

Annual Report

FY2024-25



Jobsbank®

The **Fair** Co.®



Acknowledgement of Country

At The Fair Co., we acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the lands across Australia where we work, live and play.

We pay our respects to Elders past and present and recognise their enduring care for Country over millennia. This always was and always will be Aboriginal land.

Fairness is at the heart of what we do, and we're committed to learning from First Nations peoples as we work together to build a more inclusive and brighter future.

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Explanatory note

Several projects and programs undertaken during the FY2024-25 were initiated and/or delivered while we were operating under our original 'Jobsbank' name. For the sake of consistency across this Annual Report, the organisation will be referred to as 'The Fair Co.' throughout.

Welcome



From the Chair and the CEO



This Annual Report is an opportunity for us to reflect on our collective achievements in the knowledge that we're charting a very different course in the year ahead.

After a year of significant change, the organisation has established the right foundations for success as a for-purpose consultancy that advises government agencies, statutory authorities and employers on how to achieve their social procurement and workforce inclusion goals.

Highlights for FY2024–25 include:

- a refreshed strategy
- new brand and trading name
- a shift from reliance on grant funding
- new products and services in market
- certification as a social enterprise
- People and Planet First verification.

We appreciate the support received from partners, allies and customers as we transformed the organisation and got on with building our business. We are grateful for the contribution of Karina Davis, the former CEO of Jobbank.

The people who helped bring Jobbank to life in 2019 have consistently reminded us that this transformation has successfully returned us to our original purpose.

Our vision is a world where everyone gets the opportunity to thrive through meaningful work.

It's so important that organisations understand 'the why.' We're absolutely committed to creating a just and fair society where prosperity is shared.

We're deeply grateful to the loyal, capable and hardworking team at The Fair Co. The Board and staff have worked diligently together to ensure that The Fair Co. will go from strength to strength in 2025–26.

Our business is growing because there's a need for 'fairness.' Maybe one day our vision will be realised – in the meantime, The Fair Co. has work to do.

Daniel Findley
Chair

Chris Buckingham
CEO

Meet The Fair Co.

The Fair Co. is a certified social enterprise, registered charity and People and Planet First-verified organisation. We're a for-purpose consultancy that specialises in social procurement and inclusive employment.


Building on the legacy of Jobscan, we help employers navigate evolving standards, government policies and frameworks to create inclusive workplaces and maximise social procurement outcomes.

As trusted advisors, we work across government, the private sector and social enterprises in Victoria and beyond. We help our clients meet regulatory requirements, grow supply chain capability and turn purchasing into a tool for social impact.

Our team has deep expertise in the Victorian Social Procurement Framework (SPF), Local Jobs First Policy and the Building Equality Policy.

As a for-purpose consultancy, we focus on what matters most: delivering real value for businesses and communities. And in every collaboration, every challenge we tackle and every solution we deliver, we're guided by fairness. It's the principle that connects our purpose to the impact we help create.





“Your team’s support has been invaluable in reaching this stage, getting comfortable to complete the work around meeting our obligatory requirements.”

Project Lead, MREH.

Impact Story 1

Melbourne Renewable Energy Hub (MREH)

Client: Samsung Genus Joint Venture

Sector: Energy transition

The big picture:

The Samsung C&T Corporation and Genus Group joint venture was awarded three contracts for the engineering, procurement, construction and commissioning for Phase 1 of the MREH located 25km northwest of Melbourne. Once completed, it will be one of the biggest battery energy storage systems (BESS) in the world.

The challenge:

As lead contractors on MREH, the joint venture needed to meet ambitious social procurement and inclusion targets under the Victorian Social Procurement Framework for this \$200 million combined project.

