National Youth Employment Body Practice Guide

A guide to strengthening youth employment pathways – Local to national

Brotherhood of St Laurence

National Youth Employment Body

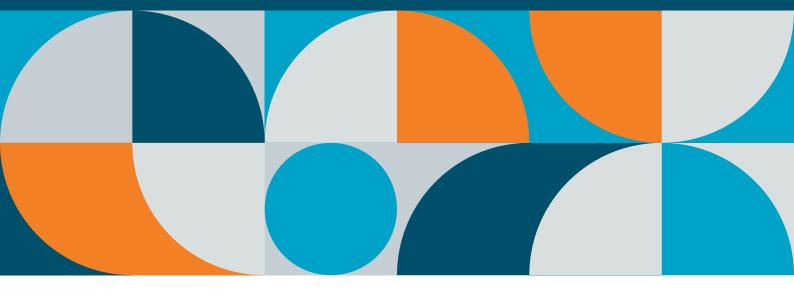# National Youth Employment Body Practice Guide

A guide to strengthening youth employment pathways – Local to national

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> *The National Youth Employment Body model draws on the evidence–informed youth transitions approach, developed and refined by the Brotherhood over the last decade...*

About this Practice Guide

This Practice Guide outlines the National Youth Employment Body model that will inform the development of a scalable national approach that both strengthens youth employment and meets local workforce needs. It has been developed by the Brotherhood of St Laurence, an independent non–government organisation with strong community links that has been working to reduce poverty in Australia since the 1930s.

Poverty is more than a lack of material resources. It often means being denied what most people take for granted: a secure job, a home, a sense of valued inclusion and connection to the wider community. Unprecedented social and economic change is accelerating economic insecurity and inequality for those facing disadvantage, and the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the risk of more people falling into poverty and experiencing long-term scarring from unemployment. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) warns that 'the short and medium-term impacts of COVID-19 will be particularly severe for the most disadvantaged and risk compounding existing socio-economic divides', especially for young people.[1]

The right to inclusive work and to economic security are key areas of the Brotherhood's innovative approach to addressing disadvantage in the labour market, which it does through:

+ Extensive employment-related research conducted with jobseekers, employers and service providers.

+ Expertise in the development, delivery and real-time evaluation of active labour market programs particularly for those facing disadvantage.

+ Practice expertise that includes developing and implementing a Youth Transitions model, to engage and sustain young people experiencing disadvantage in education, training and employment.

+ Advocating and building knowledge of collaborative policy making, governance and co-design work in communities to address complex issues.

The NYEB is building on the Brotherhood's knowledge and practice in this area to foster collaboration that empowers participants, communities and policy makers to review and respond to youth unemployment in new ways. Now, more than ever, support is needed for stakeholders from multiple local and national sectors that influence youth employment to work together on flexible strategies for structural change based on a commitment to place-based action, and ongoing learning of what works.

This Practice Guide is intended as a tool for developing and implementing place-focused solutions that enhance young people's meaningful and sustainable participation in the labour market. It is designed for local, state and national stakeholders across the employment system, including employment service providers, educators, employers, community organisations and policy makers. It is comprised of five sections as outlined here.

Section 1: Why we need a National Youth Employment Body

To inform a coordinated and scalable national approach to youth employment, the Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment funded the Brotherhood in 2018 to establish and coordinate the NYEB. The aim of the NYEB is to facilitate collaborative efforts that enable young people to secure decent work while addressing the needs of industry for a diverse and adaptable workforce.

Section 2: Harnessing community investment

The NYEB's collaborative components enable critical stakeholders from multiple sectors to work together and develop flexible strategies to address youth unemployment, including employers and industry, youth employment service providers, skills and training, government, research, young people and key community organisations.

Section 3: The practice – How we are working in place

The NYEB is working to foster collaboration that empowers participants, communities and policy makers to review and respond to youth unemployment in new and innovative ways. In practice, the NYEB model enables a place-based focus with national reach. Local communities are supported to harness their expertise to co-develop strategies to improve youth employment pathways, and inform a national conversation on how to build the capabilities of young people and meet the needs of employers in place.

