Section: 01

Overview

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# Secretary’s Foreword

During the 2022–23 financial year, the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions delivered a broad range of services to Victorians and made a positive contribution to Victoria’s economic performance.

The department’s people worked hard to deliver the achievements outlined in this Annual Report.

While continuing to support the sectors most impacted by the pandemic and administering assistance to businesses affected by the floods in October 2022, the department focused on industry development, attracting investment, growing exports, creating jobs, administering the skills and training system and supporting our suburbs and regions.

Following the State Election in 2022, the Premier announced a number of machinery of government (MoG) changes.

We were renamed the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions (DJSIR) and came into effect on 1 January 2023, supporting 15 ministerial portfolios and 9 Ministers to discharge their responsibilities related to economic and community development.

DJSIR is focused on serving the people of Victoria. Since commencing as Secretary in March 2023 it is clear to me that our team is passionate and committed to this goal and living our values of accountability, integrity and respect.

While we have a broad remit, we are united by our shared purpose – to grow prosperity through jobs and skills, to build the productive capacity of our economy to help business and industry thrive, and to support Victorians to participate in the economy, the creative industries, and in sport and recreation.

It is an honour to lead a department that plays such a critical role for Victoria.

## Accountable Officer’s Declaration

In accordance with the *Financial Management Act 1994,* I am pleased to present the Annual Report of the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions for the year ending 30 June 2023.

**Tim Ada**Secretary

# About the Department

Established on 1 January 2023, the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions (DJSIR) brought together government portfolios focused on building a prosperous future for our state and its people, our businesses and industries, and our communities and regions.

As at 30 June 2023, our work supported 9 ministers spanning 15 portfolios; with the department operating across metropolitan Melbourne, regional Victoria and in 23 international posts. We also oversee a significant number of public entities, including public corporations, regulatory authorities and specialist boards and work closely with many government, industry and community stakeholders. As of mid-October 2023, the department supports 9 ministers and 11 portfolios.

Our values of Accountability, Integrity and Respect underpin everything we do.

## Our purpose

The Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions is focused on growing Victoria’s prosperity, building the productive capacity of our economy and increasing participation. We do this by creating more opportunities for people through jobs and skills; helping businesses to thrive; and building vibrant communities and regions.

For Victoria, this means:

### Growing prosperity by creating more opportunities for people through jobs and skills

We’re helping people access the training and supports they need to find and succeed in work. As Victoria’s demand for skilled workers increases, we’re bringing employers, TAFE and training providers and employment services together so business and industry have access to a world-class workforce and more Victorians can achieve their education and employment aspirations. We’re also supporting Aboriginal self-determination through employment and economic development and finding new ways to grow greater participation through Victoria’s social economy.

### Supporting the productive capacity of our economy to help businesses and industries thrive

We’re helping businesses and industries grow, adapt or transition. By strengthening Victoria’s business environment and global connections, we’re attracting investment, helping build new industries and supporting the expansion of Victorian businesses into international markets. We’re fostering research, innovation and commercialisation, digital and creative economies, and advanced manufacturing. We’re also working to cement Victoria’s position as Australia’s leading tourism and major events destination.

### Increasing participation and supporting vibrant communities and regions

We’re building vibrant, resilient suburbs and regions and supporting Victorians’ participation in the economy, community and recreation. Our tailored, place-based approaches enhance connectedness, boost liveability, leverage local economic strengths and opportunities, and improve access to community infrastructure. We’re supporting more Victorians to engage in the arts, sport and outdoor recreation. Our relationships across government, communities and businesses help make sure the benefits of a robust economy are available to all Victorians – supporting a stronger and fairer society.

Underpinning all our work is our recognition that we are in an active sovereign relationship with First Nations, and we’re committed to developing the skills we need to support a fair treaty process that can realise positive outcomes for all Victorians.

# Changes to the department during 2022–23

## About the machinery of government changes

The Premier of Victoria announced new portfolio responsibilities and machinery of government (MoG) changes on 5 December 2022.

As part of the changes, the former Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (DJPR) became the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions (DJSIR), effective 1 January 2023.

### Changes effective 1 January 2023 – incoming portfolios

Investment attraction, industry development and innovation have been consolidated into a single department to integrate economic development policy and streamline entry points for industry and investors. The Training and Skills and Higher Education portfolios joined the department, to integrate skills and industry policy and better connect workers with the jobs of the future. A new Outdoor Recreation portfolio was also established, bringing together hunting, fishing and boating.

DJSIR brings together:

* The government’s economic development and investment attraction functions of Invest Victoria, which transferred from the Department of Treasury and Finance
* Policy oversight for the $2 billion Breakthrough Victoria Fund, which transferred from the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC)
* The Training and Skills and Higher Education portfolios, which transferred to DJSIR from the Department of Education and Training
* Social Services Workforce Reform, which transferred from DPC to better align with the Employment and Training and Skills portfolios
* The new portfolio of Manufacturing Sovereignty
* The new portfolio of Outdoor Recreation, which includes the Game Management Authority and the Victorian Fisheries Authority.

### Changes effective 1 January 2023 – outgoing portfolios

The MoG changes also included the transfer of the following portfolios to other government departments.

* The Agriculture and Resources portfolios (including related functions and entities) transferred to the renamed Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action
* Medical Research transferred to the Department of Health
* The Business Precincts Branch transferred to DPC (policy functions) and the Department of Transport and Planning (delivery functions)
* Racing (including related functions and entities) transferred to the Department of Justice and Community Services
* Local Government Victoria and the Social Procurement Function (including related functions and entities) transferred to a new Department of Government Services (DGS).

### Changes effective 27 March 2023

* The Telecommunications policy and Connecting Victoria program team transferred to DGS
* A number of corporate support staff transferred to ensure departments can operate successfully in light of the movement of functions.

### Changes effective 4 May 2023

* A number of staff from the Program Centre, Program Policy and Solutions, and Customer Experience teams transferred to DGS to support the creation of a whole-of-Victorian-Government (WoVG) grants function.

# Direct costs attributable to machinery of government changes

In December 2022, the government issued an administrative order restructuring some of its activities via machinery of government (MoG) changes, taking effect from 1 January 2023. As result of the MoG changes, the department incurred the following additional direct costs:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions | Costs incurred ($) | Anticipated future costs (1 July 2023 onwards) |
| Relocation | 370,417 | 10,000 |
| IT and records management | 754,545 | 2,015,701 |
| Rebranding | 75,026 | – |
| Other | 3,161 | – |
| **Total** | **1,203,149** | **2,025,701** |

Anticipated future costs attributable to the MoG change mainly relate to network, infrastructure and data systems migrations.

There were no direct costs attributable to the MoG change that have been incurred by the entities that are consolidated into the department’s annual report pursuant to section 53(1)(b) of the *Financial Management Act 1994*.

# Subsequent Events

On 18 July 2023, the Victorian Government announced it would not proceed with hosting the 2026 Commonwealth Games and would instead deliver a $2 billion regional investment package. The Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions will play a key role in delivering this package.

On 14 August 2023, the department implemented a realigned organisational structure to effectively and efficiently deliver the government’s agenda in line with budget decisions, and to capture integration opportunities arising from MoG changes.

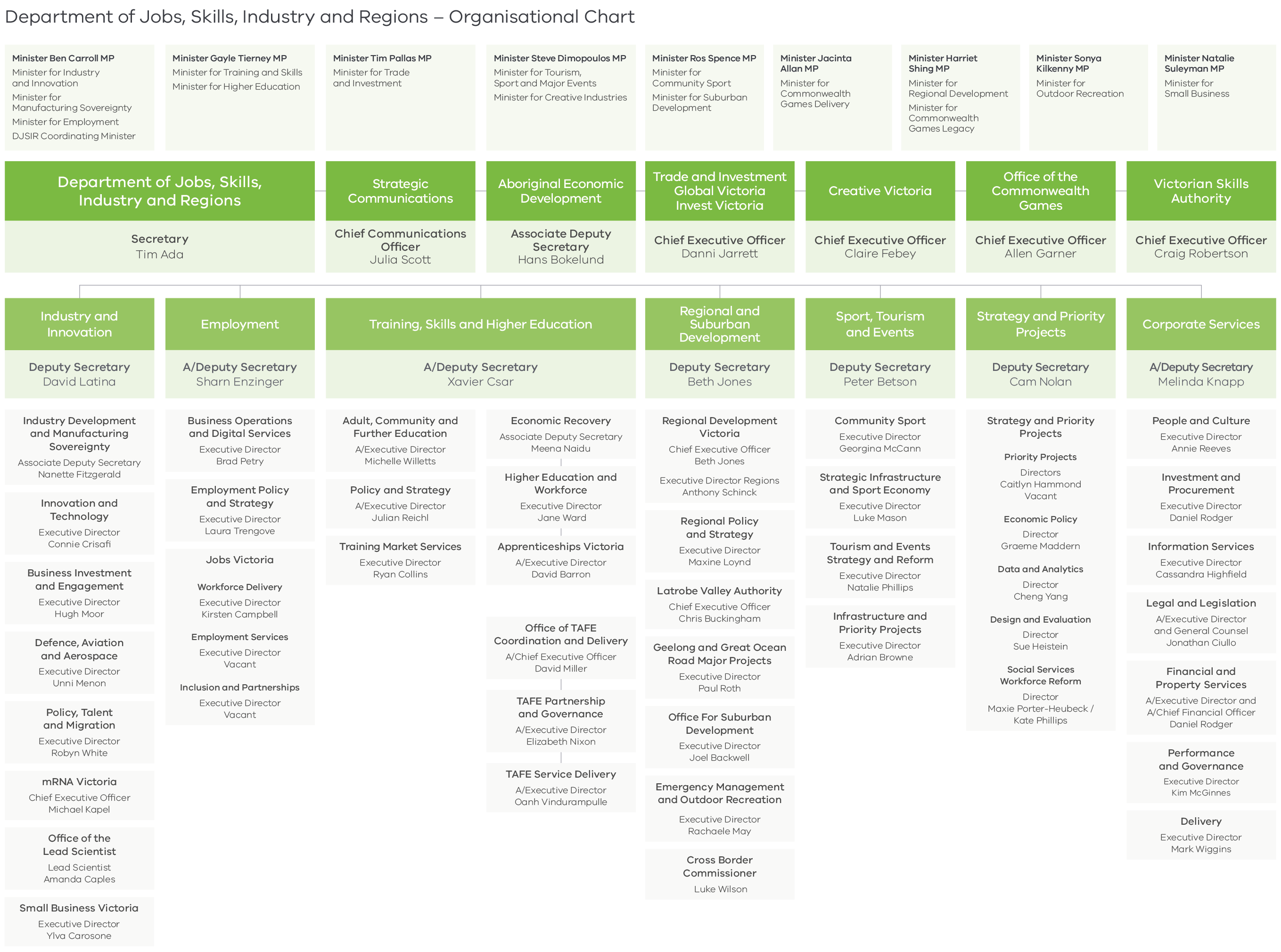
On 2 October 2023, the Premier announced changes to the Victorian Cabinet. Ministers supported by DJSIR include:

