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Marginalised jobseekers must be a key focus of Victorian State Budget: Jesuit Social Services

The Victorian Government's 2019/20 State Budget is an opportunity to ensure that jobseekers who face significant barriers to employment aren't overlooked, says Jesuit Social Services.

In its [submission to the 2019/20 Victorian State Budget](#), the organisation calls for expanded investment into Victorian jobs initiatives such as Jobs Bank and Jobs Victoria Employment Network.

"For many years, Jesuit Social Services has worked with people who face barriers to employment including people who've left school early, had involvement with the justice system and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds," says Jesuit Social Services CEO Julie Edwards.

"Everybody deserves the opportunity to work, support themselves and their families and make a positive contribution to the community. To achieve this, some jobseekers require assistance to upgrade their skills and job readiness, and have supported pathways to employment."

Jesuit Social Services delivers the Jobs Victoria Employment Network (JVEN) initiative in Melbourne's northern, south east and western regions. This program actively engages with employers to match job opportunities with disadvantaged jobseekers.

"We know that this type of targeted, individual support is effective in preparing jobseekers for work, identifying suitable opportunities for them and providing them with support as they transition into employment," says Ms Edwards.

"However, the current funding cycle for Jobs Victoria ends in June 2020. We want to see ongoing and long-term funding security for such important work."

Ms Edwards says that investment into supporting disadvantaged jobseekers can also serve to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour.

"The best way to ensure people stay out of trouble is to support them on a pathway to make a positive contribution to society, and employment plays a vital role in this."

In its submission to the 2019/20 Victorian State Budget, Jesuit Social Services also recommends:

- Establishing concrete targets for companies to employ people experiencing barriers to employment as part of the Government's Social Procurement Framework;
- Developing long term place-based initiatives targeted to communities of greatest disadvantage, that work with community, industry and employers to create skills and jobs training and pathways to employment;
- Further investing in Corporate Diversity Partnerships to support unemployed and under-employed skilled people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities to access professional jobs pathways.

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