



# Try, Test and Learn Fund

Initiative: *your job your way*

Location: Tasmania

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?

The project is aimed at young people who have been unemployed for longer than 12 months and is built around the belief that long-term unemployment is, in itself, a barrier to finding sustainable employment. The project builds young people's skills and capabilities to overcome their barriers and secure long-term employment.

## What is *your job your way*?

The *your job your way* project is targeted at young people in long-term unemployment who are receiving Youth Allowance. The project aims to expand participants' skills and capabilities to overcome barriers (including duration of unemployment itself) and gain and retain employment. The project undertakes a client-centred, best practice model of employment services, including employer engagement, community connections and understanding participants' experiences of trauma.

Participants work closely with a trusted Pathways Coach and Employment Mentor. They are also offered intensive case management and referrals to other services to help improve their job readiness.

During the program, participants are encouraged and supported to find and start employment and are given support for the first 26 weeks of employment.

## What does the evidence tell us?

- Young unemployed people face a variety of barriers to further education and employment.
- If nothing changes, 57 per cent of 16-21 year olds currently receiving Youth Allowance (other) or Disability Support Pension with mental health as the primary condition will be receiving income support payments in 10 years, and 45 per cent will be receiving income support payments in 20 years.

## How is this initiative new and innovative?

The project addresses long-term unemployment as a barrier to work, helping participants overcome fragmented work histories. The level of support provided by this project is greater than that offered in existing labour market programs, including a lower case-load for service providers, development of long-term relationships with participants, using a trusted life-coach approach and more support during the early stages of employment.

## Fast facts

- Priority group:** At-risk young people
- Target participant number:** 77
- Locations:** Devonport and Burnie
- Trial period:** 27 months
- Total funding:** \$564,300
- Service provider:** yourtown
- Potential future saving:** The purpose of these initiatives is to test whether an intervention works to reduce long-term reliance on welfare. If around 6 per cent (5) of participants move off income support because of this project, the savings to the welfare system should outweigh the costs of the project.