

The Bridge News

December 2024



Our Strategy 2024-2029



Our Purpose

Empowering lives and inspiring futures by providing holistic support to people with disabilities



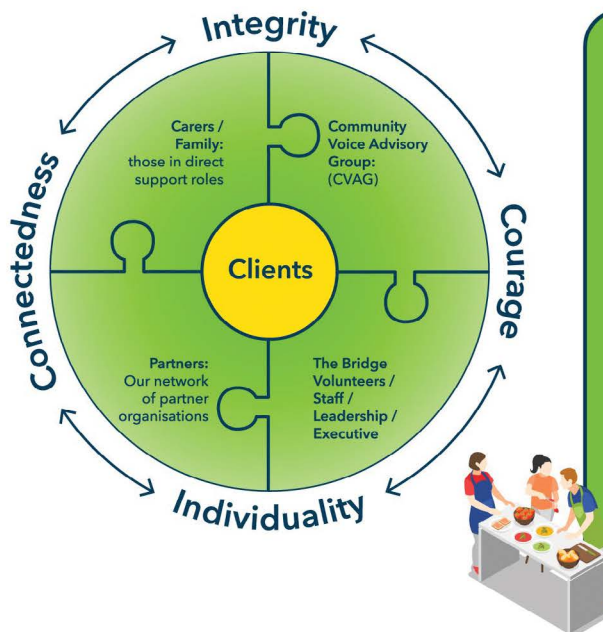
Our Mission

Supporting and advocating for individuals through education, employment, life experiences, social and community connections



Our Vision

A connected society where people of all abilities achieve their full potential



Key Priorities

- Provide services to achieve a greater impact and client experience
- Grow our partnerships to build and increase our community impact
- Be an employer of choice in the disability sector
- Ongoing business transformation to enable growth
- Expand and develop our Social Enterprise and open employment services

Strategic Intent

- Growth
To provide more services to more people
- Lived Experience
Listening to the voices of clients, families and carers
- Our Commitment
To provide unique services through our community based culture
- Collaboration
Ongoing input from our partners, staff and leadership to deliver outstanding services

A new strategic direction for The Bridge

The Bridge is excited to unveil its new Strategic Plan for 2024-2029. Following an open strategy process including sessions with our clients, carers, staff and business partners, we've crafted a dynamic roadmap for the future.

With this combined input we have been able to come up with agreed priorities to take The Bridge forward into the future and remain a leading provider of services and supports and a sought-after employer as well.

Pictured is our strategy on a page which includes our purpose, mission and vision. Our clients remain at the centre of everything we do.

This crucial blueprint will guide us over the next five years, ensuring alignment with our growth goals and the evolving needs of those we support.





Message from the CEO

Since our last newsletter we have had some amazing developments across The Bridge. We finalised our strategic direction for 2024-2029 which will enable us to achieve an even greater impact for the people and communities we support.

Shortly after, we merged with Ivanhoe Diamond Valley (IDV) to ensure services could continue for the clients and their carers and be provided by the same staff, in the same location in much the same way. We also developed a partnership with Afford to ensure that supported employees from their Carrum Downs site could continue to work after the site closed in early October.

The Bridge is expanding in line with our purpose – empowering lives and inspiring futures by providing holistic support to people with disabilities.

We will remain vigilant to ensure the quality and safety of the services we provide is maintained and keep working hard to ensure our team is reliable and kind and really committed to supporting people to achieve their goals. As your trusted partner we will continue to provide you with updates on NDIS development through our regular email updates and 6 monthly NDIS Lunch and Learn sessions.

In the new year our Carers Support Project kicks off and we will be recruiting for clients/carers to join our Community Voice Advisory Group. If you would like further information please email info@thebridgeinc.org.au.

We hope you enjoy this edition of our newsletter which includes stories from all our service areas and details of the events we have celebrated over the last 6 months.

Thanks for your ongoing support of The Bridge, with our dedicated Board, Executive and amazing frontline service team, the future looks bright for the people we support!

The Bridge has expanded!

The Bridge has joined forces with IDV, a respected disability provider in Melbourne's North. Through this merger, we've expanded our services to reach and support even more people throughout Melbourne. Operating under the name of The Bridge Inc, this collaboration brought together two organisations with a shared passion for providing exceptional care and support to individuals with disabilities. This partnership isn't just about increasing our impact by growing our services; it's about creating new opportunities for dedicated workers in the disability sector.