* The Hon. Natalie Hutchins MP   
  (Minister for Jobs and Industry, DJSIR Coordinating Minister)
* The Hon. Colin Brooks MP   
  (Minister for Creative Industries)
* The Hon. Ben Carroll MP   
  (Minister for Medical Research\*)
* Mr Steve Dimopoulos MP   
  (Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events, Minister for Outdoor Recreation)
* The Hon Sonya Kilkenny MP   
  (Minister for Suburbs\*\*)
* Mr Tim Pallas MP   
  (Minister for Economic Growth)
* The Hon. Ros Spence MP   
  (Minister for Community Sport)
* The Hon. Natalie Suleyman MP   
  (Minister for Small Business)
* The Hon. Gayle Tierney MP   
  (Minister for Skills and TAFE, Minister for Regional Development)
* Ms Vicki Ward MP   
  (Minister for Employment)

\* This portfolio and function will transfer from Department of Health to DJSIR in early 2024

\*\* This portfolio and function will transfer from DJSIR to Department of Transport and Planning in early 2024

### Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions – Organisational Chart



## Ministers

The department supported 9 ministers spanning 15 portfolios.  
As at 30 June 2023, they were:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Minister | Role |
| The Hon. Ben Carroll MP | Minister for the Coordination of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions Minister for Industry and Innovation Minister for Employment Minister for Manufacturing Sovereignty |
| The Hon. Jacinta Allan MP | Minister for Commonwealth Games Delivery\* |
| Steve Dimopoulos MP | Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Minister for Creative Industries |
| The Hon. Sonya Kilkenny MP | Minister for Outdoor Recreation |
| Tim Pallas MP | Minister for Trade and Investment |
| The Hon. Harriet Shing MP | Minister for Regional Development Minister for Commonwealth Games Legacy\* |
| The Hon. Ros Spence MP | Minister for Community Sport Minister for Suburban Development |
| The Hon. Natalie Suleyman MP | Minister for Small Business |
| The Hon. Gayle Tierney MP | Minister for Training and Skills Minister for Higher Education |

The department also provides support to parliamentary secretaries.   
As at 30 June 2023, they were:

| Parliamentary Secretary | Role |
| --- | --- |
| Mr Darren Cheeseman | Parliamentary Secretary for the Commonwealth Games\*\* |
| Ms Bronwyn Halfpenny | Parliamentary Secretary for Jobs |
| Ms Katie Hall | Parliamentary Secretary for Creative Industries |
| Ms Michaela Settle | Parliamentary Secretary for Regional Development |
| Ms Nina Taylor | Parliamentary Secretary for Training and Skills |

\* These portfolios were retired on 20 July 2023

\*\* This role was retired on 1 August 2023

## Executive Board

The DJSIR Executive Board (EB) is the department’s primary governance body. The Executive Board is a forum for the collective stewardship of the department and is responsible for supporting the Secretary to deliver on the department’s remit.

At 30 June 2023, members of EB were:

| Name | Role |
| --- | --- |
| Tim Ada | Secretary |
| Peter Betson | Deputy Secretary, Sport, Tourism and Events |
| Hans Bokelund | Associate Deputy Secretary, Aboriginal Economic Development |
| Sharn Enzinger | Acting Deputy Secretary, Employment |
| Claire Febey | Chief Executive Officer, Creative Victoria |
| Xavier Csar | Acting Deputy Secretary, Training, Skills and Higher Education |
| Danni Jarrett | Chief Executive Officer, Global Victoria, Invest Victoria |
| Beth Jones | Deputy Secretary, Regional and Suburban Development |
| Melinda Knapp | Acting Deputy Secretary, Corporate Services |
| David Latina | Deputy Secretary, Industry and Innovation |
| Cam Nolan | Deputy Secretary, Strategy and Priority Projects |
| Julia Scott | Chief Communications Officer |

## Audit and Risk Committee

The Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) is an independent body established in accordance with the Standing Directions 2018 under the *Financial Management Act 1994*. The Secretary appoints all committee members based on their qualifications and experience to ensure that the committee can adequately discharge its duties. The ARC meets 6 times a year as determined by the Chair, with the Chief Financial and Chief Audit Officers being standing invitees to all meetings.

The ARC provides the Secretary with independent assurance on the department’s:

* financial and performance reporting
* risk oversight and management
* internal control systems
* legislative and policy compliance.

In 2022–23, the ARC members were:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Name | Role | Period |
| Peter Lewinsky | Chair and Independent Member | Ongoing |
| Pamela Mitchell | Independent Member | Ongoing |
| Patricia Neden | Independent Member | Ongoing |
| Nanette Fitzgerald | Associate Deputy Secretary, Industry Development and Participation | Ongoing |
| Matt Lowe | Deputy Secretary, Agriculture | July to December 2022 |
| Cam Nolan | Deputy Secretary, Strategy and Priority Projects | From January 2023  (replacing Matt Lowe) Ongoing |
| Sharn Enzinger | Deputy Secretary, Employment | From January 2023 |

## Legislation administered by the department

The department’s website **djsir.vic.gov.au** details DJSIR-administered legislation from   
1 January 2023 onwards.

# Entities

#### Creative Industries portfolio

* Arts Centre Melbourne
* Australian Centre for the Moving Image
* Docklands Studios Melbourne Pty Ltd
* Film Victoria (trading as VicScreen)
* Geelong Arts Centre
* Melbourne Recital Centre
* Melbourne Arts Precinct Corporation
* Museums Victoria
* National Gallery of Victoria
* State Library Victoria
* The Wheeler Centre

#### Industry and Innovation portfolio

* Breakthrough Victoria
* Defence Council Victoria
* LaunchVic
* Office of the Local Jobs First Commissioner

#### Small Business portfolio

* Victorian Small Business Commission

#### Commonwealth Games Delivery portfolio

* Victoria 2026 Pty Ltd (also known as the Organising Committee)

#### Regional Development portfolio

* Latrobe Valley Authority
* Office of the Cross-Border Commissioner
* Regional Development Victoria

#### Outdoor Recreation portfolio

* Game Management Authority
* Victorian Fisheries Authority

#### Tourism, Sport and Major Events portfolio

* Australian Grand Prix Corporation
* Emerald Tourist Railway Board
* Kardinia Park Stadium Trust
* Melbourne and Olympic Parks Trust
* Melbourne Convention Bureau
* Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Trust
* Melbourne Cricket Ground Trust
* Professional Boxing and Combat Sports Board
* State Sport Centres Trust
* Victorian Institute of Sport
* Visit Victoria

#### Trade and Investment portfolio

* Invest Victoria

#### Training and Skills portfolio

* Adult, Community and Further Education Board
* AMES Australia
* Bendigo Kangan Institute
* Box Hill Institute
* Chisholm Institute
* Federation University Australia (Federation TAFE)
* Gippsland Institute of TAFE
* Gordon Institute of TAFE (The Gordon)
* Goulburn Ovens Institute of TAFE (GOTAFE)
* Holmesglen Institute
* Melbourne Polytechnic
* RMIT University (Vocational College)
* South West Institute of TAFE (SWTAFE)
* Sunraysia Institute of TAFE (SuniTAFE)
* Swinburne University of Technology
* VET Development Centre (VDC)
* Victorian Skills Authority
* Victoria University Polytechnic
* William Angliss Institute
* Wodonga Institute of TAFE

# Departmental Groups as at 30 June 2023

## Aboriginal Economic Development

The Aboriginal Economic Development group (AED) worked across the department to increase opportunities for employment and prosperity for Aboriginal Victorians. It collaborated with DJSIR business units to help embed principles of self‑determination into departmental policies and programs. AED drives the implementation of the Victorian Government *Yuma Yirramboi Strategy* in partnership with the Victorian Aboriginal Community and supports the Yuma Yirramboi Council – DJSIR’s self-determined Aboriginal partnership entity. AED also coordinated whole-of-department annual reporting on outcomes achieved for the Aboriginal Community through the *Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Report* and *Closing the Gap Report*.

## Corporate Services

The Corporate Services group consisted of specialist functions including financial and property services, performance and governance, legal and legislation, people and culture, information services and investment and procurement. These functions enabled the department to operate efficiently and effectively and support the Secretary and ministers to meet legislative obligations and responsibilities.

## Creative Victoria

Creative Victoria championed and supported the state’s creative industries, growing our $34 billion creative economy for the benefit of all Victorians. Creative Victoria invested in the people, organisations, events and projects that make Victoria the creative state. It backed the career development of creative workers, support the sustainability of creative organisations, and ensured that all Victorians have access to creative and cultural opportunities, wherever they live. Underpinned by the principle of First Peoples first, and with self-determination embedded in policies and programs, the group platformed First Peoples creative leadership and supports the growth of a strong First Peoples creative sector. Creative Victoria also oversaw the state’s $7 billion-plus portfolio of creative and cultural facilities, assets and collections, including Victoria’s iconic public cultural institutions which welcome more than 10 million visitors a year.

## Employment

The Employment group supported people into job opportunities, boosts labour supply and helped build a more inclusive Victoria. Through Jobs Victoria, it supported people looking for work, with a focus on the most disadvantaged jobseekers and communities.

The group also assisted employers in finding the staff they need to grow their businesses and administered the Sick Pay Guarantee – a safety net for casual and contract workers that allows them to access sick pay where they need to stay at home when they are sick or to care for a loved one.

## Industry and Innovation

The Industry and Innovation group worked to build relationships with Victorian businesses – from global enterprises to small businesses and start-ups – to secure jobs, promote innovation and support industry development outcomes that strengthen our economy, with a focus on Victoria’s priority industry sectors.

It did this by facilitating and enabling new investments developing and attracting world-class talent and supporting key industry and manufacturing capabilities. The group strengthened the state’s innovation and digital ecosystem and its linkages with industry, drove conversion of research into commercial opportunities and advocated for a competitive business environment.

## Office of the Commonwealth Games

The Office of the Commonwealth Games provided oversight for the planning of the Victoria 2026 Commonwealth Games including governance and coordination, commissioning of infrastructure and planning for the achievement of legacy objectives.

## Regional and Suburban Development and Latrobe Valley Authority

The Regional and Suburban Development group led place-based policy, programs, projects, and engagement to support communities across regional Victoria, suburban Melbourne and cross-border localities. It did this by working with local stakeholders, industry and all levels of government to facilitate economic opportunities, boost community resilience, and manage sustainable fisheries and game resources.

With community engagement as a key focus, the Regional and Suburban Development group supported regional and metropolitan partnerships as a source of advice on priorities.

The Latrobe Valley Authority, based in Morwell, works to support the region through a period of economic transition and support a strong future for the Latrobe Valley and Gippsland.

## Sport, Tourism and Events

Sport and Recreation Victoria (SRV) is dedicated to supporting Victoria’s sport and recreation sector, while inspiring Victorians to get active and achieve success at the highest level. Providing a series of programs and grants to support Victoria’s sporting sector, SRV worked collaboratively with not‑for‑profits, private entities and the government to drive participation, improve the health and wellbeing of Victorians, build stronger and more connected communities, deliver economic growth and jobs and enhance liveability for all Victorians.

The Office for Women in Sport and Recreation worked to increase the participation, leadership and visibility of women and girls in sport and active recreation. It led the Change Our Game initiative, which challenges gender stereotypes and drives behaviour change to advance gender equality in sport and active recreation.

