

Jobsbank[®]

2023/24 Annual Report





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Jobbank acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we work. We pay our respects to their culture, their connections to Country and community, and to Elders past and present.

From the Chair



There is a growing recognition across Australian businesses that social impact will be a priority over the next decade. Addressing deep-rooted employment inequities to achieve a diverse workforce is now a competitive edge.

Working Future, the Australian Government's white paper underscores the urgency of the issue, with a goal to "achieve economic equality for women, lifting people out of entrenched disadvantage, spreading the benefits of work more broadly in our society, and increasing the productivity of business through increased diversity", with three million Australians either looking for employment or wanting to work more hours.

Australian businesses have a pivotal role to create inclusive workplaces and Jobsbank is at the frontline of that opportunity, bridging the gap between employers who want to diversify their teams and individuals who, for too long, have been overlooked. We are committed

to breaking down barriers to help businesses welcome the workers they need to thrive.

Over the past twelve months Jobsbank has refined our purpose to focus on businesses, expanding partnerships and launching exciting new initiatives. The Jobsbank Board looks to the year ahead with a positive momentum, confident in our trajectory to support employers to achieve a diverse, equitable and inclusive workforce.

Claire Ferres Miles

Jobsbank Chair

CEO's Message



When the Australian Government released its third-ever employment white paper, focusing on “jobs for everyone”, Victoria had already taken the lead. As one of the early investors in social procurement, Victoria set the example and Jobbank has been at the forefront of that journey. The Victorian government invested early in organisations like Jobbank, which is now a model that other states are learning from.

Creating jobs for all is an admirable, ambitious goal but one that can only be achieved if employers are supported to get on board. While big business may sometimes be able to afford the expertise required to bring in a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive workforce, the largest employer of Australians, small and medium enterprises, aren't always financially equipped to make the move by themselves.

That's where Jobbank comes in. This year has been a crucial time of consolidation. We nailed down who we are and what we do, setting ourselves up for a more independent, self-sustaining future. With a fresh executive team, we devised a growth plan and set ourselves on a more commercial course. This called for a cultural shift and new ways of working. We spoke directly to businesses about what they needed and analysed our past projects. From that intelligence we refined what we offer, so our services better match market demands.

We strengthened relationships, meeting with the state and federal governments every month. We also

established our first partnership with a peak body, Chemistry Australia, which was a highlight. We sponsored the organisation's first Diversity, Equity and Inclusion award and delivered a series of webinars to its members, broadening the knowledge and understanding of DEI and Social Procurement among its members. We also sponsored the National Employment Services Association awards and conference, where I ran a workshop on how to co-design inclusive workplaces.

Our partnership with the Latrobe Valley Authority firmed up our belief that a person-focused, place-based approach is essential across the work we do, whether it's in Gippsland's clean-energy sector or Melbourne's CBD. Programs must be customised for the communities they serve. We are working closely with community leaders and businesses in Gippsland to plan to create sustainable employment opportunities.

I am optimistic about Jobbank's future. We know most employers want to have a positive impact on their community and even transform the life of someone who has been locked out of the workforce. However, many businesses feel uneasy about recruiting in a new way. We can put their fears and confusion to rest by showing them how easy it can be to make small adjustments and welcome a wider range of recruits. Together, we can turn good intentions into a fairer, more inclusive reality.

Dr Karina Davis
Jobbank CEO

About Jobsbank

At Jobbank, we're all about making workplaces better for everyone. We believe that when businesses embrace diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) and social procurement (SP) everyone wins—not just employees but the business itself and the wider community, too.

Our purpose

We're here to help businesses create more inclusive workplaces where everyone can feel welcome and where everyone can succeed. We're here to help businesses use their buying power strategically and make their dollar travel further, providing both economic and social good throughout their supply chain. Whether you're a small business just starting out or a big organisation looking to take your inclusivity to the next level, we've got the tools, connections, and know-how to help you get there.

Our mission is simple: to make diversity, equity, inclusion and social procurement a part of everyday business. We want to future-proof the workforce by helping businesses tap into diverse talent and create workplaces where everyone feels they belong.



