



# Try, Test and Learn Fund

Initiative: *Next Steps*

Location: South 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?

Improve older jobseekers' chances of finding and keeping a job, through a combination of training, mentoring and transformational coaching to improve their job search skills and emotional wellbeing.

## What is *Next Steps*?

The project aims to deliver positive mental health tools and techniques alongside effective job search skills training.

It aims to address the psychological impacts of unemployment that can affect older jobseekers in particular. This includes low self-esteem and loss of self-identity. This project also aims to increase participants' understanding of effective job search techniques, including widening the scope of the type of work they are looking for.

Participants take part in a range of activities, such as group workshops, individual help to find a job, working alongside other participants and peer mentors to seek contacts and employment leads, attending networking opportunities with employers, and completing work fitness readiness assessments, if required. Positive psychology approaches are employed throughout the activities to help participants boost their confidence and belief in themselves.

## What does the evidence tell us?

- Many older Australians want to work but find it difficult to get work.
- Australians are on average living into their 80s, and older jobseekers may draw on income support payments for many years.
- If nothing changes, 84 per cent of this group will be receiving income support payments in 10 years, and 73 per cent will be receiving income support payments in 20 years.

## How is this initiative new and innovative?

The interweaving of this type of psychological support, combined with group and individualised job-skills training, makes this project unique.

Revised February 2021

## Fast facts

**Priority group:** Older unemployed

**Target participant number:** 556

**Location:** North/South/West  
Adelaide

**Trial period:** 27 months

**Total funding:** \$1.38 million

**Service provider:** HR Development  
at Work

**Potential future saving:** The purpose of these initiatives is to test whether an intervention works to reduce long-term reliance on welfare. If around 3 per cent (18) 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.