Tourism and Events was responsible for strengthening the profile of the visitor economy across government and influencing strategic reforms and economic outcomes for the sector while administering a number of programs and grants. The group undertook research and provided policy, strategy and industry development advice to government and industry. It also provided governance support and guidance to a number of entities that market the state, secure events, and manage large scale tourist attractions, precincts, facilities and entertainment venues.

## Strategy and Priority Projects

Strategy and Priority Projects supported DJSIR with cross-portfolio priorities and policy development. The group brings together advanced skills in public policy, strategy, program design, economics, modelling, data, evaluation and project management. The team used these skills to provide a client-focused service across the department using a collaborative and flexible project-based approach.

## Trade and Investment and Invest Victoria

Trade and Investment strengthened Victoria’s economic growth by facilitating private sector investment in Victoria, helping Victorian businesses successfully trade into global markets and growing Victorian’s market share of international student enrolments in Australia.

The group connected Victoria to global opportunities by building Victorian businesses’ export competencies, connecting Victorians to international trade opportunities through its global network of 23 Victorian Government Trade and Investment (VGTI) offices and promoting Victoria’s world-class industry capabilities to international audiences. It took a leadership role for international engagement across government and advocated for the best policy settings for Victoria to be globally competitive. Harnessing specialist knowledge in international markets, it promoted Victoria as a world-leading destination for trade and investment, international education and innovation.

## Training, Skills and Higher Education and Victorian Skills Authority

The Training, Skills and Higher Education group supported economic and social prosperity across Victoria by ensuring industry has access to skilled workers and that all Victorians have the knowledge, skills and attributes that are in demand for employment now and into the future.

It did this by delivering skills-focused responses to industry needs and ensuring access to quality, pre‑accredited and accredited education and skills.

The Victorian Skills Authority focused on planning for skills and training to meet local needs. Working closely with stakeholders across the education and training landscape, it drove collaborations and shared expert advice, brokered skilling solutions and improved the skills base of Victoria to support industry and employment outcomes.

# Achievements

## Industry and Innovation portfolio

**Attracted and facilitated investment in priority sectors to support jobs growth and industry development**

* Stimulated creation of 1,771 jobs and $1.3 billion of capital expenditure in the Victorian economy
* Engaged with 1,500+ firms, providing advice to support economic development in Victoria by generating investment leads, innovation linkages and insights into key areas such as energy transition, supply chains and digital technology
* Secured a 10-year partnership between the Victorian Government, the Australian Government and Moderna to:
* Establish the Asia-Pacific Moderna Research and Development Centre and Moderna’s Asia‑Pacific Headquarters in Victoria
* Build the first mRNA vaccine manufacturing facility in the Southern Hemisphere. Construction commenced in December 2022 and the facility will have the capacity to produce up to 100 million vaccine doses annually
* Announced an in-principle-partnership with leading German biotechnology company BioNTech to establish its Asia-Pacific mRNA clinical manufacturing, R&D (research and development) centre and translational hub in Victoria
* Confirmed the development of the Lockheed Martin Australia space hub in Melbourne to deliver the JP9102 project for the Australian Government and Department of Defence, expected to create more than 150 high-value jobs
* Secured Saab Australia’s Centre of Excellence to be built in Melbourne, creating 60 full-time equivalent jobs over the next 3 years.

**Other key investment attraction and facilitation highlights:**

* Bombardier Aerospace Australia established its Asia-Pacific aircraft maintenance, repair and overhaul operations headquarters in Essendon. The project created 65 high-skilled jobs and developed specialised aviation servicing training
* Commonwealth Bank of Australia opened a new tech hub in Melbourne’s CBD generating 400 new roles for engineers and software developers, including partnerships with Monash and RMIT universities
* Victorian telematics company Directed Technologies opened a new $15 million headquarters and connected mobility innovation centre to expand and export its smart transport industry technology and navigational systems
* Ego Pharmaceuticals is expanding its Braeside manufacturing facility by 50% to meet growing demand for its dermatological skincare products, investing $35 million and creating 90 jobs
* JETCharge is expanding electric vehicle infrastructure and operations at its national headquarters in Fishermans Bend, creating an additional 70 highly skilled jobs
* Australia’s largest kombucha maker Remedy Drinks is investing $43 million in its new R&D, manufacturing and logistics facility in Dandenong
* Seer Medical is establishing its new global headquarters in Victoria, investing in R&D, manufacturing and production to advance its at-home diagnosis and monitoring technology for epilepsy for local and overseas markets. The project will create more than 200 jobs.

**Made strategic investments and delivered increased support for innovation in priority sectors**

* Opened the new $23.1 million CSIRO National Vaccine and Therapeutics Lab supported by $1.5 million in funding
* Launched the $2.4 million ANDHealth Victorian Connected Health Innovation and Commercialisation Centre (CHICC) – a co‑working, mentoring and workshop space designed specifically for Victoria-based digital and connected health companies
* Delivered $2.7 million in grant funding to 16 research projects through Round 2 of the mRNA Victoria Research Acceleration Fund to fast-track RNA-based vaccine and therapeutics R&D and manufacturing in Victoria
* Supported the operations of Breakthrough Victoria Pty Ltd.

**Accelerated the growth of the startup ecosystem by supporting LaunchVic operations**

* Held the 2023 Governor of Victoria Startup Awards
* LaunchVic supported 142 Victorian companies and new entrants through its core programs including 2 CivVic challenges (in partnership with VicHealth and the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action) and through Office Hours, a service helping founders navigate the startup ecosystem
* Delivered Round 1 of the 30x30 program – designed to support scaleup founders to upskill C-suite leaders in human resources, operations and finance functions
* Continued to co-invest in women-led startups through the Alice Anderson Fund. 12 co‑investments were announced in the 2022–23 financial year, bringing the cumulative total to 27.

**Lifted the capability of key industry sectors and supply chains in Victoria**

* Awarded over $477,000 to 9 Victorian defence businesses through the Victorian Land Systems Fund – Supply Chain Uplift Program – supporting businesses to uplift their capabilities to enter Hanwha Defense Australia’s supply chain
* Facilitated the participation of 18 businesses and 7 interns in the Smart Enough Factory which assists defence small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to adopt Industry 4.0 technologies to improve manufacturing processes
* Completed the Industry 4.0 Hub grant project delivered by Swinburne University at its Factory of the Future to help manufacturers’ digital transformations
* Invested $3.2 million in the Medtech Manufacturing program which provided 12 medtech businesses with support to win new manufacturing contracts, accelerate entry into the US market, prepare for FDA approval and grow their manufacturing capabilities. The program is expected to create 90 new jobs and accelerate medical device manufacturing projects
* Connected Victorian clinicians with local medtech innovators to deliver clinically focused medtech manufacturing and procurement outcomes through the Health Department-led Manufacturing Innovation program, in partnership with Safer Care Victoria
* Supported the establishment of the Cremorne Digital Hub as the gateway to Victoria’s digital ecosystem – accelerating tech sector growth, developing and attracting talent, creating jobs and stimulating business growth
* Supported 98 Victorian defence and space businesses and research organisations to exhibit at major defence tradeshows including the 2022 Land Forces International Land Defence Exposition and the Avalon 2023 Australian International Airshow and Aerospace and Defence Exposition, with over $70 million in potential leads generated
* Secured the relocation of the biennial Land Forces International Land Defence Exposition to Victoria from 2024 – expected to generate $65 million in economic benefits each year
* Established the new Victorian Defence and Space Network – enabling critical engagement, information sharing and promotion of defence opportunities for Victorian SMEs
* Sponsored Australian Manufacturing Week 2023 at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre, with the event hosting 348 exhibitors and 15,914 attendees.

**Equipped workers in priority sectors with high-demand skills so they can thrive in advanced manufacturing and the digital economy**

* Established the Victorian Medtech Skills and Devices Hub (VMH), led by the University of Melbourne and delivered with RMIT, Swinburne University of Technology and the Aikenhead Centre for Medical Discovery
* Supported 252 manufacturing workers across 111 manufacturing businesses, through the $4.5 million Digital Jobs for Manufacturing program
* Supported 2,647 mid-career workers through the Digital Jobs program (Rounds 4 to 7). The program has now supported 4,061 workers since Round 1, with 58% of participants women and 40% of participants over the age of 40
* Delivered the Women in Security pilot program with the Australian Women in Security Network, boosting the representation of women in cyber technical and leadership roles and addressing workforce shortages in the cyber security sector
* Expanded the SummerTech LIVE program to provide 180 paid studentships over the 2022–23 summer. The program helped students and recent graduates develop job-ready skills and supported 91 SMEs to solve digital challenges and boost their competitiveness
* Promoted Victoria’s digital ecosystem and innovators through the Digital Innovation Futures (DIF) initiative – with the online event hub sharing news and connecting audiences with 2,800 live and on-demand events, supporting 20,000 Victorians to upskill and share knowledge
* Secured CyberCon, the largest annual cyber conference in the Southern Hemisphere, in Melbourne until 2024 – providing a platform to promote the Victorian Government’s commitment to a cyber safe state and a thriving cyber sector
* Sponsored Intersekt 2022, the largest national fintech conference and the 2022 Finnie Awards, supporting the growth of the digital tech and fintech sectors.

**Helped address critical workforce shortages in Victoria by nominating 15,000+ migrants as part of Victoria’s largest ever skilled and business migration program**

* 14,900 skilled visa nominations, including over 3,000 skilled migrants to regional Victoria
* 170 business and investor visa nominations, contributing $185 million to the Victorian economy
* 5,600 health, social services and teaching professionals nominated
* 1,721 overseas qualifications of skilled professionals assessed.

**Grew Victoria’s air services capacity by securing expanded airline services**

* Cathay Pacific expanded its air services between Hong Kong and Melbourne with a double daily service from April 2023
* New airline VietJet launched its inaugural Australian air services between Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam and Melbourne in April 2023
* LATAM Airlines will re-establish non-stop flights between Santiago, Chile and Melbourne commencing in September 2023.

**Promoted and encouraged fair work and recognised good employers**

* Supported Ethical Clothing Australia to build and administer the Ethical Clothing Register, accrediting businesses for ethical supply chains and safe working conditions
* Released Victoria’s new Fair Jobs Code which took effect from 1 December 2022 – ensuring that employees of businesses benefiting from Victorian Government contracts or significant business expansion grants have safe, secure and inclusive workplaces
* Issued 2,286 Fair Jobs Code pre-assessment certificates from 10 August 2022 to 30 June 2023, with assessment processing times averaging 10 to 20 working days
* Presented to 350+ Fair Jobs Code forums, training sessions and targeted stakeholder meetings to directly reach more than 3,500 stakeholders.

