

The Bridge News

June 2024



On the move: relocating services to contemporary new centre

After creating beautiful memories over the past 12 years in our previous space at Clyde Road, we've moved to a new location in Beaconsfield, just 4km down the road!

Participants are enjoying this new, contemporary site which is over two levels with stair and lift access and has dedicated new spaces including:

- Art room
- Computer space
- Fully equipped kitchen
- Multiple activity rooms
- Onsite parking for vehicles including our buses

It's ideally located in a service lane, a short walk from the train station, and 200m to the local shopping precinct. There is easy access to public transport with opportunities for volunteering and employment in the local community.

We invite you to visit and experience the excellence that defines us. Expect nothing less than exceptional service and a friendly atmosphere that feels like home. We now have increased capacity and are currently taking enquiries at enquiries@thebridgeinc.org.au.

Visit us at 49 Wallace Street, Beaconsfield, 3807



Message from our CEO Mary-Jane Stolp

Since our last newsletter, The Bridge has opened a second warehouse, The Bridge 2Works, and relocated our Clyde Road day service. Both initiatives will help us to provide more services to more people and increase our impact in the communities we support.

Currently, we are preparing for our external NDIS audit, and we encourage you to be involved in providing feedback via this opportunity. Our commitment to ongoing evaluation and innovation continues and the positive results of our client feedback survey in March reinforced we are on the right track; one carer said...

"Extremely happy. We have had a great start to 2024 and excited to see how participants develop."

We were very pleased that one survey respondent decided to take up the opportunity to join our Community Voice Advisory Group (CVAG).

Recently, our annual employee alignment and engagement survey commenced, and we hope to improve on last year's results where The Bridge was in the top 10% of all not-for-profit providers surveyed.

Shortly we will send out invitations to our 'Town Hall' meeting, regarding the NDIS review and I look forward to seeing you there.

In closing, I'd like to thank all those involved in our 10 consultation sessions for The Bridge's new 5-year Strategic Plan. We hope to provide further details soon.

Opening our doors to the community

The Bridge service centres opened their doors for a week and invited prospective school leavers, along with their families, from nearby schools to learn about our NDIS services, enjoy morning tea, and admire the art shows that had been created by participants.

It was wonderful to see participants proudly showing off the facilities and chatting about the activities they do to help them achieve their goals.



Strengthening our governance

The Bridge has a skills-based Board and ensures effective, contemporary governance through an ongoing program of Board renewal. We recently farewelled two Board members, Sally Bennett, who joined the Board in 2014, and Andrew Stewart, who joined in 2021. Sally chaired our Board Quality and Risk Committee and guided The Bridge to develop robust quality and safety systems. Andrew headed up the Board's Client Experience Committee and worked closely with staff and representatives from the Community Voice Advisory Group to continue to measure and enhance the client journey at The Bridge. Both Andrew and Sally significantly contributed to the growth and viability of The Bridge, and we wish them well.

Following a process of recruitment, The Bridge has welcomed two new casual Board members: Sanjay Gund and Tanya O'Connor to complement the skills and expertise of our Board and Executive teams.

Sanjay is a seasoned non-executive director specialising in governance of small to large not-for-profit companies, including aged care and other health care boards. He is a Physicist and Chartered Accountant, a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors (GAICD) and Fellow of the Governance Institute of Australia.

Tanya is an accomplished global leader, strategist, and advisor, with over 18 years' experience and deep sector knowledge in technology development across the clinical research and healthcare sectors. Renowned for driving sustainable growth and transformational change, Tanya is also skilled in product and service implementation, negotiation, and global stakeholder relationships. She holds a Bachelor of Arts (Psychology) degree, a Graduate Certificate in Leadership & Strategy, and GAICD.

We look forward to the contributions of both Sanjay and Tanya as we embark on our new strategic plan for 2024-2029.



The Bridge welcomes two new board members. Their skills and expertise will complement the Board and Executive teams

Promoting advocacy via the 'Having a Say' conference

We were a gold sponsor at this year's VALID 'Having a Say' conference at Deakin University. This was Australia's largest conference for people with disabilities where they could find their voice, speak up, be heard and be respected. The conference was aimed at empowering people with disability to have a say about issues that affect their lives, share ideas, and be heard by the government and service providers. It was packed with interactive workshops, come and try activities, key speakers, as well as a dinner and disco.