This newly merged organisation will deliver contemporary, person-centred and sustainable services for the future across more locations. It will also open fresh employment opportunities for the disability sector workforce while significantly enhancing the quality of life for those within the disability community.

The Bridge now has 18 sites across North and Southeast Melbourne offering quality services in one-to-one support, day services, supported employment, transition to employment services (SLES), Disability Employment Services, specialised accommodation, and recreation/respite.

Together as The Bridge, we are committed to making a meaningful difference and lasting social and community impact.



Bridge 2 Connect Carers Program

We have been awarded a grant from Carers Victoria funded by the Victorian Government under the Connecting Carers in their Community Small Grant Program. This grant will allow us to provide more support and resources to unpaid carers in our community.

The **Bridge 2 Connect Carers**, a fresh initiative for 2025, will feature monthly catchups within your neighbourhood. We are seeking your input to shape the topics and activities that matter most to you. This program is tailored to suit the needs of carers of someone with a disability and is reflective of any cultural considerations they have.

Carers can get connected by:

- **Connecting socially** - feel a sense of belonging in the community and liaising with other carers
- **Accessing valuable resources** - discover the tools and support available
- **Exploring future options** - like jobs, mentorship, or volunteering

Reach out to us at info@thebridgeinc.org.au or call on 03 7810 8555 to express interest in joining this program. If needed interpreting/translation services are available to assist.



Celebrating International Day of People with Disabilities

What a day of celebrations! Our sites and services came together to celebrate International Day of People with Disabilities (IDPwD) with a series of exciting events.

Connects Day Service sites across the Southeast gathered at our Webb Street Centre in Narre Warren for a delightful lunch prepared by the Men's Club. Meanwhile, our hardworking Supported Employees at the The Bridge Works and 2Works warehouses in Dandenong took a well-earned break to enjoy a BBQ and karaoke.

We also exhibited at the TRAC event in Thomastown, close to The Bridge North sites. Partnering with myDRIVESCHOOL, which offers 'learn to drive' simulators at our Pakenham and Dandenong Youth Jobs Now sites, we provided attendees with the chance to test their driving skills. Additionally, we set up a stand at the Cardinia Life Centre in Pakenham, which hosted its own public IDPwD celebration.

It was such a fun day aimed at increasing public awareness, understanding and acceptance of people with disability. A true celebration of our clients and staff at The Bridge.



Lunch and Learn with The Bridge

Mary-Jane Stolp, CEO, The Bridge hosted an engaging online 'Lunch and Learn' session, focussing on the latest NDIS changes for clients and carers.

This interactive session offered insights into the newest NDIS changes since October 2024, clarified the complexities of PACE (the new planning approach which stands for 'Participant-led, Active, Collaborative, and Engaging'), and shared updates on the progress of the NDIS review recommendations. Attendees had the opportunity to submit questions beforehand and engage in real-time discussions during the session.

These Lunch and Learn sessions are designed to provide busy clients and carers with valuable industry insights during their lunch breaks and are scheduled to occur at least twice a year, with invitations sent out in advance.



Another successful interstate trip for the Getaways crew!

Our Getaways crew embarked on another successful interstate adventure, this time exploring the vibrant city of Canberra!

Highlights included visiting Questacon to see an impressive Lego exhibition, an interesting tour of Old Parliament House, a visit to the Anzac War Memorial, and a day trip to the National Zoo.

Past Getaways interstate trips have taken clients to Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania, New South Wales and now the ACT. As always, the clients and staff have an absolute blast together!

Where will our adventures take us next?



Annual Report

Read our 2024 annual report online at:
<https://thebridgeinc.org.au/about/publications>



Showtime for Dandenong Day Service clients

A truly remarkable film titled 'Big Brother' premiered at Reading Cinemas in Dandenong, crafted entirely by the talented clients of the Dandenong Day Service, who took on the roles of producers, directors, and stars.