**Continued to support the participation of Victorian industry and workers through the Local Jobs First Policy, comprising the Victorian Industry Participation Policy and the Major Projects Skills Guarantee (MPSG)**

* Introduced changes to the Local Jobs First Policy to strengthen outcomes for the local steel industry, including raising the profile of steel on current and future Local Jobs First Strategic projects. A new notification process ensured local steel alternatives are considered before proposing a change to local sourcing, giving the industry a full and fair opportunity to compete for government work
* Updated and refreshed the Local Jobs First policy and guidelines to strengthen policy outcomes and simplify application for agencies and industry. This included a new MPSG Policy Statement to complement the Local Jobs First policy with improved guidance and processes for a simplified approach
* Set ministerial requirements on 44 Local Jobs First Strategic Projects worth a combined value of $21.2 billion. An additional 102 requirements were put in place across 35 of these projects, ensuring local production, businesses, research and other valuable economic activities are incentivised and considered throughout the life of Local Jobs First projects
* Reported achieving 15 million hours worked by apprentices, trainees and cadets on higher-value construction projects to 30 March 2023
* The Local Jobs First Commissioner expanded its industry stakeholder outreach program and has overseen 200 strategic projects representing $81 billion of total government investment since its establishment
* The Industry Capability Network Victoria (ICN), responded to 2,055 requests for advice on preparing a local industry development plan (LIDP), with 3,749 LIDP submissions (2,880 for standard projects and 869 for strategic projects) received.

## Manufacturing Sovereignty portfolio

**Supported Victoria’s manufacturing capabilities by facilitating and enabling new investments**

* Launched the *Made in Victoria 2030: Manufacturing Statement* to an audience of 400 Victorian industry leaders. The statement sets out the Victorian Government’s priorities for enhancing sovereign advanced manufacturing, attracting and stimulating investment, and creating new jobs
* Established the Made in Victoria – Manufacturing Growth program – providing grants of up to $250,000 to support small and medium-sized manufacturers to introduce new technologies, expand operations, improve productivity and enhance sovereign manufacturing
* Awarded $1.4 million to 9 manufacturers through the Business Growth Stream of the Low Carbon Manufacturing Grants program, supporting Victorian manufacturers to participate in new energy technology supply chains
* Delivered the 20th Victorian Manufacturing Hall of Fame Awards – raising awareness and promoting manufacturing excellence, industry collaboration, knowledge sharing and best practice. The event attracted 770 industry guests and awarded 14 categories from a record 91 nominations.

## Small Business portfolio

Provided access to information, knowledge and capability-building resources to support Victorian small businesses to start, grow and connect

* Reached 145,405 subscribers through the *Business Victoria Update Newsletter –* providing small businesses with valuable information on grants, programs and tools, expert advice and events to network and build capability
* Attracted 4.57 million users and 6.54 million visits to the Business Victoria website, providing information to help Victorian businesses start, run and grow
* Delivered capability building through the Small Business Toolkits program. The program hosted 6,700 participants in 149 workshops, 94 live webinars, 1,584 virtual business advisory sessions and 2,847 self-guided learning sessions
* Delivered 376 business mentoring sessions, 25 wellbeing coaching sessions, 257 financial counselling sessions and 790 business engagements across 79 local government areas via the Small Business Bus
* Engaged with 1,774 multicultural small businesses and 207 business organisations, connecting them with government services. Delivered 52 in-person and virtual business forums in 6 languages attracting 53,292 views
* Facilitated 117 appointments through the Microbusiness Concierge Service, providing one-on-one support to navigate information and advice on business services and programs.

**Delivered tailored programs and initiatives designed to foster a healthy, growing small business sector**

* Continued the Business Recovery and Resilience Mentoring program in partnership with the Victorian Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Supported 1,460 businesses to make informed decisions about their business’s future through 6,060 mentoring sessions
* Delivered 15,883 sessions to more than 1,100+ unique clients through the Partners in Wellbeing Helpline, including 6,301 wellbeing coaching sessions, 8,245 financial counselling sessions and 1,337 business advisory sessions
* Continued to fund 11 embedded mental health clinicians in business chambers and industry peak bodies hardest hit by the pandemic, providing mental health support and training to staff and employers
* Continued to provide essential wellbeing and mental health support to Victorian small businesses with 10,000+ landing page visits to the Headway webpage
* Delivered 71 grants through Round 3 of the Business Chambers and Trader Groups program – empowering businesses to collaborate, adapt and thrive
* Provided 2,355 rebates through Round 2 of the Small Business Ventilation program – helping eligible public-facing small businesses to improve building ventilation in areas accessible to customers and reduce the risk of spreading viruses
* Provided a further 3,476 rebates through Round 3 of the Small Business Digital Adaptation program – helping businesses acquire and implement digital products to improve cash flow, marketing and productivity.

**Championed business resilience through relief and recovery efforts following the October 2022 flood events (as at 30 June 2023)**

* Responded to 6,856 Business Victoria hotline calls from flood-affected businesses
* Provided 605 business owners free and confidential one-on-one services from local business relief advisers, guiding them through the available supports
* Provided 7,741 businesses with a $5,000 grant to support their immediate clean up and recovery efforts
* Delivered 577 grants to businesses through the $50,000 Business and Community Sport Recovery program to cover expenses resulting from direct flood damage to property, assets, stock or equipment
* Supported up to 522 businesses in flood-affected areas to access integrated mental health and wellbeing, financial counselling and business advice services through the Partners in Wellbeing program.

**Supported businesses to thrive and contribute to a strong economic recovery for Victoria**

* Facilitated tailored advisory services to 624 high-growth potential small businesses to help them achieve their growth objectives through the Ready for Growth program
* Introduced the Retail Leases Regulations 2023 on 15 April 2023 to replace the sunsetting Retail Leases Regulations 2013
* Promoted the Fair Payment Policy, the Victorian Government’s commitment to paying small business invoices with a contract value of less than $3 million within 10 business days
* Celebrated 20 years since the commencement of the Victorian Small Business Commission. Over its 20 year history, the Commission has responded to 207,000+ enquiries, assisted 33,500+ Victorians who applied for help and has successfully resolved more than 19,500 disputes
* The Victorian Small Business Commission received the national ‘Ombudsmen & Commissions Alternative Dispute Resolution Group of the Year’ award.

## Employment portfolio

**Enabled people looking for work through Jobs Victoria initiatives**

* More than 18,000 disadvantaged Victorians gained employment with the support of Jobs Victoria services
* Focused efforts on supporting Victoria’s most disadvantaged jobseekers, including:
* women
* young people
* people who are culturally and linguistically diverse
* refugees and humanitarian migrants
* people in the justice system
* Aboriginal people
* people who are long-term unemployed or facing long-term unemployment
* people with disability
* Supported over 4,700 subsidised jobs for jobseekers through the Jobs Victoria fund, including approximately 60% for women
* Facilitated 230 traineeships through the Youth Employment Scheme, designed to combine paid work experience with study for a certificate level qualification to help forge a career in the public service or similar organisation
* Supported 2250+ workers with information and advice through the Jobs Victoria Local Employment Transition Service (LETS) – helping impacted workers where significant retrenchment or mass worker transition events occur.

**Supported Victorian workers through the Sick Pay Guarantee program**

* Provided more than 150,000 workers with the opportunity to receive up to 38 hours sick and carer’s pay at the national minimum wage, with more than 71,000 workers registered since it began in March 2022.

**Increased opportunities for employment and prosperity for Aboriginal Victorians**

* Established the new Yuma Yirramboi Council in July 2022 following the completion of the inaugural Victorian Aboriginal Employment and Economic Council term
* Substantial progress in implementing Phase 1 of the *Yuma Yirramboi Strategy*, with activity focused in 4 key areas:
* First Peoples Tourism Plan and culturally safe employment models
* Delivering financial literacy training, business mentoring programs and greater employment opportunities for Aboriginal People
* Growing the Aboriginal business sector and its export readiness
* Supporting Traditional Owners to set their own self-determined economic priorities
* Supported 14 Aboriginal businesses to participate in trade missions to New Zealand and the US, and supported 2 Traditional Owner representatives to attend the World Indigenous Tourism Conference in Canada
* Progressed DJSIR’s Treaty readiness:
* Provided opportunity for 50 DJSIR staff to undertake the Treaty MicroCert program delivered by the University of Melbourne as part of Yuma Yirramboi implementation
* Delivered Yarning sessions to 174 DJSIR staff to provide a deeper understanding of the current Treaty landscape in Victoria
* Provided cultural safety training to staff through the Koorie Heritage Trust. A total of 35 in-person and online training sessions were held, with 350 staff successfully completing the training
* Engaged the Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation to deliver 5 cultural safety training sessions to enhance staff understanding of how to work effectively with Aboriginal people
* Supported Aboriginal businesses through targeted sponsorship, including:
* Ngali – sponsored the First Nations Fashion Runway program, Together We Create, that featured 6 Victorian First Peoples creatives to expand their creative practice into the world of fashion
* Sponsored Indigenous runway projects with the ‘My Spirit, My Country’ fashion show featuring First Peoples fashion designers and aspiring models. This event won multiple awards globally including gold at Muse Creative Awards and bronze at the A’Design Awards
* Cultural exchange to New Zealand with 12 members of the Djirri Djirri dance group participating in the Treaty of Waitangi ceremonies in Paihia.

## Training and Skills portfolio

**Supported the expansion of eligibility criteria for subsidised training courses**

* Increased Skills First subsidies and Free TAFE reimbursement rates in recognition of inflation and rising costs of delivery
* Added 6 courses and 6 short courses to Free TAFE, benefiting Victorians through:
* boosting the number of Auslan interpreters to make a more inclusive and diverse community
* supporting the horticulture sector through change to a more skilled and secure workforce
* addressing shortages in the non emergency patient transport workforce
* supporting the government priority of responding to family violence
* supporting demand for the agricultural chemical skill set across multiple regions
* allowing apprentices and mechanics to upskill to electric and hybrid vehicle platforms
* supporting government mental health priorities
* Introduced a regional loading to the Free TAFE program delivery in regional areas
* Successfully negotiated a 12-month interim skills agreement on Free TAFE with the Australian Government.

**Hosted the Big Build Apprenticeships portal which processed 2,523 expressions of interest for apprenticeships or traineeships on Big Build projects**

* Contributed to 821 apprentices and trainees being employed by Group Training Organisations (GTOs) on Big Build sites as of 30 June 2023, noting 24.9% were women, 6.5% had a culturally and linguistically diverse background and 7.4% identified as First Nations people
* Apprenticeships Victoria provided advice on training and employment, safety and workplace concerns, mental and physical wellbeing, housing and financial difficulties, and drug and alcohol issues to 80,477 contacts via Apprenticeship Support Officers.

**Worked with TAFEs in a new way to build a stronger, more effective TAFE network**

* Provided $26 million across the TAFE network to support institutes with improving their cyber security resilience, critical IT upgrades, and negotiating and centralising common ICT contracts for work placement and asset management information systems
* Completed the $20.25 million Learning and Library Centre capital project at South West TAFE’s Warrnambool campus and the $30.11 million Culinary School capital project at The Gordon’s Geelong campus, through the $220 million Building Better TAFE Fund
* Supported practical placement officers across the TAFE network – reducing the mandatory work placement backlog by 50%
* Facilitated image access elevating the quality and accessibility of learning resources across the TAFE network – increasing images purchased by 40% whilst lowing the cost by 10%.

