, admired from afar, now's your chance to pick their brains. Register for a 10-minute 1:1 when you arrive.

How does the place-based agenda intersect with jobs-focused social enterprise?

FORUM 3

Bill Mithen, Neighbourhood Economics
Julie McKay, Enable Social Enterprises
Coralie Nichols, The Ian & Shirley Norman Foundation

Place-based work has experienced a renewed focus over the past decade in Australia and there is a natural interface between the aims of place-based approaches and social enterprise.

Join this conversation to explore where the opportunities might be for social enterprise, in this current moment of place-based policy and action focus.

12.10PM – 1.00PM Parallel sessions

Designing the future of work with young people as THE agents of change

FORUM 1

Mikhara Ramsing, facilitator
Pat Ryan, Dismantle
Nathaniel Diong, Future Minds Network

An interactive session exploring how we can avoid seeing young people we work with as beneficiaries and as agents of their own change. Be prepared to share your own thoughts and examples as well as hearing from Pat and Nathaniel

Scaling impact through working with mainstream employers – a dialogue

FORUM 2

Loes Westerbeek, Ventia
Julie Duncan, Australia Post
Lisa Fowkes, Social Ventures Australia

We'll hear from two employers about successes and challenges in recruiting people through social enterprises — particularly in moving to scale. We'll ask what it might take to encourage two-way learning.

Mergers + acquisitions: When are we better together?

FORUM 3

Myron Mann, Bedford Group
Jessica Mendoza-Roth, Social Impact Hub
Social impact leader **Matt Knopp**

Acquisition is a genuine model for starting a social enterprise — discuss. Dig into the challenges and opportunities of mergers and acquisitions and think about what great outcomes look like.

1.00PM – 2.00PM	Lunch	
2.00PM – 2.13PM	Announcing Centre for Inclusive Employment	FORUM
Erin Wilson, Cente for Social Impact	Erin will share a short update on the remit of this new Centre and how jobs-focused social enterprises can interact.	
2.13PM – 2.25PM	How do we value lived experience in leadership?	FORUM
Mohammed Yassin, Value Nation	How do we value people with lived experience and their leadership in design, delivery and evolution of employment support programs that target them? How might we do this better?	
2.30PM – 3.00PM	The ripple effects of empowering communities to manage their regions through Cultural Fire	FORUM
Craig North, Firesticks	The inspiring story behind Firesticks, a national Indigenous network that empowers communities to protect and enhance Country and wellbeing by reviving cultural knowledge.	
3.00PM – 3.30PM	What can we learn from Indigenous business?	FORUM
Fiona Jose, Cape York Partnership Kristy Marsella, Aboriginal Employment Services	What can jobs-focused social enterprise learn from the growth of Indigenous business over the last two decades and the resilience required?	
3.30PM – 4.00PM	Afternoon Tea	
4.00PM – 5.00PM	Playback: What could the future look like? + Closing session	FORUM
Alex Hannant, Social Enterprise Australia	A round-up of key themes from across the summit and how they might feed into a challenge-led approach for a sector working towards decent and inclusive work for all.	