

The Bridge News

December 2025

Introducing Inclusive Employment Australia (IEA) in Monash

The Bridge now delivers the Inclusive Employment Australia (IEA) program in Pakenham, Doveton, Emerald, Narre Warren, and Koo Wee Rup.

The Bridge Employment has partnered with CoAct Connect, Australia's leading network of not-for-profit employment services organisations. Through this collaboration, The Bridge provides evidence-based, co-designed programs tailored to our local communities, while CoAct Connect drives network-wide performance and innovation. Together, we help people reach their full potential through sustained, meaningful employment.

Inclusive Employment Australia is the Government's new specialist disability employment program, which replaced Disability Employment Services (DES) on 1 November 2025. This program represents a significant shift toward flexible, personalised, and long-term support for job seekers. It champions choice and control, ensuring individuals receive the assistance they need to succeed, while fostering stronger engagement with employers to promote inclusive recruitment practices.

This milestone marks a new chapter in our commitment to create meaningful employment opportunities and stronger futures for people with disabilities.



Message from our Journalism Group

This message comes straight from the heart of our Cranbourne Day Service. Members of our client journalism group have penned a special recap of their favourite moments from the past six months and a warm welcome to our latest newsletter. We're delighted to share their voices with you.

What a fantastic six months it has been! We've loved seeing our community shine through so many incredible moments.

We celebrated International Day of People with Disability this year with other clients from The Bridge at the Narre Warren Day Service. As always, it was such a special day. We enjoyed a delicious BBQ, face painting, and most importantly, celebrated us, our friendships, and achievements.

One of our favourite highlights was watching our Rock n Roll group put all their practicing and rehearsing into action, showing off their skills at their end of year performance. Our performers were so brave as they danced the afternoon away in front of a packed house made up of family and friends.

The Noble Park Art Exhibition was a vibrant showcase of creativity, which we were proud to be a part of. We loved exploring different styles and techniques while connecting with the local arts scene.

Halloween was full of fun and laughter! We embraced the spooky spirit with costumes, decorations, and activities like pumpkin crafts and a costume parade. The festive afternoon tea was the perfect way to wrap up the day.

And of course, Circus Quirkus was unforgettable! The acrobatics, comedy, and dazzling performances created such a sensory-rich experience. The vibrant colours, music, and thrill of live entertainment brought so much joy to everyone. They are a part of The Rotary Club of Preston. A wonderful group of volunteers that give their time bringing joy to children and adults with diverse abilities and backgrounds, all while providing a safe space where we can relax and be ourselves.

Looking back at these past six months we couldn't be prouder of what we've achieved together and we hope you enjoy this newsletter.

Brought to you by our fantastic Journalism Group
Jason N, Prabh, Lee, Kaniz & Rachel



Melbourne Disability Expo 2025

The Bridge proudly participated as a Silver Sponsor at this year's Melbourne Disability Expo, held at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre. Across two inspiring days, our team connected with hundreds of attendees and highlighted how our services empower clients, carers, and industry professionals to connect, grow, and thrive.

Our interactive magic mirror photobooth stole the show, with visitors snapping fun and taking home branded photo strips as keepsakes. We also gave away 'Grow with The Bridge' eco-friendly pot plants, fidget spinners, calming slime, and special bookmarks lovingly handmade by our clients.

A proud moment was being awarded Best Booth, a recognition that reflects the compassion, professionalism, and energy our staff bring every day. We left the expo with renewed focus and appreciation, strengthened in our commitment to supporting people on their path toward independence, inclusion, and fulfilment.



Illuminate Art Show Glows with Creativity

The Illuminate Art Show was a truly unforgettable celebration of creativity and community. Held at The Bridge Macleod Day Service site, the evening displayed extraordinary artwork created by the talented clients we support. Guests had the opportunity to explore and purchase unique pieces, making the night not only inspiring but deeply meaningful.

A heartfelt thank you goes to Steph Neo, Senior Art Curator at Banyule Council, for sharing insights on the transformative power of art in bringing people together. We also extend our sincere appreciation to Cr Elizabeth Nealy (Mayor, Banyule Council), Cr Alicia Curry, Cr Mary O'Kane, and Cr Alison Champion for standing with us in championing inclusive creative expression.



Thanks to the continued generous support of Banyule City Council, select pieces from the show were later featured in a standalone exhibition at the Ivanhoe Library and Culture Hub. These works celebrated artistic expression and highlighted the positive impact creativity has on health and wellbeing.

To every artist whose work was showcased, your creativity inspires us all. Thank you for reminding us that art is something we feel, share, and celebrate together.



