



Try, Test and Learn Fund

Initiative: *Fairbridge Leadership, Engagement, and Development*

Location: Western Australia

Using insights from the Priority Investment Approach, the Try, Test and Learn Fund is gathering evidence on new or innovative approaches to addressing barriers to work.

The Try, Test and Learn Fund will help achieve the objectives of welfare reform—that is, to develop a modern welfare system that increases the capacity of individuals, reduces the risk of welfare dependency and maintains a strong welfare safety net.

What are we trying to achieve?

To improve the employability of young people living in the Peel region who are disengaged from work or study to complete training, find industries that are suited to their strengths and interests, and become job ready.

What is *Fairbridge Leadership, Engagement, and Development*?

A 'try a trade' training program that provides young people with an opportunity to identify their preferred industry while completing accredited qualifications and addressing underlying barriers to employment.

Participants receive a Certificate I in Leadership through completing studies including 'try a trade' units over 12 weeks. The 'try a trade' units include hospitality, conservation land management, and construction. Participants can then go on to complete a Certificate II in their preferred industry. They can also receive tailored support and referrals that may include literacy and numeracy support, mentoring, counselling, mental health support, transport, food and tailored learning plans.

What does the evidence tell us?

- The barriers to further education and employment for young unemployed people are varied. While some will face minimal barriers to engaging in further education or taking up employment opportunities, others will face a number of challenges to making a successful transition.
- If nothing changes, 44 per cent of 16-21 year olds currently receiving with Youth Allowance (other) or Disability Support Pension with mental health as the primary condition will be receiving income support payments in 10 years, and 35 per cent will be receiving income support payments in 20 years.

How is this initiative new and innovative?

This project uses a 'try a trade' approach that delivers an accredited qualification while allowing participants to sample different industries and prepare to choose their preferred career paths. It combines this approach with case management to address underlying barriers to employment.

Fast facts

Priority group: At-risk young people

Target Participant numbers: 78

Location: Peel region

Trial period: 26 months

Total funding: \$795,200

Service provider: Fairbridge Western Australia

Potential future saving: The purpose of these initiatives is to test whether an intervention works to reduce long-term reliance on welfare. If around 13 per cent (10) of participants move off income support because of this project, the savings to the welfare system are likely to outweigh the costs of the project.

Note: Due to changes in circumstances, adjustments have been made to target participant numbers, trial period and total funding.