Our role:

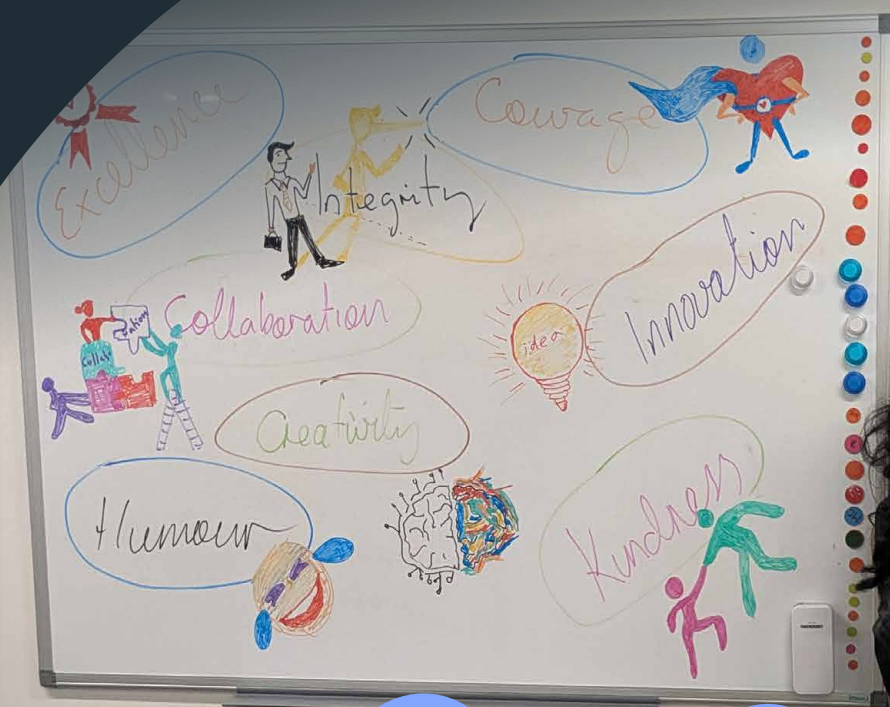
Working alongside the project team, we:

- clarified obligations under multiple policies (Social Procurement Framework, Building Equality and Local Jobs First)
- developed a focused action plan tailored to the project’s pace and scope
- supported Aboriginal procurement and social enterprise engagement
- strengthened internal systems for tracking and reporting.

The impact:

- More than a dozen supplier introductions facilitated
- Workforce connections brokered
- Reporting process sharpened
- Future collaborations marked with other new energy clients

Highlights



Highlights

of FY2024–25

The 2024–25 financial year marked a significant milestone for the organisation. It was a year of transition, strategic change and a new direction that laid the foundations for The Fair Co.

Over the year, Jobbank continued its role as a Victorian Government-funded entity delivering key services, projects and research aligned with the Victorian Social Procurement Framework – the policy that guides how the Victorian Government embeds social impact in its purchasing and commissioning

Alongside business-as-usual activities, we focused on product development, speaking engagements, policy advocacy and service provision to industries and associations across Victoria. Central to this work, was defining and expressing our future role in making Australian workplaces fairer for everyone.

The transformation from Jobbank to The Fair Co. has created an independent, for-purpose consultancy committed to sustainable and accessible social procurement and inclusive employment.

We help employers turn good intent into real outcomes. Now more than ever, our work aligns with our original values and purpose.



July 2024

After a 3-year collaboration with the Good Work Research Group, the first findings from its ambitious project Accessing hidden talent to improve organisational outcomes were published. The report supported by the Australian Research Council and developed in collaboration with Asuria, Jobs Victoria, and Social Ventures Australia, highlights the significant benefits and challenges associated with employing hidden talent groups.

July 2024

Signed a collaborative service agreement with Gippsland Women's Health to undertake an evaluation of its gender equity in the energy sector mentorship program.

See Impact story #3.

September 2024

Engaged by Figurehead Construction to provide advisory services and training to assist the company in meeting social procurement and employment inclusivity policies for undertaking larger government infrastructure projects. **See Impact story #4.**

November 2024

Created an evaluation framework and conducted an impact report on the first 5 years of our organisation – to leverage our learning, lay the foundation of The Fair Co. and prioritise our goals.