**Increased Skills First subsidies and Free TAFE reimbursement rates in recognition of inflation and rising costs of delivery**

* Processed almost 2.7 million claims for payments from training providers for $927 million in Skills First Subsidies – providing funds for 276,059 students
* Delivered the first 2,400 places from the 2021 budget allocation for an additional 4,800 places over 2 years, and contracted delivery of the remaining 2,400 places in 2023.

**Supported the network and industry by providing incentives to employ 200 TAFE teachers through the TAFE Teacher Incentive program**

* Provided funding through the International Specialised Skills Institute to 15 VET practitioners from Learn Local and registered training providers to undertake applied research through an international fellowship. The Fellowships deepen the expertise of fellows, who disseminate their findings across the VET system and through the VET Development Centre (VDC)
* Oversaw increased participation in the professional learning offered by the VDC across the calendar year from 2,062 in 2021 to 2,141 in 2022; and to 31 May 2023, 1,773 participants had registered for workshops
* Supported operations of the VDC across a program of professional learning focused on 3 streams of activity – VET Teaching Theory and Practice; Quality in Skills First Delivery; and Learn Local.

**Promoted training and skills through awards and events**

* Secured the hosting rights for the 2023 WorldSkills National Championships – up to 500 competitors from across Australia will showcase their skills in 60+ categories and compete for the title of Australia’s best in their respective industries
* Delivered the WorldSkills Team Victoria Training camp in June 2023 – more than 200 competitors, mentors and judges attended the 2-day event hosted across 8 Melbourne metropolitan TAFEs and Registered Training Organisations (RTOs)
* Supported the Adult Community and Further Education Board in holding the annual Learn Local Awards in February 2023. More than 230 people attended to celebrate the success of finalists and winners across 8 award categories
* Hosted the 2022 Victorian Training Awards in September 2022. Several award winners went on to represent Victoria at the Australian Training Awards, with some nominees winning, including the Vocational Student of the Year award and the Excellence in Language, Literacy and Numeracy Practice award.

**Supported economic recovery through engagement with government, key sectors and industry**

* Delivered the inaugural *Victorian Skills Plan* – providing a skills roadmap detailing state-wide and regional skill challenges and where the jobs are. The plan was developed in collaboration with industry, learners, education providers, government and the community and was launched in August 2022
* Liaised with more than 600 local and regional stakeholders to develop regional skills demand profiles for 7 Victorian regions.

**Ensured Victorians have equitable access to quality education and training opportunities**

* Launched a pilot of the Online Core Skills Assessment Tool (OCSAT) – delivering a standardised tool for the assessment of literacy, numeracy and digital skills for people seeking to participate in government-subsidised training at TAFEs and Learn Local organisations
* Promoted skills to the Victorian community through the Victorian Skills Gateway which delivered more than 921,000 online sessions, and through the TAFE and Training Line which responded to 13,500+ queries
* Skills and Jobs centres provided support and services in response to 16,616 individual enquiries. More than 13,800 Victorians across the state were supported with independent career advice and assistance.

## Higher Education portfolio

**Fostered a vibrant university sector that contributes to Victorian Government priorities**

* Distributed funding to Victorian universities for capital, applied research and research infrastructure projects through the $350 million Victorian Higher Education State Investment Fund (VHESIF)
* The VHESIF was developed in response to the significant impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Victorian universities
* The $350 million fund supports universities with capital works, applied research and research infrastructure focused on boosting Victoria’s productivity and the economy as the state recovers from the impacts of COVID-19, which hit universities hard
* Engaged regularly with Victorian universities, including to drive positive change in relation to:
* Improving safety on campus for students and staff, seeking to ensure students can thrive in an environment free from the threat of sexual discrimination, harassment and assault
* Addressing issues with respect to insecure work and under-payment of wages
* Actively engaged in the Australian Universities Accord, the national review of the higher education system, to advocate for favourable outcomes for Victoria.

**Supported economic recovery and social prosperity by ensuring industry has access to skilled workers and that Victorians have the knowledge, skills and attributes needed now and for the jobs of the future**

* Developed the *Clean Economy Workforce Development Strategy for Victoria* as a 10-year framework for investment and planning in the skills and training needed to meet net zero
* Released the *Future of Agriculture Training Review* so that agriculture courses meet the needs of students and employers now and into the future
* Invested $56.5 million into the Victorian training and skill development ecosystem with 75 new grants across the Workforce Training and Innovation Fund (WTIF), Regional and Specialist Training Fund (RSTF), Workforce Skill Set Fund (WSSF) and Clean Economy Workforce Capacity Building Fund (CEWCBF)
* Prepared and published 40 Victorian purchasing guides to support the implementation of final training products developed under the auspices of the Australian Industry Skills Committee
* Released resources through the VET Shared Learning Resources (VSLR) project for 1,200+ units of competency. TAFEs can access the VSLR to preview and download a wide selection of digital learning resources from several department-funded projects.

**Removed barriers to access training for disadvantaged cohorts**

* Re-engaged 1,562 disadvantaged Victorians across the state with a pathway to education, training and employment through the Reconnect program
* Ensured that displaced Ukrainian refugees and humanitarian visa holders with study or work rights continued to have access to the Asylum Seeker VET program and government-subsidised Skills First training
* Elevated the Youth Access Initiative profile by expanding eligibility to include unaccompanied humanitarian minors and young people participating in the Children’s Court Diversion Service
* Established the Game Changers Peer Mentoring program designed to support the engagement and retention of post-secondary students who have left or are leaving the out-of-home care system.

## Trade and Investment portfolio

**Trade and global engagement facilitated Victoria’s economic growth**

* Launched *Global Victoria = Your Export Partner*, outlining Global Victoria’s role as the Victorian Government’s trade facilitation and promotion agency
* Supported 3,084 Victorian firms to achieve $704 million in export sales by participating in government programs including:
* outbound trade missions
* inbound trade missions
* one-to-one client facilitation delivered by Melbourne and international staff
* in-market trade promotion activities
* Delivered 47 outbound and inbound trade missions supporting 600+ Victorian companies – including technology, health and sports, food and fibre, sustainability and advanced manufacturing, and consumer goods and ecommerce – to trade internationally in priority sectors
* Delivered export skills and capability development initiatives for more than 660 clients, supporting them to pursue international opportunities
* Delivered the 2022 Governor of Victoria Export Awards celebrating leading Victorian exporting businesses
* Continued delivering the Global Victoria Trade Alliance, supporting exporters to build knowledge, capabilities and connections via 26 events with alliance partners and supporting 730+ clients
* Finalised the Global Gateway program and confirmed an additional $37 million of export sales in this financial year, to achieve a total of $124 million of export sales since 2021 as a direct result of the program
* Supported 129 clients across 9 Global Victoria Women events focused on building the export capabilities and networks of Victorian businesswomen and showcasing their world-leading capabilities to international audiences
* Opened a new Victorian Government Trade and Investment office in Paris in February 2023
* Hosted 35 Victorian Government roundtables with Australian ambassadors and high commissioners, supporting strong collaboration with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

**Revitalised Victoria’s International Education sector**

* Developed and launched *Victoria’s International Education Recovery Plan 2025*, with a vision to drive recovery and innovation in Victoria’s international education sector through to 2025
* Provided information, legal referrals and complex casework support to approximately 1,850 international students, and $20,915 in financial aid, through the Study Melbourne Hub
* Delivered a range of strength‑based employability, entrepreneurship and enrichment initiatives to build social capital and leadership skills to more than 2,500 international students through the Study Melbourne Empowered series
* Implemented 15 grant projects under the Study Melbourne Inclusion program for improved wellbeing and inclusion of international students
* Delivered 14 Student Experience Network events attended by more than 750 industry stakeholders, addressing critical issues such as international student accommodation, wellbeing and employability
* Launched the new International Student Travel Pass, aimed at improving the accessibility and affordability of public transport in Victoria for international students by offering discounts on 3, 6 and 12 month passes for eligible international students in Melbourne and regional Victoria
* Welcomed approximately 10,120 visitors at our offshore Study Melbourne hubs in Kuala Lumpur, Ho Chi Minh City and Shanghai (physical) and South Asia (hybrid). Hosted 225 events, including pre-departure briefings, employability seminars and career talks to support Victoria’s current and prospective students and alumni
* Awarded 700+ scholarships to international students enrolled in pathway courses at 18 TAFEs and university partners through the Pathway to Victoria Scholarship program
* Delivered Melbourne EdTech Week to strengthen Victoria’s credentials as a leader in edTech, including Melbourne EdTech Summit and EduTECH International Congress and Expo, attended by 8,000+ in-person and 1,000 online participants
* Delivered the 2021–22 Victorian International Education Awards program to recognise excellence amongst Victoria’s international students and providers
* Supported the inaugural Quad Fellowship Summit of 100 postgraduate STEM fellows from Australia, India, Japan and the United States, showcasing the state’s education, research and commercialisation capability and culture to a global audience
* Established *Victoria’s Commitment to Action: Improving International Student Employment Outcomes*, collaborating with an initial 24 employers to promote post-study pathways for global talent while addressing Victoria’s skills shortages in select industry sectors
* Continued to support Victoria’s 10 universities through the $50 million International Education Resilience Fund to respond to impacts of the COVID‑19 pandemic
* Developed over 5,000 welcome packs for education providers to distribute to newly-arrived international students, helping them meet cost-of-living pressures, establish themselves in Melbourne and build familiarity with Study Melbourne
* Delivered 2 inbound familiarisation tours for school counsellors and education agents from Southeast Asia including site visits to Victorian university and TAFE campuses, and an outbound university mission to Vietnam to foster partnerships and build commercial opportunities with key stakeholders
* Developed and launched Phase 1 of the *Only in Melbourne* brand campaign in China and India to drive consideration of Victoria’s world-class education offering to potential students and their influencers.

**Facilitated investment attraction in Victoria**

* Attracted and secured high quality investments that are expected to generate 2,549 new jobs, $332 million in wages and $625+ million in innovation expenditure
* The majority of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) projects attracted aligned with priority sectors including digital technology, renewable energy, advanced manufacturing, health and life sciences, and agri-food. Notable achievements included:
* Keywords Studios – an Irish global games development company – is doubling its investment in Victoria, and establishing its first centre of excellence for autonomous testing and quality assurance in Melbourne
* Orsted – a global leader in offshore wind power production from Denmark – is expanding into Australia, choosing Victoria for its Australian headquarters
* Singapore-based equity investment startup, Seventh Sense will establish an Artificial Intelligence R&D hub in Melbourne, creating 23 jobs
* UST – a leading digital technology company – has relocated its ANZ headquarters from Sydney to Carlton. It has launched an innovation lab at the University of Melbourne’s Melbourne Connect tech hub, creating 250 jobs
* CI&T – a world-leading Brazilian-based ICT consulting and software development company – will establish its Australian headquarters in Melbourne, creating 70 new jobs
* Monopoly Dreams’ indoor theme park at Melbourne Central – one of 2 such theme parks globally – will augment Melbourne’s leisure and recreation mix, creating more than 45 jobs
* Taiwan’s Synnex’s smart distribution centre and new Australian headquarters in Oakleigh South represents a capital investment of greater than $100 million
* Smart Pension – a UK-based global leader providing services to the finance industry – is locating its APAC hub in Melbourne
* SunGreen H2’s manufacturing and R&D hub in Victoria is creating 30 jobs while developing nanotechnology to improve the efficiency and lower the cost of electrolyser parts used in hydrogen production
* LeadSquared – an Indian technology unicorn (a startup valued at over $1 billion) – is establishing its Oceania base in Victoria and Melbourne as its global hub for all training needs
* A partnership between Israel’s Sheba Medical Centre, Monash University’s Monash Health and the Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre will explore the possibility of opening an innovation centre in Victoria
* Hudson Institute’s new RNAte platform in Victoria – through close collaboration between mRNA Victoria and Invest Victoria – is providing world-first innate immune sensing of RNA response as a commercial service to industry
* Neoen – a French-based global leader in exclusive renewable energy production –established a permanent Victoria state office in Melbourne
* The Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) Industry Vision Statement was publicly released in August 2022, demonstrating the Victorian Government’s commitment to supporting the development of an AAM ecosystem.

