



## REPORT CARD 2021

This Report Card is GROW G21 Region's fourth publication capturing key outcomes, achievements and challenges experienced in the Consolidation Phase of this regional place-based initiative.

GROW G21 is made up of businesses, government and community organisations working together to change the outlook for areas of high unemployment in the G21 region, including Norlane, Corio, Whittington and parts of Colac.

[grow.g21.com.au](http://grow.g21.com.au)

# HOW DOES GROW WORK?

The GROW team supports Signatories to create Action Plans which may include:

- Advocate & collaborate
- Spend social
- Spend local
- Be inclusive

Collectively, these actions help GROW Signatories to recruit, support and retain employees from the GROW community.

“ We believe GROW provides an excellent platform to support local disadvantaged people. It is evident the community is benefiting from GROW involvement. ”

- Signatory, GROW Survey, Oct 2021

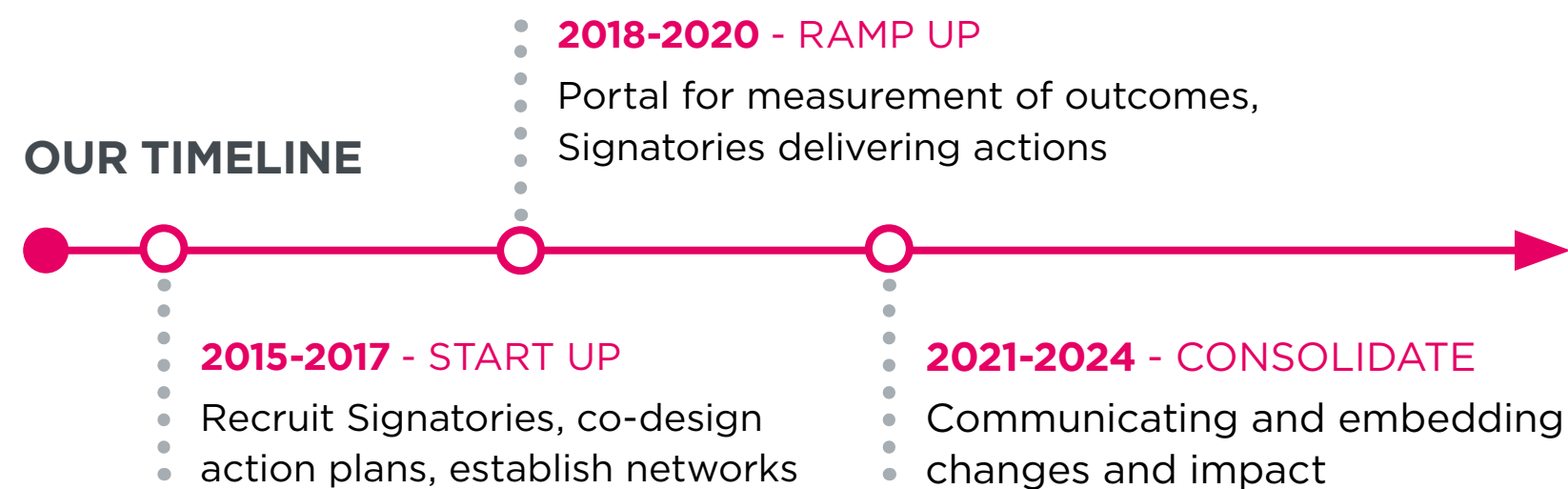
## LEARN MORE

[What-is-GROW.pdf](#)

[Who-is-the-GROW-community.pdf](#)

[GROW-Priority-Groups.pdf](#)

## OUR TIMELINE





**130** GROW Signatories with their **own action plan**

**117** GROW Signatories with **plans updated in 2021**

“ I am shocked to know that this bias exists ... having people pass judgement based solely on location and a preconceived view ... when (people from these postcodes) have the courage and strength to overcome these real disadvantages, they will then be subject to this unfair bias. ”