September 2024

Presented 2 x Chemistry Australia webinars – Championing Equality: Women in the Workforce and Understanding Social Procurement.

September 2024

Presented at the 2024 Gippsland Clean Energy Conference (GNEC).

July 2024

Welcomed two new Board members – Daniel Findley and Emilie van de Graaff.

July 2024

Commenced work with the Samsung C&T Corporation and Genus Group joint venture for the Melbourne Renewable Energy Hub (MREH) to support social procurement and inclusion targets.

See Impact story #1.

September 2024

Participated in the Employer Roundtable at Inclusive Employment in Paramedicine, Patient Transport and Health event.

October 2024

Presented on inclusive workforces at the Annual Victorian Major Projects Conference 2024 – the state's largest infrastructure conference.

November 2024

Participated in a series of DJSIR Jobs Victoria Mentor COP workshops – in Greater Dandenong, Hume, Shepparton, Brimbank and Morwell.

November 2024

Released Social Procurement in Victoria – a research collaboration with Swinburne University of Technology evaluating how social procurement is transforming industries and identifying barriers to be overcome. The resulting report highlighted the growing adoption of social procurement, the strengths of Victoria's Social Procurement Framework (SPF) and areas for improvement.



December 2024

Attended and sponsored the Kinaway 2024 Aboriginal Business Awards as part of our ongoing commitment to support Aboriginal-led businesses and Aboriginal employment opportunities.



May 2024

Sponsored the Chemistry Australia Workplace Inclusion Award



March 2025

Hosted a webinar on 'Gender Equity in the Workplace' as part of International Women's Day.



April 2025

Good Market Approved certification attained

June 2025

Launched The Case for Common Sense and Decency: The Fair Co. & NORTH Link Research Report at a Committee for Melbourne Leadership Lunch and workshop attended by the Hon. Colin Brooks, Minister for Industry & Advanced Manufacturing and Minister for Creative Industries. The first-of-its-kind report highlights the spread of inclusive workforce policies and practices across manufacturing sector, predominantly Melbourne's North.

See Impact Story #2.

February 2025

Hosted the Gippsland Innovation Breakfast in Morwell and presented on social procurement.

June 2025

Launched our rebranded and transformed business – from Jobsbank to The Fair Co. – reflecting a clearer focus and a bigger ambition: to help employers build fairer workplaces, deliver real social impact and unlock opportunity through the way they hire and buy.

March 2025

Chris Buckingham appointed as the new CEO.



March 2025

CEO was interviewed and featured in an ABC news article: Energy businesses urged to hire diverse workforce to reach net zero goals.

March 2025

Developed and launched The Social Procurement Health Check and the Workplace Inclusion Health Check – free self-assessment tools accessible via the Fair Co. website.



May 2025

People and Planet First verification



Social Traders social enterprise certification received

The Transformation



Becoming The Fair Co.



Jobsbank was originally established to help businesses implement DEI practices and social procurement – primarily through research, policy and advocacy, with limited advisory services. By addressing the root causes of non-inclusive employment, Jobsbank helped reposition Victoria as a place where inclusive employment is the norm.

Over time, our activities shifted in response to changing government priorities and the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Our core mission remained the same: to advance DEI and social procurement practices for Victorian employers.

In early 2025, the organisation made a conscious decision to move to a consultancy model.

New leadership, renewed direction

In March 2025, Jobsbank began a process of reflection, strategic planning and transition to become The Fair Co.

With the appointment of new CEO, Chris Buckingham – and the formation of a reinvigorated team combining new and existing staff – The Fair Co. set out to build on Jobsbank's strong foundations and redefine its future direction with a more powerful social purpose.



Our vision

A world where everyone gets the opportunity to thrive through meaningful work.

Our purpose

Help organisations create inclusive workplaces and maximise social procurement outcomes.