**Provided companies with access to finance and investment**

* Continued the delivery of the R&D Cashflow Loans initiative, providing $50 million in 2-year loans to 58 Victorian SMEs. The initiative enables future-focused companies to progress R&D activity amidst challenging economic conditions, further ensuring that the Victorian innovation ecosystem continues to attract global investment
* Continued the delivery of the $25 million Venture Growth Fund (VGF) – a venture debt fund that provides scale-up capital to finance company growth, in collaboration with 2 appointed fund managers
* Launched the $20 million Equity Investment Attraction Fund (EIAF) to prioritise direct equity investments into high-growth companies of strategic interest to Victoria that are looking to scale up their business.

**Continued implementation of the CarbonNet project**

* Continued delivering the project’s front end engineering design to provide the basic costing and design of the project’s construction stage – to inform final investment decisions and allow for planning, scheduling, regulatory applications and the engagement of foundation customers
* Awarded the first offshore permit for an area straddling both Victorian and Australian waters, developing the regulatory pathway for future carbon capture and storage (CCS) projects needed to decarbonise the Victorian economy
* Conducted comprehensive scientific research and ‘fault seal analysis’ of data collected during the 2020 offshore appraisal well activity which confirmed the suitability of the project’s storage site and the quality of its offshore storage aquifer.

## Tourism, Sport and Major Events portfolio

**Strengthened Victoria’s sport and active recreation sector**

* Supported the 141st Stawell Gift carnival, which attracted close to 12,000 attendees and promoted the Grampians region to over 1.025 million viewers through a live national broadcast
* Supported SportNXT 2023 – an international sports business summit that attracted 850+ delegates from 17 countries and promoted Victoria’s world-class sport and major event capabilities to a national and international audience
* Supported 95 events through the Significant Sporting Events program, including:
* Indoor Cricket World Cup
* Australian Dancesport Championship
* National Taekwondo Championships
* FIBA Basketball World Cup Qualifiers
* Melbourne to Warrnambool Cycling Classic
* Maurie Plant Athletics Meet – Melbourne
* Attracted record attendances at some of Victoria’s major sporting events, including:
* 2023 Australian Open (839,192)
* 2023 Formula 1 Australian Grand Prix (444,631)
* 2022 Australian Football League (AFL) Grand Final (100,024)
* Secured the Australian Open until at least 2046 and the Formula 1 Australian Grand Prix until 2037 in Melbourne
* Completed Australian Football League Women (AFLW) venue upgrades to Ikon Park, Arden Street Oval at North Melbourne Recreation Reserve and Moorabbin Reserve incorporating the Danny Frawley Centre for Health and Wellbeing, and commenced construction at Whitten Oval and Punt Road Oval
* Completed upgrades to AAMI Park and delivered the home of the Matildas – part of the State Football Centre at La Trobe University, Bundoora, in readiness for the 2023 Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA)Women’s World Cup
* Progressed delivery of the $225 million Marvel Stadium upgrade, noting the partnership with the AFL also secured the AFL Grand Final in Victoria to 2059, AFL investment in community and semi-professional facilities, matches in regional Victoria and sports development initiatives
* Progressed construction on:
* $142 million Kardinia Park Stadium Stage 5 redevelopment
* $132 million State Basketball Centre redevelopment
* $17 million Rugby League State and Community Centre
* $33 million State Rugby (union) Centre of Excellence
* Supported the Victorian Institute of Sport (VIS) to continue expanding its programs and support an increased number of scholarship holders, many of whom are preparing for the Paris 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games
* Implemented 8 community service agreements with professional sporting clubs being piloted to leverage infrastructure investment funding to deliver whole of Victorian community benefits.

**Delivered initiatives of the Visitor Economy Recovery and Reform Plan – to grow the visitor economy and create jobs**

* Released *Experience Victoria 2033*, a new state-wide master plan that is Victoria’s blueprint for industry, investors, operators and governments to catalyse investment in innovative tourism products over the next 10 years
* Continued to deliver on the transition of regional tourism boards into a network of visitor economy partnerships (VEPs). The establishment of VEPs is now progressing across the state
* Launched the Visitor Servicing program to help the Victorian tourism industry deliver innovative visitor information tools that encourage people to stay longer and spend more across the state
* Supported regional tourism boards to create destination management plans, local area action plans, pillar plans and regional workforce plans, and implement a suite of industry development and workforce initiatives
* Launched the Visitor Economy Community Engagement program to build the capacity of industry, councils and regional partners to engage with communities and promote the value of tourism
* Delivered the Young People in Tourism Pilot program in partnership with the Young Tourism Network to engage and develop young tourism professionals and students and promote tourism career pathways
* Supported a delegation of 12 First Peoples-led tourism businesses and Registered Aboriginal Parties to attend the World Indigenous Tourism Summit in Perth to learn and connect with Indigenous tourism challenges and opportunities on a global scale and promote the state as a budding destination for cultural tourism
* Provided funding to 2 Registered Aboriginal Parties through the First Peoples Tourism Pilot to undertake tourism product analysis and develop self-determined cultural tourism plans
* Supported $310 million of tourism infrastructure and investment projects across metropolitan and regional Victoria through the Tourism Flagship Projects program, Regional Tourism Investment Fund, Enabling Tourism Fund and Regional Tourism Infrastructure Projects program
* Provided targeted support to aid with communication and reignite tourism and events following the floods in October 2022, including funding for the reactivation and promotion of the online platform Click for Vic, as well as support for key local events such as the Fryers Street Food Festival in Shepparton, the Ararat Agricultural Show and Bendigo Agricultural Show
* Continued to support the post-pandemic recovery of major tourism assets Puffing Billy Railway and the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre, enabling them to deliver experiences such as the Puffing Billy Train of Lights and the Connection Experience at the LUME that brings together First Peoples’ art, music and culture.

**Continued to secure, support and deliver major leisure, cultural, sporting and business events**

* Supported the delivery of 40 major events, in collaboration with Visit Victoria, including:
* ICC Men’s T20 World Cup
* Bledisloe Cup
* Melbourne Winter Masterpieces ACMI Goddess exhibition
* Super Rugby Super Round 2023
* Rising Festival
* Secured 28 international business events, in collaboration with Melbourne Convention Bureau. Events included:
* Confederation of Asia Pacific Chambers of Commerce and Industry Conference 2022
* World Barista Championships and World Brewers Cup 2022
* SpineWeek 2023
* Delivered 2 new rounds of the National Business Event program with the Melbourne Convention Bureau and Business Events Victoria. Events supported included the Jobs Australia conference; the 2023 Stormwater Victoria Conference in Ballarat; and the Cell Signalling and its Therapeutic Implications conference on the Mornington Peninsula
* Monitored 23 declared major events under the *Major Events Act 2009* including the 2023 Formula 1 Australian Grand Prix, the 2023 Australian Open tennis tournament, 2022 Boxing Day Test, 2023 Rising Festival and the theatre production of *& Juliet*
* Enforced ticket scalping provisions for declared major events by removing more than 1,215 ticket listings from secondary ticketing platforms and issuing 56 penalty infringement notices for breaches of the *Major Events Act 2009*
* Secured a 5-year sponsorship package with Netball Australia, including the 2023 Suncorp Super Netball Grant final, test matches and high-performance training camps; and promotion of Victoria as a tourism destination
* Delivered 34 regional events, in collaboration with Visit Victoria through the Regional Events Fund, including the Kings of Leon concert in Mildura, the Lost Trades Fair in Bendigo and the Cycling Road Nationals in Ballarat
* Supported 122 events across Greater Melbourne through the Small and Medium Events program
* Supported the delivery of Always Live, in collaboration with Visit Victoria and Always Live Limited. The festival showcased more than 570 artists, with 225,000 attendees to 367 free and ticketed shows
* Provided funding to Pride Cup Ltd to deliver LGBTIQ+-inclusive initiatives at the A-League’s Pride Cup round including education and awareness to staff and players, community and match day activations and a Pride Village for the 8,000+ people who attended the match.

## Creative Industries portfolio

**Championed Victoria’s industries while growing the creative economy**

* Invested more than $10.6 million in creative individuals and workers. This included support for over 100 Victorian artists and creative groups to bring diverse projects to life with $2+ million in funding through Round 1 of the new Creative Projects Fund
* Provided investment in the development and presentation of new creative work through Round 2 of the Creative Ventures program, supporting 20 creative teams, from theatre-makers to fashion labels to publishers, with $3.7 million over 2 years
* Supported music industry professionals through programs including Live Music Restart, Music Works and On the Road Again, providing more than $11 million to 85 projects and organisations across the Victorian music sector
* Boosted the creative scene in Melbourne’s west with $2.3 million in new funding to present events delivered by up-and-coming and established artists and festivals like Born in a Taxi, Na Djinang Circus, Snuff Puppets and the Melbourne International Comedy Festival
* Celebrated the 40th anniversary of Melbourne Fringe which delivered a record-breaking box office of $2.5 million and a wider economic impact of nearly $23 million
* Reinforced Victoria’s position as a global design leader through the Victorian Premier’s Design Awards. There were 93 finalists over 8 categories and Australia’s largest design event, Melbourne Design Week was attended by a record 70,000 people
* Invested in 27 screen projects through the Victorian Screen Incentive and 60 through the Victorian Production Fund, which are expected to generate almost 10,000 Victorian project jobs over the next few years
* Launched the $5.4 million screen industry skills and training package to support Victorian digital games, TV and film professionals, including the Digital Screen Sector Vocational Training EOI, *Neighbours* skills development program and the *Set Educated* initiative
* Invested $5.25 million in Melbourne’s globally significant digital games industry, including $2 million to expand Melbourne International Games Week, where a record-breaking 85,000 people participated in 2022, and the international success of Victorian game *Cult of the Lamb* was celebrated
* Led cultural diplomacy initiatives with Victorian Government priority counterparts in Greece, Sichuan and Jiangsu, China, West Java and Yogyakarta, Indonesia and Lombardy, France
* Managed Victorian Government in-and-out bound trade delegations including:
* 60+ delegates from UNESCO Cities of Literature for its Melbourne conference
* 30+ Canadian creative businesses visited Victoria
* 222 delegates from 33 countries attended Melbourne’s Australian Performing Arts Market
* 70+ delegates attended SxSW
* 80+ companies attended the world’s biggest games markets in San Francisco and Cologne
* Unveiled new exhibitions and attractions at Melbourne Museum, including bringing together First Peoples knowledge of nature with creative technology in the immersive exhibition *Tyama* and a new outdoor play-based learning space the Gandel Gondwana Garden
* Progressed design and construction of the $1.7 billion Melbourne Arts Precinct transformation, with major works getting underway on upgrades to Arts Centre Melbourne’s Theatres building
* Established and improved creative spaces – from workshops and collaborative spaces to mobile studios – for 19 organisations through the $2 million Creative Neighbourhood Infrastructure Support program
* Prepared to open the $140 million Geelong Arts Centre Little Malop Street redevelopment
* Addressed critical industry skills shortages in regional Victoria, by providing professional training and qualifications for theatre technicians through Tech Connect in 2 regional hubs – Bendigo and Shepparton
* Delivered by Arts Centre Melbourne’s RTO, 12 people successfully completing their Certificate IV in Live Production and Technical Services. An additional 34 people participated in the training by undertaking individual units. An accredited Certificate IV level wellbeing unit was delivered for the first time
* Supported the NGV to deliver exhibitions including:
* *Melbourne Now*, showcasing the work of more than 200 local artists and designers
* *Alexander McQueen: Mind, Mythos, Muse*, a celebration of the work of the legendary British fashion designer
* Melbourne Winter Masterpieces exhibitions *The Picasso Century* and *Pierre Bonnard: Designed by India Mahdavi* topped and tailed the year with *The Picasso Century* delivering the highest economic impact in the history of the series with $91 million being generated for the state
* Brought art to young people across Victoria with the largest ever NGV Kids on Tour program visiting more than 130 venues including galleries, libraries, paediatric hospitals, neighbourhood houses, migrant resource centres and community organisations – from Cobram to Craigieburn and Warrnambool to West Gippsland
* The State Library Victoria welcomed a record 2 million visitors through its doors and delivered the inaugural annual Book Bash program online and live streamed to primary school students in June, reaching 83,000+ students from more than 640 schools.