Staying Safe Over The Summer

During hot weather, we would like to take the opportunity to remind families about some available resources that have important information regarding:

- keeping safe in summer
- preparing your property
- how to keep cool in a heatwave

Scan the QR codes for links to further information including a fire escape plan template that can be completed to keep you safe. It covers tasks such as listing important people who can help you, smoke alarms and other fire safety equipment as well as listing a safe meeting place should an emergency require leaving a home.

If you have any concerns about your safety in the summer, please don't hesitate to contact The Bridge on **1800 274 343** who can discuss any concerns further.

In the case of an emergency, always dial 000.



Fire Escape Plan



How to cope in a Heatwave



Summer Safety Guide

Support The Bridge Every Time You Shop

The Bridge is delighted to be part of the Ritchies Community Benefit Program, an initiative that allows you to make a real difference simply by doing your everyday shopping. If you shop at Ritchies or IGA supermarkets, you can help The Bridge continue to provide vital support and opportunities for people in our community.

Getting involved is simple. Just download the Ritchies app or card and choose 'The Bridge Inc' as your organisation. Each time you shop and use your card, your purchases help us reach our goal. When our supporters collectively spend \$2,000+ in a month, Ritchies make a donation to The Bridge. With the combined efforts of our staff, clients, families, and friends, this target is well within reach.

Your participation matters. By taking this simple step, you help us create meaningful change and strengthen the programs that support our clients every day. Thank you for supporting The Bridge in a practical and impactful way.



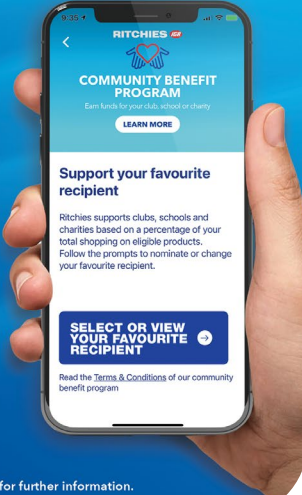
NOMINATE US TODAY

AS PART OF THE RITCHIES COMMUNITY BENEFIT PROGRAM

and help us generate extra funds.

- 1** Download or update the Ritchies Card App


- 2** Search and select our name when prompted to nominate a club, school or charity
- 3** Every time you shop at Ritchies and scan your app or card, Ritchies will contribute a percentage of the total to us*



*CONDITIONS APPLY. Go to ritchies.com.au/loyalty for further information.

Celebrating Community Impact Together

We were honoured to receive the Community Impact Award, proudly sponsored by the City of Greater Dandenong, at the Southeast Business Awards!

This recognition reflects the dedication of our team in empowering people with disabilities and those experiencing disadvantage. It's a celebration of the values that drive us every day, creating opportunities, fostering inclusion, and building stronger communities.

For more than 55 years, The Bridge has proudly provided employment, education, and social programs that empower people to thrive and contribute to their communities. Through our social enterprises at The Bridge Works, our microbusinesses including The Bridge Cleaning Crew and The Bridge Mow & Mend, our partnerships with local schools and businesses, and our Connects community services, we remain dedicated to delivering a positive collective impact in the communities we serve.



Brewing Confidence and Building Career Pathways with Your Job Now

Over the past six months, our Your Job Now (YJN) clients have been on an incredible journey of growth and achievement. The job skills building program is designed to help individuals upskill and transition confidently into the workforce and the results speak for themselves.

Barista Basics Training

Clients completed a successful two-day Barista Basics course with Jesuit Community College. From learning the art of coffee-making to mastering customer service skills, this training was a fantastic step toward hospitality careers. A huge thank you to Jesuit Community College for hosting us, and congratulations to all clients for their hard work and enthusiasm.

Hands-On Café Experience

Our clients also had the amazing opportunity to gain real-world experience at Lanterns Viet Kitchen in Clyde North. The generous team welcomed our clients by offering guidance and support while teaching the fast-paced operations of a thriving café. This experience gave clients a true taste of what it means to work in hospitality.

Warehouse Skills at The Bridge Works

Clients spent time at The Bridge Works in Dandenong for a hands-on placement in a warehouse setting. They learned practical skills such as labelling, packing, counting, and pallet stacking across production lines.

Training sessions covered essential topics like manual handling, OH&S, and our Code of Conduct. On their final day, each client received a certificate of completion, a testament to their commitment and progress.

If you would like to join the YJN program and take the next step towards your future, get in touch with our team at enquiries@thebridgeinc.org.au



Doing Business For Good: One Sustainable Clean at a Time

The Bridge Cleaning Crew has been hard at work delivering exceptional results for our customers. Recently, this team of supported employees completed a major job; scrubbing and polishing a 100sqm concrete floor, as well as a full end-of-lease clean for a 500sqm office in Dandenong. The customer was thrilled with the outcome!