Why the change?

The name change with a new visual identity represents far more than a rebranding opportunity. Feedback from stakeholders revealed that the Jobsbank name did not reflect what we do.

The Fair Co. is a name that literally defines the work we do – helping make workplaces, employment opportunities and procurement practices fairer for everyone.

The change also marked the transition from a government-funded operational model to an independent, not-for-profit, fee-for-service social enterprise.

While The Fair Co. remains committed to Jobsbank's original values and goals, the way we fulfil our purpose has evolved. We're applying lessons learned over the past six years, building on our capabilities

and meeting a genuine demand in the market for inclusive employment and social procurement expertise.

Under The Fair Co. brand we're building new partnerships, collaborating more closely with peak bodies and focusing on growth and emerging sectors. By expanding our portfolio of products and services – while staying true to our origins – we're strengthening our role as trusted advisors

Although The Fair Co. is at the beginning of a new journey, we know that our name and renewed purpose have been widely welcomed by partners, allies and customers.

We will continue to celebrate and elevate fairness as a shared value across business, community and government.

Product Development and Consulting Services

Our focus is on helping organisations meet regulatory requirements, improve productivity and embed equity and fairness into workplace culture.



The Fair Measure®

We created The Fair Measure® – an inclusive workplace assessment and consultancy package – to help organisations strengthen their inclusion practices. It's a strategic, diagnostic approach that identifies the systems, structures and behaviours shaping workplace inclusion.

It provides best practice guidance on how to embed inclusion throughout a business in ways that boosts performance, supports people and delivers measurable business results.

Delivered over 6 – 12 weeks, the process is tailored to each organisation's needs and includes working closely with teams to build shared ownership and deliver a practical roadmap with ongoing support.

Outcomes for businesses include:

- attracting talent to fill workforce gaps
- increased engagement and reduction in employee turnover
- smarter innovation and strategic differentiation
- reduced legal and reputational risk
- improved psychological safety and wellbeing
- increased productivity and team performance
- enhanced brand reputation as a fair and future-ready employer of choice.



Health checks


In March, we launched two free user-friendly online tools: The Social Procurement Health Check and the Workplace Inclusion Health Check. These 5-minute surveys help organisations assess current practices and identify practical steps to improve.

The initial online survey introduces organisations to the consultancy services The Fair Co. offers. For those opting into a full assessment, our team conducts on-site

visits to understand specific obligations and opportunities, then tailors a roadmap to deliver sustainable, measurable results that create business, social and economic value.

A graphic for the Social Procurement Health Check. It features a solid orange background. On the left, there is a stylized, light orange silhouette of a person with their arms raised in a celebratory or inclusive gesture. The text 'Social Procurement Health Check' is written in a dark, sans-serif font, centered on the right side of the graphic.

Social
Procurement
Health Check

A graphic for the Workplace Inclusion Health Check. It features a solid blue background. On the right, there is a stylized, light blue silhouette of a person with their arms raised in a celebratory or inclusive gesture. The text 'Workplace Inclusion Health Check' is written in a dark, sans-serif font, centered on the left side of the graphic.

Workplace
Inclusion
Health Check

Training suite

We began developing a suite of training modules to support organisations to evolve and implement their individual social procurement principles and inclusive workplace culture.

Three modules will be rolled out during FY2025-26:

1. Workplace Inclusion Fundamentals: introduces key concepts, explores equity vs equality and highlights the benefits of inclusion
2. Bias and Belonging: builds awareness of bias and microaggressions and provides tools for allyship and self-awareness
3. Inclusion and Workplace Culture: focuses on inclusive leadership, psychological safety and practical strategies for embedding inclusion into team dynamics and policy.



Impact Story 2

The Case for Common Sense and Decency

Client: NORTH Link

Sector: Peak body/
Economic development
association

The big picture:

Melbourne's north is home to a vibrant, diverse manufacturing sector, but after COVID-19, many SMEs were doing it tough. NORTH Link wanted to understand how inclusive practices were faring across the region's industrial heartland and what could be done to strengthen them.