Section 4: Tools and resources
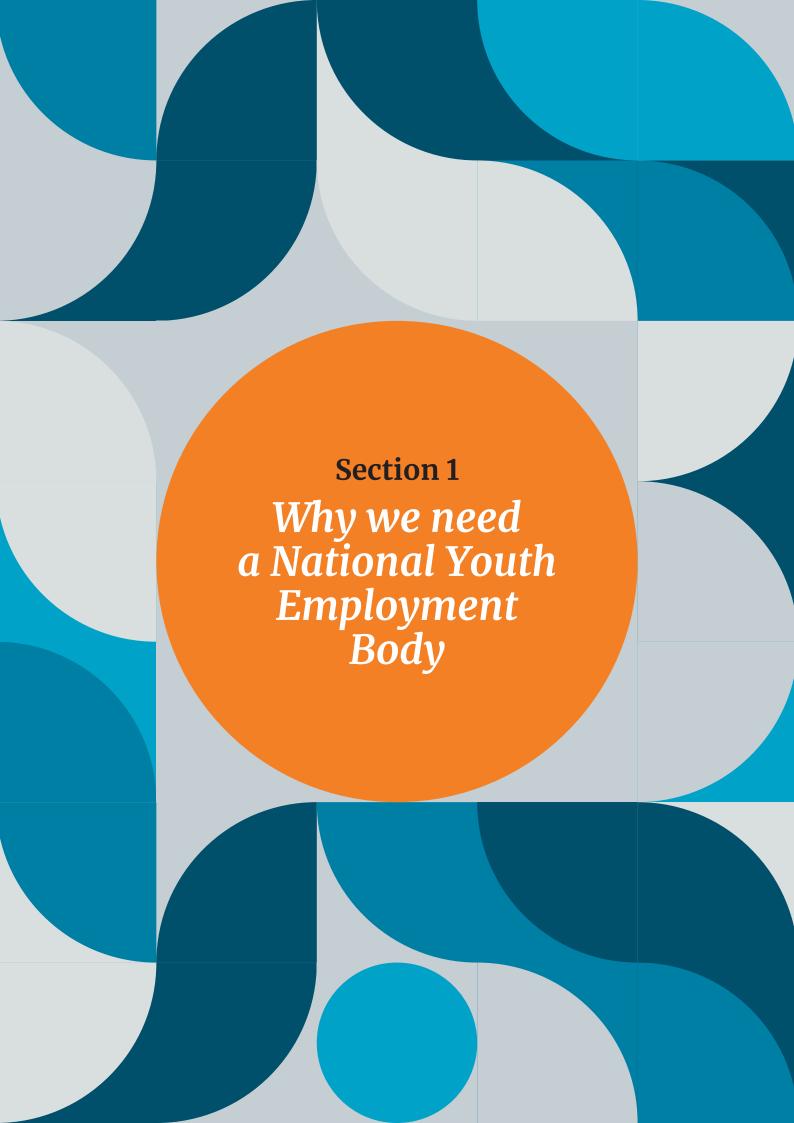
The development of NYEB-tailored information and tools support place-based approaches and link local to national. These tools and resources are designed to help build the capacity of NYEB Lead Partner organisations and other CIC members to drive the work of the NYEB locally, as well as to inform national stakeholders on approaches for strengthening youth employment.

Appendix: National Youth Employment Body – Theoretical underpinnings

The work of the NYEB draws on national and international evidence, and the concepts and approaches that support good practice across the youth employment system.