What makes these achievements even more meaningful is our commitment to sustainability. The Bridge Cleaning Crew uses the eWater system, a powerful cleaning solution that is non-toxic, biodegradable, and tough on mess without leaving harmful chemicals behind. By choosing products like these, we proudly demonstrate our dedication to partnering with businesses that share our vision of doing business for good while protecting the planet.

Ready to make your next clean sustainable? Book The Bridge Cleaning Crew for your commercial space today. Contact us at socialenterprise@thebridgeinc.org.au



New Wellness & Creativity Group Program

Our Your Supports team launched an exciting new Wellness and Creativity Group program and what an inspiring start it's been!

From the very first session, clients embraced the opportunity to explore activities that nurture both mind and body. The program offers a diverse mix of experiences, including relaxing yoga, practical computer skills, and creative outlets all designed to build confidence and spark joy. Just as importantly, these sessions create a welcoming space for clients to form new friendships and feel part of a supportive community.

Seeing clients connect and learn together reminds us why programs like this matter. And we're only just getting started! Our team is continuing to plan ways to make future sessions even more engaging, inclusive, and fun, so there's always something to look forward to.

If you would like more information on how Your Supports can support you, get in touch with our team at yoursupports@thebridgeinc.org.au.



From Victoria to the NT: Getaways Clients Explore Darwin

The Getaways group set off on another interstate adventure—this time to Darwin! The trip was filled with discovery and unforgettable experiences. From wandering through the lush Botanical Gardens and sharing plenty of laughter on the Jumping Crocodile Tour, to enjoying magical evenings of music under the stars at Buffalo Country, every moment was special.

Each day brought something new; diving into high-tech hologram adventures in Palmerston, cooling off with refreshing swims, and gathering over delicious meals.

These shared experiences created lasting memories and strengthened the bonds within the Getaways community.

Interested in joining our next adventure? Get in touch with our Getaways team at getaways@thebridgeinc.org.au to learn more.



Disco Coming to The Bridge North

We are thrilled to share that our much-loved All Abilities Disco, long celebrated at Hallam in Southeast Melbourne, is officially expanding to The Bridge North!

Grand Opening Details:

- Date: Saturday 17 January 2026
- Time: 7:30 PM – 10:30 PM
- Location: Macleod Day Service Hall, 88 McNamara Street, Macleod
- DJ & Security Provided
- Door Prizes
- \$15 Entry (Carers Free)

The All Abilities Disco offers a safe, welcoming space for people of all abilities to enjoy

great music, meet new friends, and celebrate in a supportive, uplifting environment. From January 2026, the disco will run every 3rd Saturday of the month, giving our community a regular opportunity to connect, dance, and most importantly to have fun.

We can't wait to kick off this new chapter at The Bridge North and to see the dancefloor come alive. This vibrant and inclusive event has brought much joy to clients, families, and supporters, and we're delighted to make it accessible to even more members of our community.

If you are interested in attending our discos, please speak to the team at getaways@thebridgeinc.org.au.

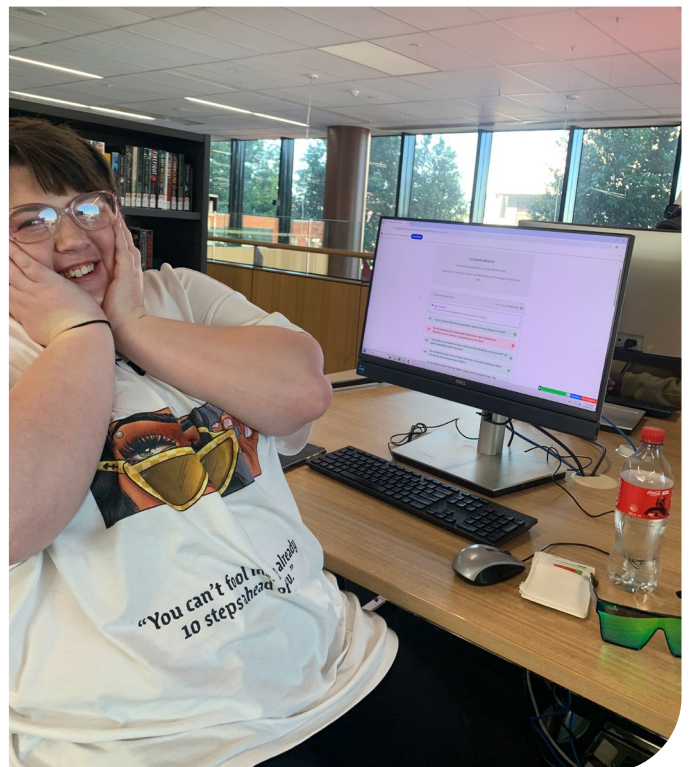
Driven by Determination

Leanne (pictured), who is supported one-on-one through our Your Supports program, set her sights on earning her learner permit, a milestone she approached with focus, independence, and determination.