Why it matters

We know that making workplaces more diverse isn't just the right thing to do—it's smart business. Diverse teams are more innovative and better at problem-solving, and businesses that embrace inclusion often see stronger financial performance. We're here to help you unlock those benefits, one step at a time.



Companies with higher-than-average inclusion are six times more likely to be innovative and agile and eight times more likely to achieve better business outcomes (Deloitte, 2019).

Those with higher average inclusion are 70% more likely to be innovative leaders in their market (Boston Consulting Group, 2017).



Diverse teams are four times more likely to work extra hard and four times less likely to leave their job. They are also six times more likely to provide excellent customer service. (DCA, 2024)

Diversity in your executive team will give you increased likelihood of above-average profitability (McKinsey 2023)



We work across industries to offer hands-on support, build meaningful partnerships, and share our knowledge.

Our key priorities are:

- Helping businesses bring diversity, equity, and inclusion into their daily operations.
- Supporting companies so they can benefit from the government contracts which fall under various Social Procurement Frameworks.
- Partnering with others to drive economic and social benefits through employment initiatives.
- Advocating for more inclusive workplaces by sharing insights and promoting industry best practices.



We're here for you

At Jobbank, we work one-on-one with businesses to help them build more diverse, equitable, and inclusive teams. Beyond that, we guide them on how to **procure strategically**, driving both economic and social good. No two businesses are the same. Our approach is always tailored to fit what you need—whether you're just starting the conversation around inclusion or ready to scale your efforts. We've partnered with more than 100 businesses across 27 industries, so we know what works and we know how to make a lasting impact.

We also stay with organisations and businesses through the journey. From our previous work, we know the hard work really starts when the on-the-ground work begins. We not only develop plans, we help implement them.

We're a for-purpose organisation with strong connections to government and the social enterprise world, and our experience means we bring practical, tested solutions to the table. We don't just talk about diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workplace — we help make it happen.

We help solve problems

Jobbank partners with government on projects that drive both economic growth while delivering social impact. We bring organisations together to create job opportunities that benefit everyone, focusing on diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workplace.

Our research projects give us valuable insights that we use to support government initiatives aimed at improving employment outcomes.

With our hands-on experience, we understand the challenges businesses face and can help design practical, effective solutions that benefit the broader community. Our partnerships with businesses and communities allow us to deliver real-world solutions that work.

We support partnerships and share good practices

Since our founding, Jobbank has built strong relationships with organisations that are just as passionate about creating diverse, equitable and inclusive workplaces. We learn from each other and always look for opportunities to collaborate and share what works.

Our research program provides insights into how businesses can better support diversity, and we use these findings to help others implement good practices. We're also committed to recognising the hard work already happening in this space by sponsoring industry awards that celebrate businesses leading the way in diversity and inclusion.



Our strategic focus

At Jobbank, the last year has been all about getting our foundation right. We've focused on improving how we work internally so that we're set up for long-term success. This focus on strengthening ourselves means we're now in a better position to connect with businesses, government, and industry partners in a more meaningful way.

Improving how we work

We've worked hard to streamline our internal operations so we can focus on what matters—bringing value to businesses and helping businesses build more diverse and inclusive workplaces. By improving our processes, we're ready to grow and take on more ambitious projects.

Connecting with others

By strengthening our internal foundation, we've built a solid base to better engage with our key stakeholders. We're now in a stronger position to connect with businesses, government agencies, and industry leaders who share our vision of creating more inclusive workplaces.

Building partnerships

Partnerships are at the heart of what we do. By collaborating with organisations in construction, manufacturing, clean energy, and other growth sectors, we're driving change and supporting sustainable employment initiatives.

Our new areas of focus



Clean energy

Helping businesses in the energy sector adopt inclusive hiring practices and drive diversity in the industry.



Construction & manufacturing

Partnering with companies to integrate diversity and inclusion into their growing workforces, ensuring representation across all levels.



Transport & logistics

Supporting businesses to fill workforce gaps by focusing on diversity and inclusion, building resilient and adaptable teams.



Health & aged care

Assisting organisations in the care economy to create more inclusive workplaces, meeting the needs of diverse workers and clients.