## Community Sport portfolio

**Promoted and supported Victoria’s local community sport initiatives**

* Provided more than $100 million towards 215 community sport infrastructure projects to help communities transform sports grounds, build female-friendly change rooms, develop exciting play spaces and light up sports fields across the state
* Launched a refreshed *Active Victoria 2022–2026: A Strategic Framework for Sport and Active Recreation in Victoria*
* Launched the Fair Access Policy Roadmap to improve gender equitable access to, and use of, community sports infrastructure, with more than 1,500 stakeholders participating in the ‘Education Phase’ since its launch in August 2022
* Oversaw Balance the Board policy delivery, with 96% of funded state sport and active recreation bodies meeting minimum requirements for women on boards
* Supported 104 organisations through Change Our Game community activation grants to increase participation, build capability and celebrate the role of women and girls in sport and active recreation
* Supported 30 women pursuing a career in sports media and broadcasting to build knowledge and skills through the Change Our Game Women in Sports Broadcasting program
* Awarded 97 Change Our Game Professional Development scholarships, supporting skill development and retention for women in sport and active recreation across every stage of the career cycle
* Increased impact and engagement on Change Our Game social media and digital channels, with a 14% growth in social media followers, 22% in e-newsletter subscribers and 50% in Change Our Game website users
* Supported 1,288 grants totalling almost $2.1 million through sporting club grants to make community sport and active recreation more inclusive and accessible, stimulate local economies, build sustainable volunteer opportunities and increase local participation
* Delivered more than 50,000 vouchers in the Get Active Kids voucher program, helping eligible Victorian families with the costs of participating in organised sport and recreation
* Approved 438 one-off grants of $5,000 each to a total value of $2.19 million to support Victorian sport and active recreation organisations directly affected by the October 2022 Victorian floods
* Supported 100 state sporting associations, state sport and active recreation bodies, regional sports assemblies and peak bodies with their projects through the Together More Active program – worth more than $5.5 million – to enhance the capability of the sport and active recreation sector and deliver more inclusive participation opportunities
* Delivered 231 grants totalling almost $500,000 under the Athlete Pathway Travel Grants program to support Victoria’s emerging athletes, coaches and officials
* Supported 41 sport and active recreation organisations to continue participating after an emergency event under the Emergency Sporting Equipment grant program, for a total of more than $70,000
* Supported 31 organisations through the Access for All Abilities program with 15 grants worth $1.5 million, including to state sporting associations, local government areas and specialist community and disability services
* Provided 156 grants valued at over $159,000 under the Aboriginal Sporting Participation grant program to increase opportunities for Aboriginal Victorians to participate in sport and recreation activities
* Supported 34 organisations with 12 projects through the Preventing Violence Through Sport Grants program, to support the sports sector in creating change in communities to prevent gender-based violence
* Delivered Preventing Violence Through Sport community of practice over 7 sessions with 80+ participants per session. The community of practice was attended by sport and primary prevention sectors to build capacity to prevent gender-based violence
* Delivered an Access for All Abilities community of practice to 80+ people to build the capacity of the sport and active recreation sector to increase the participation of people with disability through a codesign approach
* Delivered over $210,000 in grants through the Youth Aquatic Accreditation program to support workforce shortages and deliver training for 860+ individuals – 38% of whom work in areas of high disadvantage
* Launched the refreshed Fair Play Code to help all local clubs and participants understand their responsibility in maintaining a safe and welcoming environment for everyone involved in sport.

## Suburban Development portfolio

**Fostered suburban revitalisation projects**

* Supported 8 suburban revitalisation boards chaired by a member of parliament, with representatives from local government, businesses, community organisations and other institutions in Boronia, Lilydale, Melton, Noble Park, Reservoir, Tarneit, Frankston and Broadmeadows
* Delivered investments of $7 million into 62 suburban revitalisation projects valued at over $9 million to improve liveability and economic and social outcomes
* Invested almost $15 million into 324 projects located in 177 suburbs, with a total combined project value of $31.1 million, including co‑investment from local government, community organisations and groups. A total of 174 projects were completed in 2022–2023.

**Facilitated metropolitan partnerships**

* Supported 6 metropolitan partnerships that engaged 1,171 people across 13 community engagements in regional and local communities. The partnerships advised government on community priorities and drove local action through pilots and projects to test new approaches and develop solutions to local problems
* Supported the metropolitan partnerships to scope and commence 11 projects worth $2 million to drive local action and build an evidence base for scalable, place-based investments. Projects included Fast-tracking Neighbourhood Batteries and initiatives to address social isolation.

**Supported the CBD through Melbourne City Funds**

* Stimulated the CBD economy and supported businesses through the Melbourne City Recovery Fund, including support to:
* activate 67 spaces with pop-up shops, creative offerings and bespoke displays
* deliver the Business Concierge service, which provides free advice and mentoring for city businesses, reducing the time it takes businesses to start up in the city and supporting them to navigate the CBD’s new daily rhythm
* Supported events, activations, innovation projects and public infrastructure works through the Melbourne City Revitalisation Fund, attracting visitors, students and workers to the city, including:
* Expanding Australia’s first dedicated social enterprise precinct at Queen Victoria Market, which will sell goods from up to 100 social enterprises, employing 75 disadvantaged jobseekers
* Staging RISING Festival 2023 – a major winter drawcard event for Melbourne.

## Regional Development portfolio

**Delivered community benefits in the Barwon South West Region**

* Facilitated the FormFlow housing manufacturing facility in Portland, with funding from the Portland Diversification Fund. The project will transform an unused Portland airport hangar into a $2.35 million facility capable of producing up to 200 relocatable houses a year for the Glenelg Shire and surrounding regions, creating 50 new jobs and an estimated 150 indirect jobs
* Allocated funding from the Regional Jobs Fund to support:
* Moolap-based boat manufacturer Edencraft International in installing advanced manufacturing machinery at its workshop to build up to 100 boats per year
* Prestige Jayco Caravans Geelong in redeveloping its sales centre in Geelong to meet growing demand and create 15 jobs
* Portarlington manufacturer Think Fencing in expanding its product line and business to help reduce PVC waste going to landfill
* Continued support for Gunditjmara Traditional Owners to develop the Budj Bim Cultural Landscape. The Victorian Government increased its investment in Tae Rak (Lake Condah) with an additional $7 million for Gunditj Mirring Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation to develop an amphitheatre, yarning circle, boardwalk, and associated interpretation of the World Heritage-listed Tae Rak eel traps
* Achieved significant progress on the Timboon to Port Campbell stage of the 12 Apostles Trail. The project will deliver a 20 km off-road cycling and walking trail which is set to distribute economic benefit from the coastline through to the hinterland and increase visitor yield
* Supported improvements to the town centre of Port Campbell, with $6 million in funding from the Regional Infrastructure Fund. The project will deliver public improvements in the town’s retail, commercial and foreshore area with works on Tregea Street already completed
* Supported construction of 5 affordable housing units at Moyne Koroit Caravan Park, with $500,000 funding from the Regional Recovery Fund. This will provide local businesses in Moyne Shire with more options to support key seasonal workers in the region.

**Delivered community benefits in the Gippsland region**

* Supported renovation of the Maffco Brewery & Taphouse, with $400,000 funding from the Regional Tourism Investment Fund. Up to 15 jobs were created during the renovation and an additional 8 ongoing roles already filled
* Supported the Backyard project at Yes Youth Hub – a community driven space for young people to come together, connect, grow, and have fun – with significant funding from the Living Local – Regional Fund
* Provided grants to various community organisations through the Living Local – Regional Community Grants Fund, to purchase equipment and undertake minor building refurbishments and maintenance works to help them support their local communities. Recipients included:
* Walhalla Goldfields Railway
* Gippsland Employment Skills Training Inc. Moe
* Paynesville Neighbourhood Centre
* Mirboo North Opportunity Shop
* Supported the $700,000 expansion of Wood Street Windows in Bairnsdale to increase manufacturing capability by 30% and create 10 jobs
* Facilitated the development of Victoria’s first end of life (EOL) solar panel recycling plant in Kilmany, supporting the Latrobe Valley’s strategic energy transition and creating 30 jobs. The $3.65 million facility leverages innovative technology to achieve up to 98% extraction from EOL solar panels, and has a target capacity of 180 kilotonne (kt) of waste processing per annum
* Supported Habitat Creations in progressing a $600,000 investment to expand their plant nursery at their Yarragon site – the project will create more efficient irrigation systems and improve plant health, while creating up to 8 new jobs in the Latrobe Valley
* Continued to support the Bullock Island Master Plan with funding of $1.9 million, with upgrades to visitor facilities that will enhance recreational fishing and crabbing activities, supporting the visitor economy in Lakes Entrance and more broadly the Gippsland Lakes
* Supported the Conservation and Land Management program, with $800,000 funding from the Local Economic Recovery Regional Economic Programs Fund. A total of 20 trainees and 6 school-based trainees aged 14 to 18 participated in the program, with 17 trainees having completed their placements and successfully transitioned into work and/or further education. The program supported over 40 bushfire-impacted landowners and 15 community projects
* Delivered the Metung Hot Springs project, with $1.5 million in funding each from the Tourism Infrastructure program – Flagship Projects and the Local Economic Recovery Regional Economic Programs Fund – for a total co-investment of $4.5 million. The project has produced Australia’s first hot springs golf course, with 30+ people employed and up to 200 visitors daily
* Supported the University of Melbourne in undertaking a design study for a Smart Geothermal Industrial Loop (SGIL) focusing on industrial zoned areas of Morwell, with funding from the Investment Fast Track Fund. The project aims to sustainably develop and practically use the substantial geothermal resource in the Latrobe Valley to benefit businesses and the community.