- Tanya, Perry Demolitions

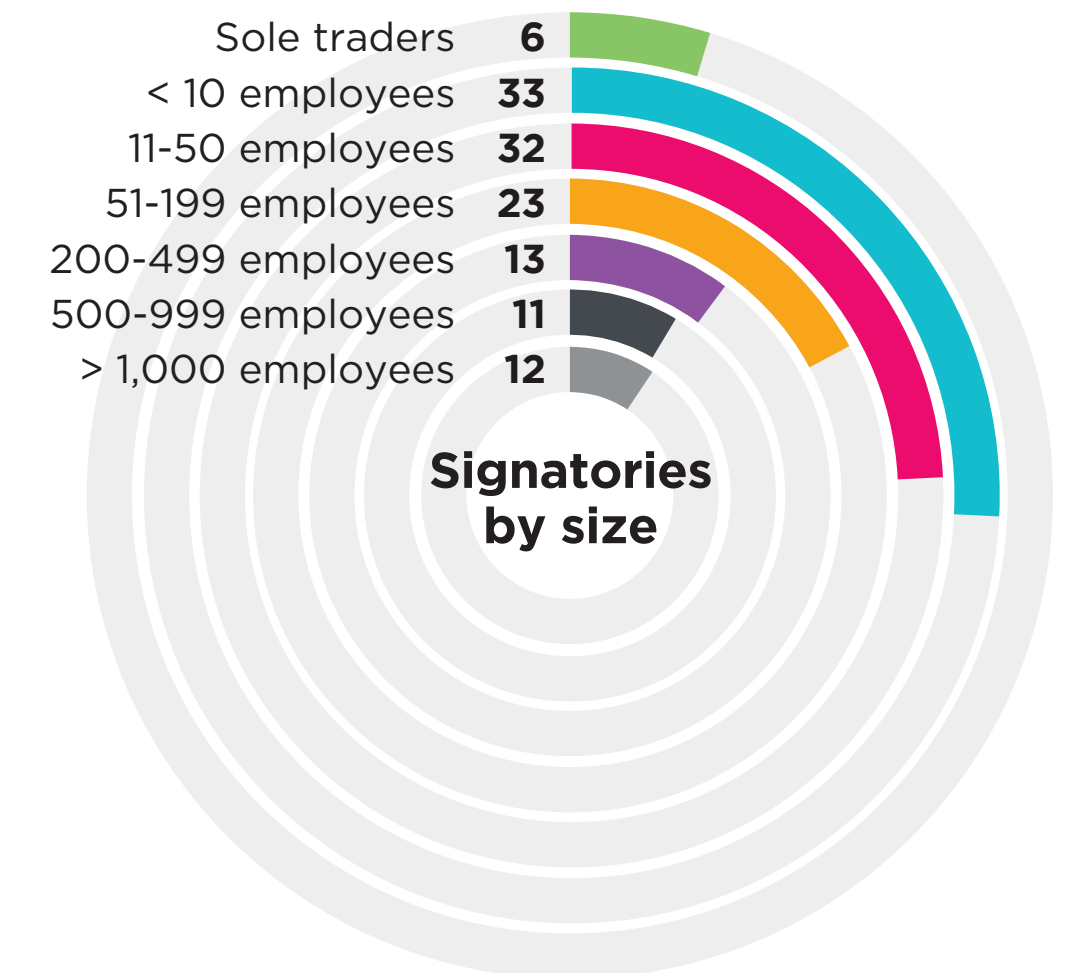
## WHY GROW STILL MATTERS

The number of people on JobSeeker and Youth Allowance between the ages of 15 and 64 in the GROW postcodes are continuing to increase.

Region - LGA/SA2	September 2021		March 2020		Change
	JobSeeker and Youth Allowance	% 15-64 years of age	JobSeeker and Youth Allowance	% 15-64 years of age	
City of Greater Geelong	11,215	6.7	9,129	5.4	+2,086
- Corio-Norlane	2,728	15.1	2,508	13.9	+220
- Newcomb-Moolap (Whittington)	1,081	11.7	879	9.5	+202
Colac Otway Shire	945	7.4	736	5.8	+209
- Colac	589	7.9	488	6.5	+101

(Source: Profile.id, 2021)

## WHO WE ARE



While unemployment decreased at the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic, recently it has begun rising again, perhaps owing to the reliance on casualised and insecure work, lack of digital inclusion, and the postcode bias.