The challenge:

With a mix of international, family-owned, ASX-listed and overseas-owned manufacturers, NORTH Link needed a clear picture of workforce composition, recruitment practices and inclusion challenges, especially in traditionally male-dominated sectors.

Our role:

We partnered with NORTH Link to design and deliver a targeted research project, using face-to-face and online surveys across 12 manufacturers in subsectors including:

- caravans (automotive)
- commercial joinery
- componentry
- food
- health & pharmaceuticals
- metal fabrication
- tools.

We gathered insights into how inclusion shows up — and where it falls short.

The impact:

The result was a first-of-its-kind report: The Case for Common Sense and Decency. It maps the spread of inclusive workforce policies across Melbourne's north and highlights key gaps. The report calls for:

- more visible career pathways for women and CALD communities
- inclusive education and training
- greater diversity in leadership
- stronger accountability and tracking.

It's a roadmap for change, and a call to action for manufacturers ready to lead with fairness.

Our Partnerships

Impact through engagement





Our longstanding, mutually beneficial relationship with the German Australian Chamber of Industry and Commerce (AHK) provides speaking opportunities and direct engagement with German businesses operating in Australia. Through this partnership, we support companies seeking to work on Australian government contracts and align with the Victorian Social Procurement Framework SPF and other inclusive employment policies



Our ongoing partnership with Chemistry Australia (CA) brings diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) to the forefront of industry conversation. Through our sponsorship of the DEI Award at the annual awards night, we help spotlight inclusive leadership and practice across the sector. The close working relationship also enables us to educate and inform the sector on inclusive employment and social procurement best practice.



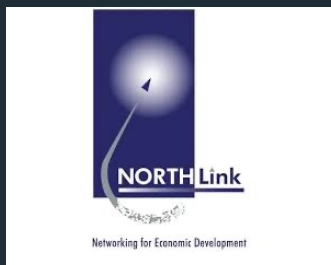
Partnering with Committee for Melbourne has opened doors to deeper engagement with large organisations across multiple sectors and build meaningful relationships. In FY2024-25, in conjunction with Committee for Melbourne we sponsored the Annual Parliamentary Drinks with the Hon. Colin Brooks, Minister for Industry and Advanced Manufacturing and Minister for Creative Industries to announce the launch of the Fair Co. We also jointly hosted a leadership lunch to launch our collaborative research with NORTH Link



The Fair Co. partnered with GWH to deliver an evaluation report on its Women in Energy program. This relationship has since evolved into a broader collaboration focused on engaging the Gippsland community in inclusive employment and social procurement, with a more holistic and long-term approach



Our strategic partnership with Kinaway, the peak body representing Aboriginal businesses in Victoria, has established a strong pipeline for connection, education and opportunity. Through this relationship, we're able to engage with high-performing Aboriginal businesses across a range of industries, supporting inclusive employment and strengthening the impact of social procurement



The Fair Co. has enjoyed a long and productive partnership with NORTH Link – a business network and regional economic development advocacy group representing Melbourne's northern region. Its membership includes local councils, tertiary education institutions, Melbourne airport, healthcare organisations and other key industries.

Together, we've delivered impactful work, including the joint release of The Case for Common Sense and Decency: The Fair Co. & NORTH Link Research Report (2025).



Our partnership with Swinburne University of Technology focused on joint research evaluating how social procurement is transforming industries and identifying barriers to be overcome.