Some participants from The Bridge attended the conference (independently and with their support workers), whilst others joined online.

The Bridge exhibited at the 'Our Choice Disability Expo' of the conference along with 70 other providers. Attendees were encouraged to visit to explore their choices and find out about what services they could access to help achieve their goals.



Empowering people with disability to have a say about issues that affect their lives

Introducing new services to meet community needs

At The Bridge, we think every individual deserves a place to call home, tailored to their unique needs and preferences. That is why we're dedicated to providing comfortable, safe, and inclusive living spaces for individuals with disabilities.

Coming soon!

Newly built High Physical Support house

2 bedrooms, 1 bathroom, 1 toilet, garden, and parking

- Designed for 2 residents with overnight support (OOA)
- Hoist installed in main bathroom with recessed ceiling rails
- Automated doors at: front entrance, deck entrance, Bedroom 1 and Bedroom 2

For more details, visit <https://hubs.li/Q02swkKH0>

Two newly built Improved Liveability houses

2 bedrooms, 1 bathroom, 1 toilet, garden and parking

- Designed for 2 residents per house (one with OAA and one without OAA)
- Both properties are double storey with bedrooms located on the 2nd storey with kitchen and living spaces downstairs

For more details, visit <https://hubs.li/Q02swhNd0>

Located within close proximity to a range of community supports including Noble Park shopping precinct, Noble Park train station, Noble Park Aquatic Centre, Dandenong Market and Dandenong Hospital.

Speak to our team at enquiries@thebridgeinc.org.au to find out more.



Caring for the environment by promoting recycling

Donations to The Bridge have just become easier! People can now use a partner ID code and allocate their 10c per eligible container to The Bridge when they recycle at participating outlets across Victoria.

To donate your refund to The Bridge:

1. Find your nearest location by logging into: <https://cdsvic.org.au/locations>
2. Use the Donation Partner ID - C2000016111

Join us in making a positive impact!

Don't forget you can also donate to The Bridge via our website at <https://thebridgeinc.org.au/get-involved/support-us/>.

DONATION PARTNER

Victoria's Container Deposit Scheme




DID YOU KNOW?

You can now return eligible plastic and glass containers to a collection point for a 10c refund! You can opt to donate your refund directly to The Bridge Inc.

1 COLLECT

Drink containers and check for the 10c mark.



WWW.CDSVIC.ORG.AU/ELIGIBLE-CONTAINERS

2 FIND

Your local refund location:



WWW.CDSVIC.ORG.AU/LOCATIONS

3 NOMINATE

The Bridge Inc as your donation recipient.



Use our donation partner ID - **C2000016111**

Broadening participants horizons through Getaways

Another interstate holiday success for The Bridge as it flies participants to the Gold Coast. In the past year, the service has expanded its usual day and weekend trips in Victoria to include exciting interstate adventures, following feedback from participants and carers. Previous trips to Tasmania and Sydney were well-received, prompting the organisation to plan an action-packed getaway to Queensland for lucky participants.

Fun-filled activities included:

- A trip to Movie World
- A visit to the World of Oddities at Ripley's Believe It or Not
- A ride on an Aqua Duck
- Dinner at the Australian Outback Spectacular

Mary-Jane Stolp, CEO of The Bridge, expressed her delight at the positive outcomes of the carefully planned interstate trips. She emphasised the importance of these trips for participants, as many of them were experiencing interstate travel and flying for the first time, without their families. She said, "The interstate getaways not only offer respite care for families but also allow participants to increase their independence and build strong friendships whilst exploring new experiences."

Many more adventures are in the works. For more information, please contact the team at getaways@thebridgeinc.org.au



Celebrating our volunteers

Volunteering is not just about lending a helping hand; it is about fostering connection, building stronger communities, and making a real difference in the world around us.

On National Volunteers Week (May 20-26th), we celebrated the incredible contributions of our volunteers at The Bridge with a special volunteers' family picnic and BBQ.