Abbreviations

4IR	fourth industrial revolution
Brotherhood	Brotherhood of St Laurence
BSL	Brotherhood of St Laurence
CICs	Community Investment Committees
CoI	Community of Interest
CoP	Community of Practice
ILO	International Labour Organization
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
NDIS	National Disability Insurance Scheme
NERG	National Employers Reference Group
NYEB	National Youth Employment Body
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
READ	Research, Evaluation and Design (Working Group)
RPC	Research and Policy Centre (Brotherhood of St Laurence)
SAYE	Shoalhaven Aboriginal and Youth Employment (Forum)
TAFE	Technical and Further Education
TtW	Transitions to Work
TtW CoP	Transitions to Work Community of Practice
VET	Vocational Education and Training

Section 1

Why we need a National Youth Employment Body

Section 1: Why we need a National Youth Employment Body

Young people in Australia want to work.[2] Unfortunately, too many of them feel like Lelani 'that a future without financial hardship is hard to achieve, or having a job that is rewarding is simply not meant for them…'

> *… being a young person living alone trying to support myself independently, I felt trapped because I didn't have the resources or finances to pursue education, or the work experience to change from that area and apply for better positions. It felt like a hamster wheel of unemployment, job dissatisfaction and no way out… A lot of… employment services solutions [don't have] … the time to invest in a young person and give support to all their needs so they can achieve long–term employment.*
>
> **— Lelani, female, aged 23**[3]

To inform a coordinated and scalable national approach to youth employment, the Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment* funded the Brotherhood of St Laurence in 2018 to establish and coordinate the National Youth Employment Body. The aim of the NYEB is to facilitate collaborative efforts that enable young people to secure decent work while addressing the needs of industry for a diverse and adaptable workforce.

The Brotherhood understands that successful youth employment outcomes must build enduring skills and capabilities in young people, while also resourcing communities to provide opportunities for them to make choices and progress towards meaningful and sustainable employment. This can include studying for a career or attaining a secure job that extends their skills and talents.

Youth employment opportunities and outcomes cannot be generated successfully by individual, community or government efforts alone. They require a system-level response that pays equal attention to policy, program design and practice-level drivers of youth employment outcomes.

The NYEB seeks to multiply young people's employment opportunities and outcomes through implementing a scalable national model that builds effective place-based practice and solutions that are mutually beneficial to employers, the community, the local economy and young people themselves. The NYEB model will harness the expertise and social resources of others to build a form of 'network capital' across critical sectors of the youth employment system to facilitate youth employment and meet employer needs.

The key NYEB model components and practices needed to harness community effort and investments at a local and national level are:

+ **An enabling organisation**: to provide leadership that drives and evaluates practice, strategies and collaborative processes, and to share key learnings between local and national governance groups and the community.

+ **National governance groups**: to link place-based employment, education and training responses to the national agenda; to increase awareness of structural, policy and practice barriers to youth employment; and to inform policy design and investments in local employment, education and training opportunities.

+ **Local Community Investment Committees**: to develop cross-sector stakeholder relationships and community-led trials that meet local employer priorities and enhance youth employment outcomes.

+ **Activating employers**: to share expertise, co-design work entry pathways, and to promote the benefits of investing in young people so they can realise their contribution to building productivity.

+ **Youth participation**: to contribute their expertise, perspectives and experiences to maximise the effectiveness of the NYEB model in securing employment outcomes.

As the enabling organisation providing facilitative leadership across the NYEB model, the Brotherhood is well positioned to assist community and government in aligning the necessary efforts, expertise, sectors and investments to support a more coordinated and coherent approach to youth unemployment. The model will build on the Brotherhood's non-competitive approach to service delivery, deep engagement with national and international research and evidence (discussed and summarised in the **Appendix**), and extensive experience in testing innovative models and working collaboratively. This includes supporting employment providers to move beyond an outcomes-driven practice focused on service delivery, to fostering collaboration in the design and implementation of youth employment solutions in place.

Case studies presented in this Practice Guide reveal early findings of how the NYEB is enabling a shared vision, embedding community-driven solutions, and linking place-based responses to the national agenda. Both the Practice Guide and the work of the NYEB will continue to be developed and updated in response to the learnings and experiences of stakeholders as they work collaboratively at local and national levels to improve employment pathways for young people.

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* Formerly the Department of Jobs and Small Business at time of first funding in July 2018, and the Department of Employment, Skills, Small and Family Business from May 2019 to 1 February 2020.