Since 2019 we have:

- Worked with 100+ businesses across 27 industries to integrate diversity and inclusion into their everyday operations.
- Worked on employment programs developing and delivering job placements, like the 'Out for Good' project, in partnership with construction companies and community organisations.
- Created employment opportunities through partnerships with major events like the Australian Open, the Melbourne Food & Wine, and the Comedy Festival.
- Launched a consultancy service to help businesses navigate Victoria's Social Procurement Framework, with 32 Maturity Assessments delivered to date.
- Hosted 'Meet the Suppliers' events to connect businesses and social benefit suppliers – including social enterprises, Aboriginal businesses, Disability Employment Service Providers, promoting best practices and networking opportunities through Victoria's Social Procurement Framework.
- Established partnerships with universities and DEI-focused organisations to lead research projects that inform best practices in inclusive employment.
- Sponsored industry-based conferences and awards, advocating for diversity, equity, and inclusion, and celebrating businesses that lead the way.

Research and thought leadership

We've also ramped up our role as thought leaders in inclusive employment and social procurement.

Our recent research projects are exploring:

- The barriers businesses face when committing to DEI
- Challenges and opportunities for businesses in Victoria's regions, like Gippsland
- The construction industry's understanding of social procurement
- Manufacturing industry experiences with migrant employment

Our research doesn't just sit on a shelf—it directly informs how we work with businesses. We're using these insights to help organisations take meaningful steps toward creating more diverse and inclusive workplaces.

Our Year in Review: Making Inclusion Happen

At Jobbank, this year was all about driving real change. We worked hard to champion inclusive hiring and workplace practices through social procurement, and our efforts have made a real impact. From hosting events to forming strong partnerships, we've helped businesses take practical steps toward creating more inclusive work environments.

Here's a look at what we achieved:

Raised the awareness and understanding of the opportunities that social procurement and diversity, equity and inclusion in the workplace offer business by:



Working with **39** organisations across various industries and **four** government entities.

Delivering

10



workshops to diverse groups including the German Chamber of Commerce AHK, NORTHLink, and the Australian Sporting Goods Association.

Provided training to

48

organisations



The workshops and sessions highlighted some of the business imperatives and opportunities reaped by businesses who engage in social procurement and have diversity, equity, and inclusion in their workplaces and dispel some of the myths about the difficulty and complexity of both.

We continue to broaden the reach and influence of our experience, knowledge, and research with government by making submissions

to government, including the **Put Local Jobs First** submission, to help influence the reform of the Local Jobs First Act 2003. We also made a submission to the **Victorian Energy Jobs Plan**, focusing on employment in the energy sector.

We raised the profile of Jobbank and DEI in the workplace and social procurement across a broad audience by proudly sponsoring major events such as the:

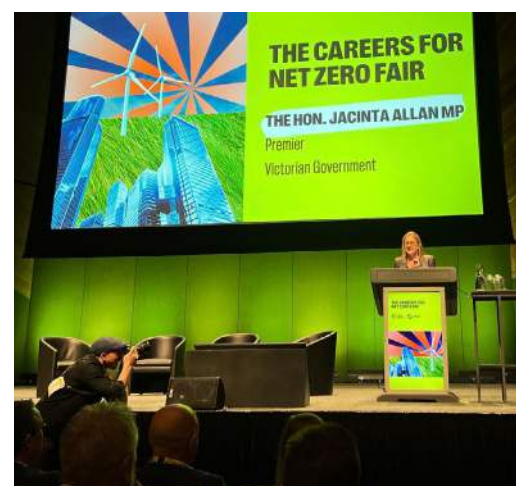
- Victorian Manufacturing Showcase (VMS) 2023
- Careers for Net Zero conference in Melbourne
- National Employment Services Association (NESA) Conference & Awards, and
- Chemistry Australia Annual Awards

These events strengthened our presence in the key spaces that matter most for DEI advocacy.



Jobbank continued to grow the knowledge base and data surrounding DEI in the workplace and social procurement with our research agenda. We built **research partnerships** to fill critical gaps in industry knowledge and support businesses in better understanding DEI challenges. Our research projects include:

- A project with **Quantum Research**, examining barriers businesses face in committing to DEI.
- A project with **Gippsland Women's Health**, exploring opportunities for businesses in the Gippsland region.
- A Linkage Project with the Australian Research Council, the Australian Catholic University and the University of Sydney, aiming to identify the levers that will enable government and labour market intermediaries (such as employment service providers) to better support businesses to employ from hidden talent pools (e.g. long-term unemployed, people with disability, First Nations), and improve the quality of jobs available.