Benefits of Volunteering:

- **Connect & Grow:** Build meaningful relationships and expand your network while discovering new passions and talents.
- **Boost Your Well-being:** Volunteering isn't just good for others; it's good for you too! Improve your mental health and increase happiness levels by giving back.

- **Learn & Thrive:** Develop valuable skills and gain hands-on experience that can enhance your career and personal development journey.
- **Be the Change:** Every small act adds up to create big impacts. By volunteering, you're actively shaping a better, brighter future for all.

Whether you can spare an hour or a day, your time and effort can truly make a world of difference.

For more info about volunteering at The Bridge, please visit: <https://thebridgeinc.org.au/get-involved/volunteer-with-us/>

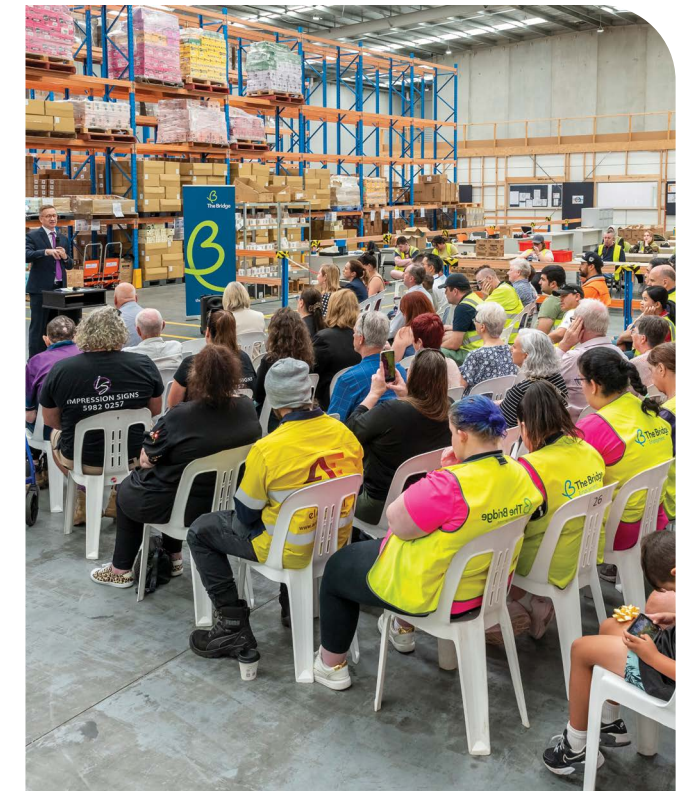


Launching 2Works!

2Works is the new supported employment warehouse offering packing, labelling and assembly solutions to businesses. It is the latest Social Enterprise expansion from The Bridge Employment. This second warehouse operates alongside 'The Bridge Works' and both facilities are situated on Cheltenham Road in Dandenong.

At the official opening of 2Works, we were honoured to have special guests Julian Hill MP (Federal Member for Bruce) and Mayor Cr Lana Formoso - Noble Park North, speaking to mark this special occasion. A crowd of our customers, participants and families gathered to listen to some fantastic speeches and then enjoyed a traditional smoking ceremony. Networking opportunities were had afterwards with coffees and morning tea provided by our social enterprise friends at L'Arte Central.

We believe social enterprises are champions of inclusive employment and achieve significant social and community impact. We are thrilled to be expanding our offering in this space in response to community needs.



Partnering to provide work options

The hard-working participants at The Works Cleaning Crew (a microbusiness of The Bridge Works) had the opportunity to work alongside Marriot Support Services Enviro Management Crew supporting their team to clean up over 20 beaches for Melbourne Water and the Kingston City Council over the summer.

This collaboration offered our supported employees an excellent opportunity to accomplish their work-related goals while venturing out in the community and collaborating with others to gain valuable environmental knowledge through teamwork. We look forward to continuing this partnership into the future.



