

FINAL PROJECT REPORT

# SHORETRACK SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

LOCAL JOBS PROGRAM (NPF 2023 - 25)



ShoreTrack



Australian Government  
Department of Employment  
and Workplace Relations

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

**Giinagay!** At ShoreTrack, we acknowledge the Gumbaynggirr people as the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we operate. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present, and emerging, and recognise their enduring connection to land, waters, and culture. We are committed to honouring the rich cultural heritage of the Gumbaynggirr Nation and to fostering respectful relationships with the local Indigenous communities.

As an organisation dedicated to empowering young people, we also recognise the vital role of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth as knowledge holders, future Elders, and custodians of culture. Their resilience, strength, and leadership continue to shape strong, connected communities.





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# PROGRAM SUMMARY & IMPACT SNAPSHOT

In 2024-25, ShoreTrack was funded through the Local Jobs Program to support young people through practical training, mentoring, and real-world experience. ShoreTrack successfully supported 40 young people in total, with 10 undertaking paid traineeships through our social enterprise, SSteps. 23 participants completed or are currently undertaking a Certificate II, and 22 have transitioned into employment since commencement of the program.

This model enabled young people to contribute to real projects while developing cross-industry skills aligned with local workforce needs, including construction, metal fabrication, landscaping, and automotive. Alongside technical training, the program focused on life skills, cultural connection, and wraparound support including daily transport to and from the facility, meals, mentors, learner driver license attainment and driving lessons.

Thanks to strong partnership and co-investment, ShoreTrack leveraged more than \$1.1M in additional value - including youth worker wages, in-kind materials, cultural and wellbeing supports, and scholarships from other funders - to significantly extend the program's reach and depth. This collaborative approach delivered outstanding outcomes in confidence, engagement, and job readiness.