GROW shows that in this region, we have the power to change this bias: 85% Signatories agree that GROW had increased their awareness of disadvantage and barriers to employment, while 89% have increased awareness about how to support job seekers with barriers (besides donating money).\*\*

\*\*Statistics from questions asked in the GROW Survey, October 2021.





## ACTION: ADVOCATE & COLLABORATE

GROW Signatories understand they are stronger together, and value the ‘*collaboration with like-minded people.*’\*

With the support of the GROW team, they are actively advocating for each other through introductions, partnerships and sharing good news stories.

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**25 good news stories** published, sharing GROW Signatory successes

**144 referrals or introductions** provided to 75 GROW Signatories

**87%** Signatories ranked **Making Introductions** as ‘*extremely or quite useful*’\*\*

**265** (from 92 Signatories) attended 4 x **Network Meetings**

**85%** Signatories found **GROW Network Meetings** ‘*relevant and/or interesting*’\*\*

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“*I always find that the introductions/connections aspect of what GROW does is extremely helpful, as many of the employers/suppliers that you know about are unknown to us!*”

GROW is a network of values-aligned organisations, and 53% of Signatories identified that they signed up for this reason:

“*Networking and connections are important and understanding employment barriers as a whole extremely useful.*”

“*GROW is creating awareness of and collaboration between businesses to ensure local procurement and employment opportunities.*”

“*I have more of an appreciation for the amount of like-minded business making changes to people’s lives.*”

For many Signatories, the work is not just external but also within their businesses:

“*Staff and management here see the value and benefits in supporting the GROW initiative.*”

“*Our company values are aligned to GROW. Achievable and realistic targets are set in place.*”

\*Quotes from current GROW Signatories (N=61) in the GROW Survey, October 2021.

\*\*Statistics from questions asked in the GROW Survey, October 2021.

# ACTIONS: SPEND LOCAL AND SOCIAL



GROW Signatories are reviewing and changing the way they buy and spend in the G21 Region. Based on their Action Plans:

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**40 Signatories are reviewing current suppliers** to support the local or social benefit suppliers

**93 Signatories are changing their policy, procedure or practice** to prioritise ‘buying local’ in their policies, checking for local suppliers first, or focusing on how they can use social or disability enterprises and Indigenous businesses in their supply chains

**22 capability statements** have been sourced from GROW Signatories to promote to major projects

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“Engaging Fruit2work (a social enterprise that supports ex-offenders into employment) was such an easy decision for us to make; a simple change for us but resulting in a big impact for others. GROW actions don’t have to be complex to be meaningful.”

- Elly Hanlon, Hanlon Industries

GROW Signatories are ‘looking for contractors based in target communities who can employ more locally from the target demographics’\*. Connecting GROW Signatories to major projects, helps create new job opportunities for local job seekers. GROW Signatories are involved in:

- Geelong Arts Centre Phase 3
- Barwon Heads Road Duplication
- Chisholm Road Prison Precinct
- City Deal Projects
- City of Greater Geelong Civic Accommodation
- Kardinia Park Stadium Trust (Stage 5)
- Anam Cara House
- Barwon Prison Infill Expansion
- Regional Rail upgrade – Geelong to Waurin Ponds

Supporting GROW Signatories to purchase from inclusive employers, or social benefit suppliers, enables them to respond to the Victorian Government Social Procurement Framework tenders.

\*Quotes from current GROW Signatories (N=61) in the GROW Survey, October 2021.



## GOOD NEWS STORY: MY MAINTENANCE CREW

My Maintenance Crew (a social enterprise of Diversitat) advise that 70% of their work came from GROW Signatories across the 2020-2021 year.

“The results have been more employment opportunities and pathways for young people. The knock-on effect isn’t just increased self-esteem and confidence for the individual but the broader impact for the young person’s family and their renewed access to their community”, says Narelle Arthur, My Maintenance Crew.