Expanding our pre-employment training services Youth Jobs Now (16-24 yrs) and Your Job Now (25 yrs+)

Our YJN services, which provide the pre-employment training and work experience to become job-ready, kicked off the year with great momentum by:

- Increasing the service days at the Slattery Place centre in Pakenham to 3 days a week on Mondays, Thursdays, and Fridays (our Hub31 centre in Dandenong offers 5 days a week).
- Onboarding new employment coaches to support service expansion.
- Giving each participant a YJN diary to use on a daily basis to be organised with their activities.
- Learning through program blocks, such as building employability skills on communication, leadership, workplace values, volunteering and teamwork.

- We introduced myDRIVESCHOOL - an assisted technology (AT) for Specialised Driver Training. myDRIVESCHOOL can be used for NDIS participants to assist them with their goals and outcomes. Driving can give participants choice, independence and control. The driving simulators are at both YJN centres in Dandenong (Hub31) and Pakenham (Slattery Place).



Helping the community via Foodbank

Foodbank supplies are now offered at our Frankston and Mornington Disability Employment Services offices, and at Slattery Place centre in Pakenham and 2Works warehouse in Dandenong. This service is available to the whole community as well as prospective participants and our existing participants.

Available at:

- Frankston: Suite 8, Level 1, 108-120 Young Street, Frankston, 3199
- Mornington: 4/216 Main Street, Mornington, 3931
- Dandenong: 93B Cheltenham Road, Dandenong, 3175
- Pakenham: 89-91 Slattery Place, Pakenham, 3810



Teamwork makes the dream work

Our Youth Jobs Now (YJN), Disability Employment Services (DES) and Support Coordination teams have worked together to find participant, Anthony, employment.

How we made it happen:

- Anthony's DES Employment Coach worked with him to create a cover letter, revamped his CV and enhanced his communication style.
- YJN Employment Coach worked with Anthony doing mock interviews and pre-employment training related to the jobs he wanted to pursue.
- Anthony's Support Coordinator stayed in touch with the employment providers to obtain regular updates on his employment progression, and where any additional support was needed for success, along with securing NDIS funding for specialised driving lessons.

Anthony now works at B Box for Kids and is loving his new job, working 3 days a week as a warehouse assistant and pick packer. He has made awesome progress within his time at YJN and DES and will continue to be supported in his first year of his employment journey. The next goal is helping Anthony get his driver's license, so he will be able to further improve his independence and set him up with future career opportunities.



The Bridge Inc.

Registered Office

- Level 1, 33 Princes Highway
Dandenong VIC 3175

✉ info@thebridgeinc.org.au

☎ (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



The Bridge Connects

Main Office

- Level 1, 33 Princes Highway
Dandenong VIC 3175

✉ info@thebridgeconnects.org.au

☎ (03) 8710 8555

New Service Enquiries
enquiries@thebridgeconnects.org.au

General Enquiries
info@thebridgeinc.org.au

Getaways
(03) 8710 8588

Your Supports
(03) 8710 8555

NDIS Support Coordination
(03) 8710 8555

Day Services:

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

☎ 1800 274 343

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

☎ 1800 274 343

- **Hub31 Dandenong**
(Day Service & Youth Jobs Now)
Level 1, 31 Princes Hwy
Dandenong VIC 3175

☎ 1800 274 343

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

☎ 1800 274 343

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

☎ 1800 274 343

- **Slattery Hub**
(Day Service & Youth Jobs Now)
89-91 Slattery Place
Pakenham VIC 3810

☎ 1800 274 343

The Bridge Employment

Main Office

- Level 1, 33 Princes Highway
Dandenong VIC 3175

✉ info@thebridgeemployment.com.au

☎ (03) 8710 8555

New Service Enquiries
enquiries@thebridgeemployment.com.au

General Enquiries
info@thebridgeinc.org.au

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

☎ 1800 274 343

- 4/216 Main Street
Mornington VIC 3931

☎ 1800 274 343

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

☎ 1800 274 343

- **Slattery Hub**
(Day Service & Youth Jobs Now)
89-91 Slattery Place
Pakenham VIC 3810

☎ 1800 274 343

The Bridge Works

- 95A Cheltenham Road
Dandenong VIC 3175

☎ 1800 274 343

The Bridge 2Works

- 93B Cheltenham Road
Dandenong VIC 3175

☎ 1800 274 343



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