Success rate



First Nations young people



Paid traineeships



Additional value leveraged

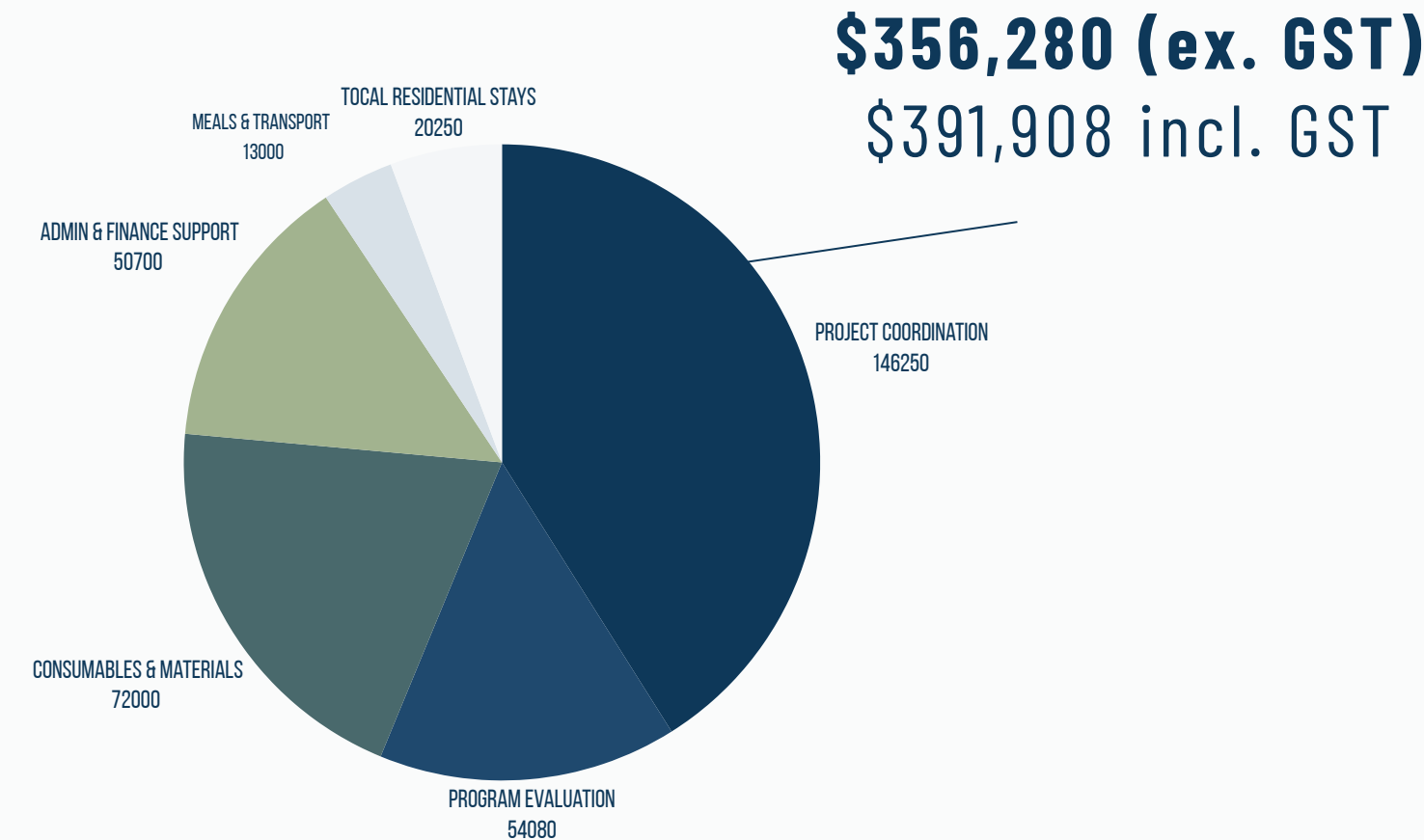


# WHAT WAS FUNDED

This project was funded through the Local Jobs Program (NPF 2023-25) to support ShoreTrack’s social enterprise initiative. The grant enabled us to recruit young people into paid employment, complete accredited training, and access wraparound supports across as 12-month period.

The grant was used to:

- Employ a full-time project coordinator to manage the program
- Cover professional staff wages for participation in industry skills
- Purchase tools, PPE and trade materials
- Provide meals, transport, and supervision for off-site training
- Support two residential Total training blocks
- Deliver impact measurement, data collection, and reporting



Thanks to this funding, we were able to provide 40 young people with supported pathways, and deliver a culturally safe, skills-based program aligned with regional workforce needs and local school re-engagement where relevant.

# WHO WE SUPPORTED

- 40 young people were supported throughout the term of the program.
- 50% identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.
- All were based in regional areas and many faced significant barriers to participation including school disengagement, mental health challenges, transport disadvantage, employer stigma and low confidence.
- Referrals came from Transition to Work (TTW), Reconnect (Lifetime Connect), Mission Australia PSP, local high schools, Bellingen Youth Hub, self-referral and word-of-mouth.

## PATHWAYS

- Overall, two participants withdrew.
- The 38 remaining all had positive outcomes, with 100% of these young people either completing/ currently undertaking their Certificate II and/or transitioning into full-time employment, further training or back into mainstream education.
- Apprenticeships/traineeships were secured across diverse industries including metal fabrication, aged care, hospitality, ecological regeneration, greenskeeping, butchery, landscaping and community services, building real-world experience with local employers committed to supporting their growth.

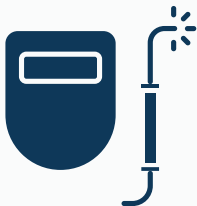
**“WAKING UP KNOWING I’M GOING TO ACCOMPLISH SOMETHING - EVEN IF IT’S NOT A BIG TASK - HELPS ME KEEP GOING”**



# TRAINING AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT

30 participants were enrolled in a Certificate II in Agriculture, or a Certificate II in Rural Operations, delivered in partnership with Tocal College and TAFE NSW. The courses include accredited training across a range of rural and outdoor units, delivered through a blended model of on-site instruction and intensive residential blocks.

Through ShoreTrack’s social enterprise, Steps, participants engaged in real-world skill-building across:



Welding



Metal Fabrication



Automotive



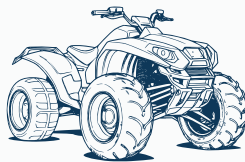
Agriculture



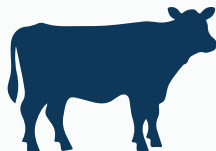
Landscaping & Gardening



Machinery Operation



Quadbike Operation



Livestock Handling

Through daily routines, peer interaction, and mentoring, participants developed personal capabilities that will support them far beyond the workplace.



Communication & Teamwork



Confidence & Self-belief



Emotional Regulation



Independence & Routine



# OUTCOMES & SURVEY INSIGHTS

Survey results demonstrate the transformative impact of ShoreTrack's program. Participants reported encouraging improvements in confidence, mental health, and readiness for work.

*"My physical health has been a big improvement, before ShoreTrack I was sitting at home most of the time either suspended from school or just not going. My friendships and mental health has been improved drastically and my skills and ability in the workshop have improved a lot and I feel more comfortable in my ability to get and hold a job."*

- 100% received transport, meals, and mentoring during their engagement.
- 98% Would recommend ShoreTrack to another young person.
- 95% of participants are now employed, have completed their Cert II, or remain actively engaged in training, education, and/or ShoreTrack programs.
- 90% Reported improved mental health.
- 88% Now feel positive about their future.
- 85% Now feel confident in their abilities.
- 80% Reported developing stronger routines and time management.
- 78% Now feel ready for work.
- 72% Reported stronger problem solving skills.