Working with peak bodies

At Jobbank, we believe real change starts with people. That's why we partner with industry peak bodies and the people who lead them.

Peak bodies are in a unique position to influence the way businesses think about diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workplace. They do more than set standards, they help shape the culture within their sectors, making them key allies in promoting inclusive workplaces.

In partnering with peak bodies, we share best practices, advocate for policies which support diversity, and build stronger and more inclusive industries from the ground up. These collaborations mean that we're not just working with individual businesses—we're helping entire sectors move towards a future where everyone has a chance to succeed.



Partnering with Chemistry Australia to drive diversity and inclusion

In 2024, Jobscan teamed up with Chemistry Australia to launch a brand-new Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Award as part of their annual excellence awards to promote more inclusive workplaces and recognise businesses making progress in this area.

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The DEI Award was designed to celebrate businesses actively working to create fairer, more inclusive work environments in the chemical industry. It was co-designed by Jobscan and Chemistry Australia and examined how businesses support people from diverse backgrounds, how they promote equity in their hiring and workplace practices, and what steps they take to ensure that everyone, regardless of their background, can succeed in their organisations.

The award set a new standard for the industry, encouraging companies to not just talk about inclusion but to take real, measurable action. For Jobscan, this collaboration highlighted the importance of recognising and celebrating businesses that are leading the way in making workplaces more inclusive while sending a clear message to the industry about the value of diversity in driving innovation and success.





Showcasing DEI excellence: Case studies from Chemistry Australia's DEI award

As part of our ongoing partnership with Chemistry Australia, Jobsbank created case studies on all three finalists of the 2024 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) award.

Winner: BASF – Enhancing diversity in the chemistry industry

BASF was recognised for its efforts to build a more diverse workforce by prioritising inclusivity in recruitment and retention practices. BASF developed programs specifically designed to attract and support women and people from underrepresented backgrounds in the chemistry industry. They also focused on fostering a more inclusive workplace culture, ensuring that every employee, regardless of their background, feels valued and supported. BASF's approach is a great example of how tailored strategies can enhance diversity within a traditionally male-dominated industry.

[Read the full case study](#)



Finalist: SNF Australia – DEI in the manufacturing sector

SNF Australia's efforts to integrate DEI into their operations earned them recognition as a finalist. The company implemented a range of initiatives aimed at improving gender balance within its workforce and providing opportunities for people from diverse cultural backgrounds. SNF Australia has created a more innovative and dynamic workplace, setting an example for others in the manufacturing sector.

[Read the full case study](#)



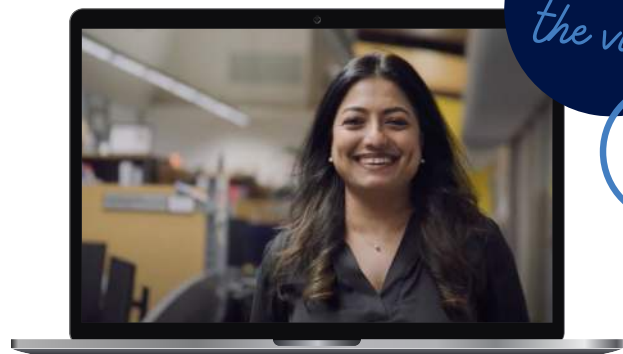
Watch the video



Finalist: DuluxGroup – A top-down approach to driving diversity

DuluxGroup stood out for its strong, top-down commitment to diversity and inclusion. The company took a proactive approach, ensuring that its leadership team not only supports DEI initiatives but actively drives them throughout the organisation. DuluxGroup focuses on creating pathways for underrepresented groups to advance in their careers, including women and people from diverse cultural backgrounds. Their structured, strategic approach to DEI is seen as a model for the entire industry, demonstrating that leadership commitment is crucial for achieving long-term change.

[Read the full case study](#)



Watch the video



Driving DEI through knowledge sharing: Webinars for Chemistry Australia members

Jobsbank also delivered a series of webinars to support members in their journey toward creating more inclusive workplaces. These webinars were designed to offer practical guidance and expert insights on how businesses in the chemical industry can integrate diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) into their operations.