Our Research

The Fair Co. led, collaborated on and/or drove the following research projects in FY2024–25:

1. Accessing hidden talent to improve organisational outcomes research report – Good Work Research Group & The Fair Co (2024).
2. The Case for Common Sense and Decency: The Fair Co. & NORTH Link Research Report (2025).
3. Women in Energy Program Evaluation Report: The Fair Co. & FTI Consulting (2025).
4. Creating sustainable employment for disadvantaged and vulnerable groups: Ongoing research project led by Prof. Jo Ingold from Australian Catholic University (ACU) on employment services and workplace inclusion – administered by Deakin University.
5. Collaborated with Swinburne University of Technology on Social Procurement in Victoria (2024) – a research report that evaluates how social procurement is transforming industries and the barriers which need to be overcome to embed social procurement across the board.



Looking Ahead

Long-term Vision

We exist to solve an endemic challenge in social procurement and inclusive employment – equipping organisations with the tools and knowledge to create fairer, more equitable systems. Our existence is a sign that the current system still needs work. Until Australian businesses consistently adopt and deliver best practice outcomes, we will continue to provide services, advocate for fairer workplaces and contribute to policy development.



Impact Story 3

Women in Energy Program Evaluation Report



Client: Gippsland Women's Health (GWH) initiative

Sector: Healthcare

The big picture:

Gippsland Women's Health is leading the charge for gender equity across the region and saw a clear gap in employment outcomes for women in the energy sector. With government funding, it launched the Women in Energy leadership development program to support career progression and build networks through mentoring.

The challenge:

GWH needed to understand how well the program worked — and what lessons could be applied to other industries. That meant a robust evaluation, grounded in participant experience and focused on real-world impact.

Our role:

We teamed up with First Person Consulting to deliver a detailed evaluation. Through surveys, interviews and collaboration with participants, we explored:

- how the program supported career development
- what barriers still exist for women in energy
- how perceptions and confidence shape participation.

The impact:

The evaluation revealed key insights:

- Future programs should actively engage CEOs, senior leaders and men to shift workplace culture
- Careers in male-dominated industries are still seen as “not for women,” especially among younger cohorts
- Representation matters and the lack of women in leadership feeds into low confidence and limited engagement.

The report recommended stronger industry education, targeted outreach to young women (including at school level) and more visible career pathways. Off the back of this work, we've already begun collaborating with GWH on broader inclusion initiatives, including the Male Champions for Change program.



Creating Impact, Together

At The Fair Co., we work alongside businesses, changemakers and sector leaders who are committed to building fairer systems, whether through inclusive employment, social procurement or broader social impact initiatives.

We value collaboration with those who share our goal: creating workplaces and supply chains grounded in fairness, equity and purpose. Whether you're meeting obligation, driving innovation or shaping the future of your sector, we're here as a trusted partner, offering expertise, support and a practical approach to help turn good intent into meaningful outcomes.



Our Board



Daniel Findley
Board Chair



Samantha Read
Deputy Chair



Vishaal Kishore
Board Member



Claire Ferres Miles
Board Member



Emilie van de Graaff
Board Member



Kei Ho
Board Member



Impact Story 4

Future Proofing with Purpose

Client: Figurehead Construction

Sector: Building & infrastructure

The big picture:

In Victoria, construction companies bidding for government projects over \$20 million must meet strict social procurement and inclusion requirements. But forward-thinking businesses aren't waiting, even when their tenders and projects fall under the \$20 million threshold. They're getting SPF-ready now.

The challenge:

Figurehead Construction, a Melbourne-based firm with 80 employees, wanted to position itself for larger government infrastructure tenders. To do that, it needed to understand and apply the Victorian Social Procurement Framework, Local Jobs First policy and Building Equality policy, and build internal capability to deliver.

Our role:

We delivered a tailored training session for Figurehead's team, helping it:

- understand key policy requirements
- reposition their business for larger tenders
- prepare a competitive bid for a \$15 million project in Belgrave.

The impact:

With our guidance, Figurehead adopted SPF principles across its operations, even on smaller projects. The result? A successful bid for the \$15 million Belgrave project and a stronger foundation for future growth.

Give it a Fair Go

If your organisation is looking to strengthen social procurement or build a more inclusive workforce, we're here to help.

The Fair Co.®

Contact us



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