“*The GROW Signatory list was extremely useful in working out who was undertaking the good work of employment and how our trades can help support these businesses.*”

- Signatory, GROW Survey, Oct 2021

“*It’s so obvious just how important GROW is in providing the conduit between Industry and Social Enterprise. Without GROW these connections would likely not exist.*”

- Stephen Allen, Nicholson Construction



Photo: Naomi Bavington and Brianna Ure, My Maintenance Crew



ACTION: BE INCLUSIVE



GROW Signatories are ‘looking at ways to help disadvantaged job seekers’\* and choosing to employ from GROW communities. This has resulted in:

- 140 jobs across 29 Signatories (includes 37 traineeships and 21 apprenticeships)
- 15 employment pathways (including 9 placements, 4 workplace tours and 1 volunteering)
- 93 Signatories reviewing employment opportunities for the GROW community
- 76% Signatories found brokering employment connections ‘extremely or quite useful’\*\*
- 96 Signatories reviewing their employment conditions, ways to support staff and career progression plans that work best for people from GROW communities\*\*
- 30+ employment services exploring partnership opportunities

“GROW provides opportunities for the different sectors to collaborate and create employment pathways and relationships.”

Total employment opportunities:

Postcode 3214	46
Postcode 3250	15
Postcode 3219	14
Young people (aged < 25)	36
Long-term unemployed (> 6 months)	13
Mature aged people (aged 45+)	10
Migrants and refugees	1
People with disability	2
Justice clients	3

“We are already recruiting jobseekers for roles everyday but now are more strategic with our process to keep GROW front of mind.”

\*Quotes from current GROW Signatories (N=61) in the GROW Survey, October 2021.  
\*\*Statistics from questions asked in the GROW Survey, October 2021.





## GOOD NEWS STORY: FAGG'S MITRE 10 BELMONT TIMBER

Fagg's Mitre 10 Belmont Timber have a history of supporting new staff who come from disadvantaged backgrounds.

“We're committed to do this as ‘business as usual’ as part of our culture and commitment to our local community”, Narelle Lehmann, Senior Administrator comments.

“The difference it can make to someone's life is so heartening to see. We never really know what is going on in the backgrounds of peoples' lives. To be a role model, or a mentor for a person trying to break the cycle of unemployment is a very satisfying part of my job.”

💡 *We think it's important for businesses like ours to support the local economy and provide better employment opportunities for disadvantaged locals by supporting initiatives like GROW. 💡*

- Signatory, GROW Survey, Oct 2021



# THANK YOU

Thanks to these employers who have offered opportunities to job seekers from the GROW community in 2021, and provided their employment outcomes for the GROW portal:

- Australian Lamb Colac
- Auswide Plumbing and Civil
- Barwon Disability Resource Council
- Barwon Health
- Barwon Water Group
- Bay City Group
- Bild Group
- CCP Group
- City of Greater Geelong Council
- CLOS
- Corio Waste Management
- Direct Recruitment
- Fagg's Mitre 10 Belmont Timber
- Fruit2Work
- Geelong Port
- Geelong Roofing Pty Ltd
- GForce Employment Solutions
- Give Where You Live Foundation
- Hanlon Industries
- Innovative Windows Solutions
- Jacaranda Industries
- My Maintenance Crew
- Perry Demolition Pty Ltd
- Plan Group Geelong
- Rendine Constructions
- TAC
- The Gordon
- Viva Energy Australia - Geelong Refinery
- Westvic Staffing Solutions

“It's a very important initiative which keeps myself and my organisation accountable to this work- could be very easy to ignore our responsibility in this space.\*”

“There is no other organisation that does what GROW can.\*”

“We are very aware of our social and corporate responsibility in the Geelong Community and being involved with GROW keeps us aligned to this value.\*”

“I feel the value that GROW adds to Geelong is immense and the connections we gain from having the GROW team at hand is adding great value to our business also.\*”

“We now have increased knowledge and understanding of some barriers people face when trying to gain employment in these areas.\*”

**If you have employed from the GROW community this year but are missing from this list please reach out and let us know.**

\*Quotes from current GROW Signatories (N=61) in the GROW Survey, October 2021.

## WANT TO KNOW MORE?

For more stories and information:  
GROW Team

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GIVE WHERE  
YOU LIVE FOUNDATION



GROW is a joint initiative of Give Where You Live Foundation and G21 - Geelong Region Alliance.