The webinar series covered various topics, including strategies to fill workforce shortages, women in the workforce, understanding social procurement and building a diverse and inclusive organisation.



Partnering with NESAs to promote inclusive employment

For the third year, we partnered with the National Employment Services Association (NESA) to advance our shared mission of promoting inclusive employment across Australia. As the peak body for employment service providers, NESA plays a critical role in helping people—especially those from underrepresented groups—secure meaningful work.

NESA's annual conference brought together a dynamic ecosystem of industry leaders to share best practices, advocate for inclusive hiring, and champion sustainable employment initiatives.

On the first day of the conference, Jobbank delivered a workshop on co-design principles when working within the employment sector. The session provided insights into supporting underrepresented groups to be more involved in processes that they participate in and offered practical tools for creating inclusion.

Jobbank also proudly sponsored the NESA Excellence Awards, recognising outstanding achievements in the employment services sector. These awards highlight individuals and organisations that go above and beyond to help people, particularly those from diverse backgrounds, find meaningful employment and thrive in the workforce.



Working with Chambers of Commerce

Chambers are at the heart of business communities, offering support and guidance to help companies grow.

For us at Jobscan, working with Chambers of Commerce is a great way to reach businesses who are ready to become more inclusive.

This year, we teamed up with the Melbourne Chamber of Commerce, the Victorian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI) and the German-Australian Chamber of Industry and Commerce to spread the message of diversity and inclusion to the business leaders who can make real change.





Victorian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI) and the Chamber Change Program

Through this partnership, Jobsbank supports VCCI's efforts to provide businesses with the tools and knowledge they need to create meaningful change in their workplace cultures, ensuring that inclusion becomes a key driver of growth and innovation.

Jobsbank's CEO, Dr Karina Davis, is one of the champions of the Chamber Change program, which aims to boost gender diversity and equity while supporting sustainable business growth. The program offers practical support, tools, and resources to help women grow their careers and step into leadership roles. It also shows businesses how embracing diversity and inclusion can benefit their teams and improve how they operate, making diversity a key part of their success.

German-Australian Chamber of Industry and Commerce

Jobsbank continued its close collaboration with the German-Australian Chamber of Industry and Commerce, working together to promote diversity and inclusion in the business community. This partnership is essential in helping businesses address workforce challenges through practical, inclusive strategies.



Highlights of our work together:

- **Business breakfast in Melbourne:** Jobsbank co-hosted a business breakfast at our Melbourne office, where we explored how businesses can bridge workforce gaps through inclusive hiring. Backed by real-world case studies, the session offered practical advice on how companies can expand their talent pool by embracing diversity.
- **Spring Lounge event:** At the Chamber's Spring Lounge event, held at Veriu Queen Victoria Market, our CEO, Dr. Karina Davis, gave a talk on 'The S in ESG', focusing on the social side of environmental, social, and governance (ESG) practices. The event provided a valuable opportunity for attendees to network and consider how inclusion can drive better business outcomes.

Our place-based approach

This year, we introduced a place-based approach to ensure our programs are more tailored and effective for each community. Different regions face different challenges and require different solutions built around local needs.

Involving local voices in decision-making helps make diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts relevant and sustainable in the long run—it gives the community ownership over shaping and maintaining the outcomes.

One of our key focus areas has been Gippsland. The region is undergoing major shifts in its workforce. There are and will be enormous job opportunities with the growth of new industries such as renewable energy, agriculture, and tourism, other more traditional industries like coal mining and timber are declining.

The region has other challenges, including intergenerational disadvantage, youth unemployment, access to training, shortages in healthcare, aged care, and education.

By working closely with community leaders, we saw how important it is to be 'on the ground' to build trust with businesses, government, and local groups. We also saw how local knowledge also increases the opportunities for local solutions. Towards the end of the financial year, we appointed Jane Anderson as our director for Gippsland. Jane, a trusted community leader and advocate for equity, brings deep local knowledge to lead our work in the region.

Over the next twelve months, our Gippsland lead with the support of the Melbourne team will help drive social change and create sustainable employment opportunities.