This was an unprecedented endeavour for The Bridge, and the outcome was nothing short of spectacular. The group infused the project with their creativity, crafting the storyline, developing intriguing characters, and even adding a surprising twist at the end. The staff played a supportive role, guiding them through the filmmaking process, from understanding the basics of moviemaking to making crucial editing decisions to bring their vision to life.



Families, friends, and staff from The Bridge came together for this special screening, and it was heartwarming to witness the clients' enthusiasm, determination, and courage as they ventured beyond their comfort zones.



Dreams come true as Hebe meets her idol Katy Perry

When the news broke that Katy Perry would be performing at the AFL Grand Final, staff at the Greensborough Hub site immediately saw an amazing chance for their client Hebe to experience her favourite singer live. After months of negotiations, staff finally secured approval from the AFL, and Hebe was invited to attend a private rehearsal at the iconic Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG).

Upon arrival, MCG staff greeted Hebe warmly and guided her to her own special section, complete with front-row seats. When Katy Perry appeared, Hebe's excitement was electric and she jumped up and waved, catching Katy's eye. To everyone's delight, Katy smiled and waved back, continuing to acknowledge Hebe throughout her performance.

It was a magical day for Hebe, whose infectious excitement spread to everyone around her.



With a little help from our friends

The transformation of the Macleod Day Service site is officially underway!

With the incredible support of Bunnings and Imagine Re-Revolution, clients and staff have begun turning Macleod's expansive outdoor areas and gardens into something truly special.

The first phase of the project, revamping the Youth Space courtyard, was impressively completed in just four hours! A heartfelt shout-out to Lisa from Bunnings and Jayne from Imagine Re-Revolution for leading the volunteer team. Stay tuned for more exciting updates in the coming months, including the unveiling of new The Bridge signage!



The Bridge Works welcomes new Supported Employees

The Bridge is committed to ensuring uninterrupted services for clients and their carers, and recently, we had the pleasure of welcoming over 20 supported employees, and their Training and Support Officers from Afford. These people were seeking alternative employment after their previous workplace closed. Thanks to the collaborative efforts of both organisations, we made this transition a reality.

Recognising the challenging situation faced by Afford's supported employees and staff, The Bridge Works team stepped up to offer them new employment opportunities. The opening of The Bridge 2Works warehouse in 2023, providing an increased capacity for more employees and an increase in social enterprise work in the future, paved the way for this beneficial partnership.

With the dedication and hard work of Afford, our Intake team, and the People & Culture team, the onboarding process for the supported employees and Team Leader from Afford was seamless and successful.

This transition not only provided a fresh work environment for everyone involved but also highlighted the incredible power of community unity and support.

This successful transition serves as a shining example of how organisations can join forces to create a social and community impact and greater variety for those seeking employment.



Driving to success at Youth Jobs Now

Congratulations to Tatjana on achieving her learner's permit! This significant milestone marks the beginning of her journey towards becoming a confident and independent driver.

With the invaluable support and motivation from her Employment Coach, Tatjana successfully completed her learner modules online. She honed her practical driving skills using the myDRIVESCHOOL simulator situated at her Youth Jobs Now site, a program designed to provide hands-on experience and build confidence behind the wheel.

This has been a long-term goal for Tatjana, who has been diligently working towards it for several months. Her determination and perseverance have paid off, and she has made it happen—fantastic job!