# PARTICIPANT STORY BJ

## TURNING STAR PICKETS INTO PURPOSE

In early 2023, a young male participant was referred to ShoreTrack after being expelled from school for a high-risk behavioural incident — wielding star pickets around the playground. With a history of trauma, disrupted education, and a lack of reliable male role models in his life, he had become disengaged, angry, and viewed as a danger to others.

Upon joining ShoreTrack, he was welcomed into our daily program of hands-on skill development and mentoring. In a calm, respectful environment led by trusted adults, he was given clear expectations, structure, and — most importantly — a sense of belonging. Through ShoreTrack's Cert II in Agriculture, he worked alongside experienced tradespeople who challenged his thinking, modelled respectful behaviour, and held him accountable to the team.



Just months later, the same young man was using star pickets again — but this time, safely and purposefully as part of ShoreTrack's fencing crew. He quickly became one of our hardest workers, known for his reliability, humility, and willingness to support others.

Now, he's not only job-ready — he's a leader in his crew, encouraging other participants to work hard and stay on track. His confidence, skillset, and ability to self-regulate have grown dramatically.

This grant directly funded BJ's paid traineeship — and thanks to his success, ShoreTrack will employ him next year as a team leader to support the next cohort of young people.

This case shows the power of intensive, relationship-based engagement for vulnerable young men. With the right structure and support, young people with complex histories can completely transform their path — and lead others to do the same.

# PARTNERS & COMMUNITY SUPPORT

While this program would not have been possible without the generous funding from the Australian Government, it also would not have been possible without the unwavering support of our community partners. From local employers and training organisations to youth and cultural services, each played a vital role in helping young people feel safe, seen, and capable of success. Our heartfelt thanks to the community that stands behind ShoreTrack.

We offer special thanks to those who contributed financially alongside this grant, helping to unlock over \$1.1 million in additional value. This includes the Siddle Family Foundation, Eureka Benevolent Foundation, the Foundation for Rural & Regional Renewal (FRRR), and other generous funders who enabled us to cover youth worker wages, in-kind resources, scholarships, and program delivery beyond the scope of the initial grant. Your support ensured more young people could participate, complete their training, and thrive.





# EVALUATION SUMMARY: MEASURING IMPACT

## ENGAGEMENT

Engagement was tracked through daily attendance, participation in social enterprise activities, and pre/post surveys.

- 98% of participants would recommend ShoreTrack to another young person
- 85% reported stronger confidence and motivation
- Increase in consistency, reliability, and initiative among young people

## CONNECTIONS & WELLBEING

Participants developed strong peer and mentor relationships, accessed daily support, and reconnected with culture through local Indigenous organisations and on Country activities.

- 90% reported improved mental health
- 80% developed stronger routines and time management skills
- 100% accessed meals, transport and a safe, supportive environment

## CAPACITY TO NAVIGATE THE EMPLOYMENT SYSTEM

Participants received job readiness training, license attainment support, and hands-on experience through ShoreTrack's social enterprise, STeps.

- 78% reported feeling work ready
- 72% improved their problem-solving and teamwork skills
- Several obtained their white card and were assisted to obtain their learner driver licenses and gain hours and experience behind the wheel

## EMPLOYMENT & FURTHER LEARNING OUTCOMES

Participants transitioned to work across multiple industries with local employers.

- Apprenticeships and traineeships secured in metal fabrication, aged care, butchery, regeneration, hospitality, greenkeeping and more

# REPLICATION POTENTIAL

ShoreTrack is pleased to deliver this evaluation report as evidence of the project's success and its suitability for adaptation in other communities. The model has proven highly effective for disengaged young people, particularly when delivered through a social enterprise embedded in local needs.

Its success relies on a few key factors: a supportive community that values young people, local industry partners willing to provide real work experience and employment pathways, and a safe, respectful learning environment where trust is built and growth is nurtured. When young people are given the space to be seen, supported, and challenged – in a place where respect is mutual – their capacity to thrive increases dramatically.

Where these elements exist, the ShoreTrack model is both adaptable and scalable for lasting social and economic impact.





# WITH GRATITUDE

Thank you to the Australian Government and the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations for funding this project through the Local Jobs Program (NPF 2023-25). Your support enabled ShoreTrack to deliver a high-impact, community-driven program that created real change for 38 young people - many of whom are now working, studying, or mentoring others.

Together, we built confidence, skills, belonging, and brighter futures.



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and Workplace Relations**

ShoreTrack - Changing Lives. Proudly supported by the Australian Federal Government





ShoreTrack