

## MEDIA RELEASE

### BRIDGE TO WORK PUTS DISADVANTAGED JOBSEEKERS INTO REAL, SUSTAINABLE JOBS

For immediate release

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Leading Sydney community housing provider Bridge Housing, in partnership with employment services provider [CoAct](#), has achieved outstanding results in a 15-month pilot program to help social housing residents, who are among some of the most disadvantaged people in the job market, into employment.

Eighty residents participated in the program from July 2018 to September 2019, with 39% being placed in employment and 9% returning to full time study. Nearly twice as many Bridge to Work participants were placed in jobs or returned to study than did a control cohort.

On average, participants were placed in less than half the time of participants in the control group (12 weeks compared with 26 weeks) and the program achieved significantly better results in terms of *sustained* employment. At the 26-week mark, Bridge to Work participants were nearly twice as likely to still be in their placement as someone in the control cohort.

Bridge to Work was particularly successful in engaging women and people with a disability in employment and study opportunities. Jobseekers from a CALD background, mature age candidates and carers also benefited.

CEO John Nicolades said: "While on a modest scale, Bridge to Work proves that if you can help create a "foot in the door" for people who have typically struggled to secure sustainable work, then employers will consider their applications and recognise their potential value to their businesses."

"We are delighted with the success of Bridge to Work in creating life and economic opportunities for our residents and in building their confidence, skills and self-esteem in the job market and beyond."

Bridge to Work's intensive case management approach involves a dedicated case manager embedded at Bridge Housing and working closely with jobseekers at all stages of their employment journey, including: identifying their goals, helping to prepare their CVs, helping them to become job ready, identifying work opportunities and supporting them through the interview process.

Bridge to Work jobseekers have secured work in areas as diverse as tourism, manufacturing, aviation, waste management and the not-for-profit sector. Others have realised their ambitions to undertake further study or training.

Bridge Housing also supports Bridge to Work applicants by offering them a six-month rent freeze to take the financial pressure off them while they undergo their job search.

The program was independently evaluated by social research specialists [Inca Consulting](#) in December 2019. Bridge Housing will continue its partnership with [CoAct](#) for the three-year life of the program.

### **Karleen's story**

Karleen was a mature age job seeker who secured employment as a cultural educator with [Tribal Warrior Cultural Cruises](#).

She says of Bridge to Work: "The program uplifted me. I now wake up every day knowing I've got something to do. It's a wonderful program and it's great that it's part of housing. People will be more comfortable going to A Bridge to Work because they're already dealing with Bridge Housing. It's not so daunting. They encourage you. They listen."

[Watch a video about Karleen.](#)

### **Other participant feedback**

"Bridge to Work has given me confidence. I was about to give up. My case manager encouraged me to keep looking and told me it was normal to face setbacks."

"I would recommend Bridge to Work to anyone. I've got a job that I like and I've got a lot more confidence now too."

"My case manager understood the direction I wanted to go in and he researched roles that might fit me. It is good to have someone there to support me. It was a personal process."

### **For more information:**

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[Learn more about Bridge to Work.](#)

[Read the Bridge to Work evaluation report.](#)