Giving businesses the tools for diversity and inclusion

This year, we focused on equipping businesses with the tools they need to create welcoming, diverse, and flexible workplaces. From our [Lunch & Learn](#) series to practical [webinars](#) and the launch of [Getting it Right Season 2](#), we've worked hard to make diversity and inclusion easier to understand and put into action.

Building an inclusive workplace is about real change that benefits everyone. Whether you're an HR manager or leading a small business, having the right support makes all the difference. That's why we've developed resources, delivered training, and sparked conversations to help organisations close workforce gaps and foster diversity in meaningful ways.

The **Jobsbank Resource Centre** has been a key part of this effort. Designed to give businesses practical tools for DEI, the Resource Centre is full of guides and templates that anyone can use to make real changes today, whether it's navigating social procurement or building a more inclusive team.

On top of that, our **webinars** and **workshops** have been hugely popular, offering employers direct access to experts in the field. These sessions provide actionable insights that businesses can use immediately to improve their practices.

A major highlight this year has been our [Lunch and Learn series](#), launched in May. These sessions brought together organisations to explore topics like workforce gaps, social procurement, and building inclusive workplaces. Whether online or in-person, these discussions sparked fresh ideas on how to tackle diversity challenges and we're looking forward to more sessions next year.

We also launched [Getting it Right Season 2](#), our podcast exploring the do's and don'ts of inclusive workplaces. Hosted by award-winning journalist Rae Johnston, this season featured practical tips and insights from experts like Andrea Ho and Lisa Annesse, covering everything from unconscious bias to flexible working—giving listeners real-world advice they can apply to their own workplaces.



Looking ahead: 2025 and beyond

Jobsbank still has a big job to do.

There are large skill gaps in many industries across the nation, while at the same time, there are close to three million people who are either unemployed or under-employed. There are opportunities to match some of the people who are unemployed or under-employed to those roles. It is why we exist.

But this doesn't happen with the click of a finger, so we will continue to advocate for and build awareness of the opportunities a diverse, equitable and inclusive workforce offers businesses by continuing to run events, creating more content for our Resource Centre, including practical guides and case studies. We will also continue to bring industry and suppliers together to open doors to the opportunities available.

Our place-based approach will continue to mature as we further build our base in Gippsland, working with business and the community to ensure new opportunities benefit the broader community. Our Gippsland Director will continue engaging with the local Chambers of Commerce and industry while also supporting partners like Gippsland Women's Health in their work and research.

We will continue to provide advice to different levels of government on how they can broaden the benefits of their project expenditure on a wider workforce by focusing on vulnerable cohorts. We will also continue to build and evolve our knowledge base with our practical research projects such as one we have embarked on with NORTHLink which will provide us with real world experience and knowledge from a cross-section of industries.

We will also continue to focus our work with industries and sectors which we know are going to grow, such as the clean energy sector and infrastructure projects, working with businesses of all different sizes.

There are so many opportunities and so much good we can do together. Stay tuned.

Our Board



Claire Ferres Miles | Board Chair



Sam Sondhi | Director and Deputy Chair, Member of the Finance, Risk and Audit Committee



Justine Moss | Director, Member of the Business Development and Strategy Committee



Jim Hilaris | Director, Chair of the Finance, Risk and Audit Committee

The Jobsbank Board and team would like to thank the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions for their support and continued commitment over the past year.

Our team



Dr Karina Davis | CEO



Michelle Cunningham | Director, Commercial & Corporate Services



John Deppe | Director, Business Engagement

Our team



Merita Tabain | Director,
Stakeholders & Advocacy



Margaret Portelli |
Head of Finance



Sophia Fatouros | Manager,
Communications, Marketing
& Evaluation



Leigh Jones | Manager,
Digital & Innovation



Emily King | Manager,
Client Solutions



Marion Olen | Manager,
Client Solutions



Alicia White | Manager,
Client Solutions



Danielle Kutchel | Advisor,
Marketing & Communications



Hilarin Mendis |
Financial Accountant



Taylor Burge |
Executive Assistant

With thanks to the valuable
contributions of team members that
supported us throughout the year.



Jobsbank[®]

Level 7/179 Queen Street
Melbourne VIC 3000

info@jobsbank.org.au
jobsbank.org.au

ABN 37 633 508 675