Leanne practiced VicRoads tests on her own and completed pre-tests at the library with just a little reading support. Her dedication paid off when it came time for the real test; she answered 27 out of 30 questions correctly, needing support to read only five.

Leanne's journey is a powerful reminder that with the right support, encouragement, and belief in oneself, anything is possible. We are incredibly proud of her achievement and can't wait to see where the road takes her next!

Interested in one-on-one support to reach your goals, get in touch with our Your Supports team at yoursupports@thebridgeinc.org.au.



Support Sparks Lasting Friendships

What started as a cup of coffee between two people has blossomed into a community of friendship, support, and empowerment.

Through Connects community services at The Bridge, a group of clients organically formed their own friendship circle. They get to choose their own activities, support one another, and most importantly, create a space where everyone feels seen, heard, and valued.

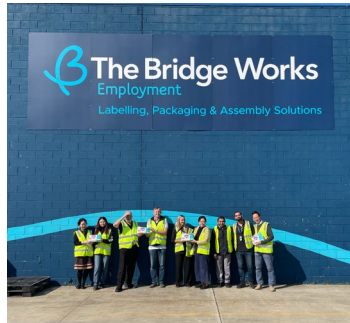
From sharing lunch to planning outings and activities, these moments have become stepping-stones towards building confidence, independence and belonging. They encourage each other to try new things, celebrate achievements, and offer a listening ear when life feels challenging.

It's a clear reminder that meaningful change often begins with simply being present. At The Bridge, we're proud to provide the support, while the journey belongs to the individuals themselves. It reflects the strength of community and the powerful outcomes that emerge when people come together.

To find out more about our Connects community services, please contact enquiries@thebridgeinc.org.au.







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

P.O. Box 7030
Dandenong VIC 3175



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NDIS Provider



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Business for good



thebridgeinc.org.au

The Bridge Connects

Registered Office

- Level 1, 33 Princes Highway
Dandenong VIC 3175

☎ (03) 8710 8555

Getaways

Your Supports

NDIS Support Coordination

(03) 8710 8555

Day Services

- **Springvale South Day Service**
69-71 Athol Road,
Springvale South VIC 3172

- **Narre Warren Day Service**
67-69 Webb Street,
Narre Warren VIC 3805

- **Dandenong Hub**
Level 1, 31 Princes Highway
Dandenong VIC 3175

- **Beaconsfield Day Service**
49 Wallace Street
Beaconsfield VIC 3807

- **Cranbourne Day Service**
3 Stawell Street
Cranbourne VIC 3977

- **Pakenham Hub**
89-91 Slattery Place
Pakenham VIC 3810

- **Macleod Day Service**
83 McNamara Street
Macleod VIC 3085

- **Greensborough Day Service**
25 Grimshaw Street
Greensborough VIC 3088

Independent Living Homes:

- **Chaucer Crescent,**
Bundoora VIC 3083
- **Fernside Avenue,**
Briar Hill VIC 3088
- **Airlie Road,**
Montmorency VIC 3094
- **Gould Circuit,**
Noble Park VIC 3174

The Bridge Employment

Registered Office

- Level 1, 33 Princes Highway
Dandenong VIC 3175

☎ (03) 8710 8555

Inclusive Employment Australia (IEA)

Job Skills Building: Your Job Now
Supported Employment
Social Enterprise

Inclusive Employment Australia

- **Narre Warren IEA**
1/26-28 Verdun Drive,
Narre Warren VIC 3805

- **Doveton IEA**
23 Autumn Place,
Doveton VIC 3177

- **Pakenham Hub IEA**
89-91 Slattery Place,
Pakenham VIC 3810

- **Emerald IEA**
323C Main Street,
Emerald VIC 3782

- **Koo Wee Rup IEA**
255 Rossiter Road,
Koo Wee Rup VIC 3981

Your Job Now

- **Dandenong Hub**
Level 1, 31 Princes Highway
Dandenong VIC 3175

- **Pakenham Hub**
89-91 Slattery Place
Pakenham VIC 3810

Supported Employment/ Social Enterprise

- **The BridgeWorks**
95A Cheltenham Road
Dandenong VIC 3175

- **The Bridge 2Works**
93B Cheltenham Road
Dandenong VIC 3175

- **The Bridge Works 3PL**
18 Short Street
Dandenong VIC 3175

- **The Bridge Works Northside**
36 Green Street
Thomastown VIC 3074

- **The Bridge Works Mobile Services**
Mow & Mend
Cleaning Crew

Your feedback is important to us!

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