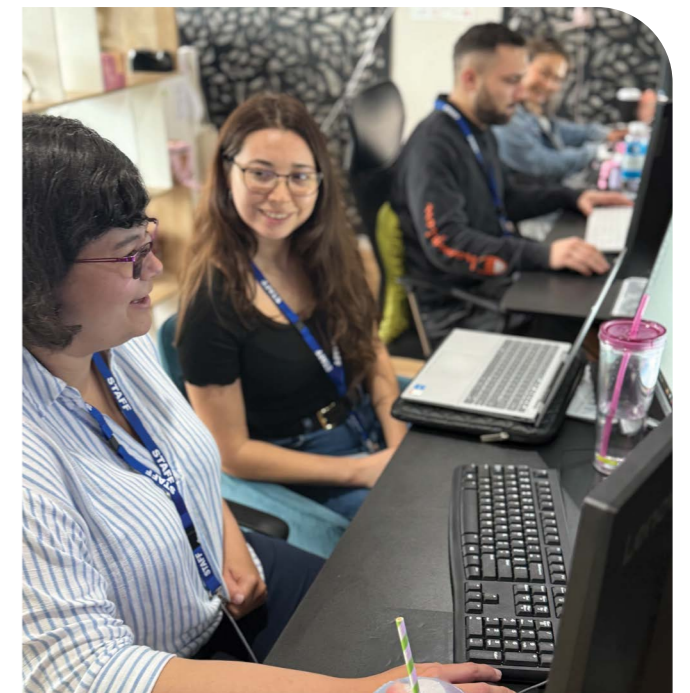


DES partners with Permalink Support Services

The Bridge Disability Employment Services (DES) would like to celebrate the successful partnership between The Bridge and Permalink Support Services. Throughout this collaboration, Permalink has been incredibly accommodating, ensuring a smooth and seamless transition of The Bridge clients into their community.

We are especially grateful to Permalink for their genuine commitment to supporting our NDIS clients. Their friendly and person-centred approach has had a profound impact on the lives of those we have placed into supported employment. By fostering a supportive and inclusive environment, Permalink has enabled our clients to thrive.


The Bridge DES looks forward to continuing this journey together which is a testament to the shared commitment to improving the lives of those whom we support to achieve their employment goals.



The Bridge Inc.

Registered Office

- Level 1, 33 Princes Highway
Dandenong VIC 3175

 (03) 8710 8555
1800 274 343

New Service Enquiries
enquiries@thebridgeinc.org.au

General Enquiries
info@thebridgeinc.org.au

Postal Address
PO Box 7030
Dandenong VIC 3175

The Bridge Inc. is a
registered NDIS provider




thebridgeinc.org.au

The Bridge Connects

Main Office

- Level 1, 33 Princes Highway
Dandenong VIC 3175

 (03) 8710 8555

Getaways

Your Supports

NDIS Support Coordination
(03) 8710 8555

Day Services:

- Athol Road Day Service
69-71 Athol Road,
Springvale South VIC 3172
- Webb Street Day Service
67-69 Webb Street
Narre Warren VIC 3805
- Hub31 Dandenong
(Day Service & Youth Jobs Now)
Level 1, 31 Princes Hwy
Dandenong VIC 3175
- Beaconsfield Day Service
49 Wallace Street
Beaconsfield VIC 3807
- Stawell Street Day Service
3 Stawell Street
Cranbourne VIC 3977
- Slattery Hub
(Day Service & Youth Jobs Now)
89-91 Slattery Place
Pakenham VIC 3810
- Macleod Day Service
88 McNamara Street
Macleod VIC 3085
- Greensborough Hub
(Day Service & Step By Step
Youth Transition)
1/25 Grimshaw Street
Greensborough VIC 3088


Supported Independent Living (SIL) locations:

- 21 Chaucer Street
Bundoora VIC 3083
- 35 Fernside Avenue
Briar Hill VIC 3088
- 81 Airlie Road
Montmorency VIC 3094

The Bridge Employment

Main Office

- Level 1, 33 Princes Highway
Dandenong VIC 3175

 (03) 8710 8555

Disability Employment Services (DES)
Casey CALD Youth Employment project
School Leaver Employment Support (SLES)
/Pre-employment training - Youth Jobs Now
Supported Employment / Social Enterprise

Disability Employment Services (DES)

- Suite 8
108-120 Young Street
Frankston VIC 3199
- 4/216 Main Street
Mornington VIC 3931

Youth Jobs Now (ages 16-24) Your Job Now (ages 25+)

- Hub31 Dandenong
(Day Service & Youth Jobs Now)
Level 1, 31 Princes Hwy
Dandenong VIC 3175
- Slattery Hub
(Day Service & Youth Jobs Now)
89-91 Slattery Place
Pakenham VIC 3810
- Greensborough Hub
(Day Service & Step By Step
Youth Transition)
1/25 Grimshaw Street
Greensborough VIC 3088

The Bridge Works

- 95A Cheltenham Road
Dandenong VIC 3175

The Bridge 2Works

- 93B Cheltenham Road
Dandenong VIC 3175

The Bridge Works Northside

- 36 Green Street
Thomastown VIC 3074

Scan our QR code and let us know
what is working well or how we
can improve our services.



Your feedback is
important to us!