**Delivered community benefits in the Grampians Region**

* Supported the Hammon Park Trailhead project in Creswick, delivering new accessible toilets, picnic and barbecue areas, and a play space for young people
* Supported JG King Pty Ltd to undertake a $6.5 million investment to establish a new Project Windows and Doors facility in Ballarat that will create 15 jobs and house a modern production line capable of producing High Energy Efficient windows to reduce the heating and cooling requirements of homes and improve their liveability
* Completed works at the Perridak Art Gallery which is run by the Ballarat and District Aboriginal Co-operative (BADAC) and shares Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stories and art with the wider community
* Commenced construction of a culturally safe village for Aboriginal Elders in Ballarat that will be led by BADAC. This independent living community will help BADAC to support Aboriginal people in the Central Highlands to have culturally appropriate supports as they age
* Supported improvements to the Wimmera Riverfront, including creating a new public realm at the southern end of Horsham’s main street and the development of an accessible pedestrian and cycling bridge linking the residential areas of Horsham with its central business activity district, schools, and major health precinct
* Supported construction of the Stawell Underground Physics Laboratory, in the disused sections of a working gold mine in Stawell. With a $5 million investment from both Victorian and Australian governments, a team of scientists and engineers built this ground-breaking laboratory one kilometre underground in the search to discover the elusive nature of dark matter
* Supported construction of an on-site water retarding basin, pump system and earthworks on a 1.7-kilometre table at the Bannockburn Southwest Industrial Estate, with $2 million funding from the Regional Infrastructure Fund. This investment will unlock Stage 1 of the Southwest Industrial Estate adjacent to the existing industrial estate at Bannockburn. The expansion addresses a critically short supply of industrial-zoned land in the area and will attract new and expanding businesses into approximately 70 lots on 21 hectares
* Supported revitalisation of the suburb of Sebastopol in Ballarat through 13 projects that have delivered extensive tree planting, street landscaping and new infrastructure including a skate facility, basketball court at MR Power Park and additional lighting to support the junior soccer teams at St George’s Reserve.

**Delivered community benefits in the Hume Region**

* Supported local communities through several significant events including the October 2022 floods
* Delivered 48 community-based projects to enhance the liveability of the region, including:
* completing Shepparton’s Maude St Mall
* Mansfield Autism Statewide Service’s ‘Operation Gamechanger’
* Great Victorian Rail Trail art installations
* Stage 2 of the Great River Road project in the Upper Murray
* Supported the continued growth of iconic visitor economy projects such as Ride High Country and Prosecco Road. Activated 13 projects from Round 2 of Ride High Country with many completed over the year, adding to the regional visitor economy. The program has attracted and supported more than $5 million in investment by the private sector in cycle tourism development across Northeast Victoria, creating an estimated 70 jobs
* Delivered the final portion of $18.9 million of funding for the region’s 5 alpine resorts, with funding over the past 3 years supporting 9 key projects to continue the resorts’ growth and development through improved infrastructure and amenity, and strengthening both green and white season product offers
* Supported the final stages of delivery of the Mt Buller Electricity Upgrade project – one of 9 key alpine resort projects. The $3.8 million project received $3.6 million from Regional Development Victoria (RDV) and has delivered vital additional electricity capacity to Mt Buller, enabling consistent and continued operation and expansion of the snowmaking system, accommodation, and visitor attractions
* Continued to support the ongoing growth and development of the region’s food and fibre industry through key Regional Jobs Fund projects including:
* significant glasshouse developments with Cannatrek, Flavorite and Katunga Fresh
* expansion of Nestle’s confectionery operations in Broadford
* expansion of Unilever’s mayonnaise operation in Tatura
* Supported funding for the Goulburn Murray Woka Yurringa Energy Feasibility Study which lays out the opportunity for a game-changing Aboriginal-owned renewable energy development in the region – providing a circular economy and clean energy solution to support decarbonisation of industry in the region, while also creating opportunities for the agriculture sector, local employment, and engagement with the Indigenous community.

**Delivered community benefits in the Loddon Mallee Region**

* Continued delivery of Galkangu Bendigo GovHub in partnership with Development Victoria and builders Icon Fairbrother, working alongside Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation and Traditional Owners – housing up to 1,000 Victorian Government and City of Greater Bendigo (CoGB) employees, the GovHub will provide a centrally located, one-stop-shop for community access to government services
* Supported the Central Goldfields Shire Council in transforming the Maryborough Railway Station, with $1.8 million in funding from the Regional Infrastructure Fund
* Supported the CoGB to prepare for the Bendigo Regional Employment Precinct. CoGB has purchased 155 hectares of the 294-hectare site on the outskirts of Marong to be developed as an employment precinct and provide critical industrial land for the growing city
* Supported the CoGB to finalise designs and progress its planning for the Bendigo Art Gallery redevelopment. RDV support enabled the development of comprehensive designs and planning activities
* Revitalised the Central Goldfields Art Gallery, with $1.7 million in funding from the Regional Infrastructure Fund and the Regional Tourism Investment Fund – transforming the aging building by merging the historic elements of the 19th century fire station into a contemporary public art gallery
* Supported Mildura Regional Development and the Murrayville community to provide the region with an accessible fuel supply for residents, business, and farming, and to encourage visitation. The unmanned fuel station will be open to the public in October 2023 and feature an all‑weather platform, large tanks, payment terminals and a formal vehicle access road
* Supported the Mountain Distilling Company in investing $1.2 million to expand the Mountain Distilling Equipment gin and whiskey distillery at New Gisborne, with funding from the Regional Jobs Fund. The project will create 17 jobs in the Macedon Ranges
* Completed the new Bendigo Planetarium at the Discovery Science and Technology Centre, with $200,000 funding from the Regional Tourism Investment Fund. Centred around a state-of-the-art dome theatre displaying high-resolution images of planets and the cosmos, the new planetarium is expected to attract more than 14,000 new visitors to the region
* Delivered the community-led Romsey Ecotherapy Park, with artworks and other elements designed to engage all the senses to promote health and wellbeing. The project, delivered with $600,000 in funding from the Regional Infrastructure Fund, created up to 12 jobs during construction and is expected to create flow-on opportunities for local businesses through increased visitation.

**Continued to provide Emergency Management support**

* Delivered the *2023–24 Food and Grocery Sector Resilience Plan* following collaboration with the sector to share and grow resilience initiatives and consider risks
* Established the DJSIR Emergency Management Leadership Committee to oversee emergency management and resilience strategic planning and reform
* Developed the *DJSIR Emergency Management Strategy* that identifies the emergency and resilience setting the department aligns with, supported by delivery of the annual activity cycle
* Delivered 24/7 DJSIR State Agency Commander and State Duty Officer responsibilities as part of the whole-of-government approach for emergency management response. This included deployment of liaison officers to the State Control Centre for 50 days during major emergencies.

**Delivered community benefits through the Latrobe Valley Authority**

* Supported the Ladder Step Up Latrobe Valley program, assisting young people into employment or to re‑engage with secondary or vocational education. Ladder has supported 226 young people, 80 of whom have found employment post program and 61 have re-engaged with education
* Funded the Gippsland Trade and Labour Council (GTLC) to deliver an inclusive employment and workforce transition (IEWT) project for vulnerable community cohorts. The initial focus is on giving young people (aged 16 to 25) pre-apprenticeship skills and qualifications to make them job ready for the domestic construction industry. GTLC registered 190 participants in the IEWT project, with:
* 6 securing permanent employment
* 6 gaining part-time jobs
* 20 acquiring casual work
* 4 getting apprenticeships
* Led the development of the *Latrobe Valley and Gippsland Transition Plan* – setting out a shared community vision for a thriving region in 2035, including opportunities for a strong, diversified economy and job creation in industries that will have a long-term future in Gippsland as the region undergoes significant change
* Commissioned and released 2 significant reports:
* *Gippsland Regional Labour Force Participation Report* – researches factors influencing labour force participation in Gippsland and makes recommendations of interventions that will increase participation among specific groups
* *Gippsland Energy Skills Mapping Report* – maps the current skills of Gippsland’s energy workforce and how they align with the needs of future projects in Gippsland. The recommendations from this report resulted in a $3 million funding allocation for Stage 1 of the Asia Pacific Renewable Energy Training Centre (APRETC) Gippsland at the Morwell Innovation Centre in the 2023–24 Victorian State Budget.

## Commonwealth Games Delivery portfolio

**Established governance arrangements for the games**

* Formally established the Victoria 2026 Commonwealth Games Organising Committee in December 2022, with headquarters in Geelong.

**Progressed development of games infrastructure**

* Progressed games village design and procurement activity in close consultation with local government, Traditional Owners and key stakeholders, following the Victorian Government’s announcement of games village sites in Geelong, Bendigo, Ballarat, and Morwell
* Invited a shortlist of builders to participate in a staged Request for Proposal process for houses and townhouses and a shortlist of contractors to deliver the civil works across games village sites
* Released an Expression of Interest for head contractors to complete the $150 million upgrade to Ballarat’s Eureka Stadium to host athletics, and the $292 million development of facilities in Waurn Ponds to host gymnastics and weightlifting and Armstrong Creek to host aquatics.

**Engaged with partners, stakeholders and communities**

* Hosted the Commonwealth Games Partnership Forum at the Melbourne Cricket Ground in August 2022, bringing together more than 150 partners including regional councils, regional tourism boards, commerce and business groups from the regional hubs, regional higher education sector, tourism associations, Traditional Owner groups and the sport and recreation sector
* Established Hub Delivery Partnership groups in each host community. The groups met monthly to provide strategic direction and oversight on planning and delivery matters at a local level.

## Commonwealth Games Legacy portfolio

**Identified long term benefits of games infrastructure and programs**

* During the Closing Ceremony at the Birmingham Commonwealth Games, Gunaikurnai, Dja Dja Wurrung, Wadawurrung and Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung representatives invited the Commonwealth to their lands
* A First Peoples Leadership Group was established as a sub-committee of the Organising Committee Board to ensure a self-determined approach to the development of initiatives supporting First Peoples.

## Outdoor Recreation portfolio

**Supported outdoor recreation in Victoria**

* Delivered $2 million of initiatives and grants to support the Sustainable Hunting Action Plan, including:
* development information resources
* delivery of community workshops
* research initiatives
* construction of hen houses to support native bird breeding on parks and wetlands
* Delivered the Kangaroo Harvesting Plan to ensure Victoria’s kangaroo population is sustainable, as part of a long-term partnership with the Game Management Authority to ensure consistency and regularity of service delivery
* Supported the operations of the Game Management Authority and the Victorian Fisheries Authority to create sustainable recreation opportunities for Victorians and provide regulation and compliance services.