Figure 1: Transition to Work Community of Practice model

The TtW CoP model is currently being delivered in 12 communities around Australia by the Brotherhood and 11 other community organisations. By bringing together the expertise of TtW employment service providers into a collaborative effort to address youth unemployment, the model operates on two levels.

Local level

The model seeks to test the effectiveness of a new approach to service delivery through:

+ A capabilities approach delivered in practice as Advantaged Thinking – to build motivation and agency by working with young people according to their talents and aspirations.

+ Evidence-based service offers – consisting of activities and opportunities that equip young people with the skills, experiences and networks needed to plan their journey to work.

+ Harnessing community effort to increase work opportunities – linking young people with local employers and other community stakeholders by combining 'supply side' support with 'demand side' interventions.

National level

The model seeks to test the effectiveness of a new approach to practice and policy development through:

+ Forming a TtW CoP among service agencies using the Brotherhood's TtW service model to develop and improve the service delivery model.

+ Engaging national employers and other stakeholders to harness community effort to increase opportunities for young people.

+ Advocating to, and working with, government about issues affecting the delivery of TtW and youth unemployment more broadly.

+ Evaluating the value of collaborative learning and action, to capture impact and drive innovation.

The Brotherhood's approach to addressing youth unemployment

Young people experiencing disadvantage face multi-dimensional challenges to participation in mainstream social and economic life. They often lack the necessary resources, opportunities, or family and social networks that could support them to complete school and to enter and remain engaged in decent employment.[4] Those young people with early experiences of long-term unemployment are also more likely to experience a 'scarring' effect over their lifetime, with negative impacts on future health and wellbeing, such as lower earnings and higher job insecurity.[5]

Over the past decade the Brotherhood has developed an evidence-informed youth transitions model for enabling young people to build their capabilities for achieving

a sustainable livelihood.[^] The concept of capabilities underlying much of this work is understood as the freedom of an individual to make choices they value, and to have opportunities available in the community to achieve them.[6] A capabilities-driven employment approach thus enables young people to identify and advance their aspirations, access and engage in real-world opportunities and realise their potential through sustained engagement in education, training and work.

The Brotherhood's understanding of what works has led us to develop and deliver innovative practice in youth transitions and employment. This includes the delivery of Transition to Work (TtW) employment services,[#] and convening the TtW Community of Practice (CoP) that brings the expertise of TtW employment service providers across the country into a collaborative effort to address youth unemployment. The TtW CoP model is briefly outlined in **Figure 1** above.

[^] This model has been applied in a number of service settings through government-funded programs and pilots, including: homelessness (the Education First Youth Foyers and associated sub-pilots); out-of-home care and leaving care (OoHC Developing Independence Pilot and the Better Futures Pilot); refugee settlement (the Youth Transitions Support Pilot); and the employment services sector through Transition to Work. Practice Guides in all areas are available upon request.

[#] The TtW service, which was announced in the 2015–16 Federal Government Budget, provides a distinct, youth-focused employment service that provides specialised, longer term support for 15–21 year olds at risk of long-term unemployment. This includes 'intensive, pre-employment support to improve the work-readiness of young people and help them into work and/or education'. Australian Government Department of Employment 2017, Transition to Work Evaluation Strategy, Australian Government, Canberra, p. 1. Accessed 5 March 2020 at: https://docs.employment.gov.au/documents/transition-work-evaluation-strategy.

Building community solutions to connect our young people to jobs through COVID–19 and beyond

A recent campaign produced by the TtW CoP and the NYEB includes a video showcasing the experiences of young people, and employer champions who believe in young people, their capabilities and the value they bring to the workplace and their community. The COVID-19 Snapshots video highlights the importance of community-led solutions to address the impacts of COVID-19 on young people's transition to employment. For although 'everything has gone downhill' due to the pandemic, the young people supported by TtW providers remain focused on a better future and 'cannot wait to go back' to work.[7]

COVID-19 Snapshots demonstrates how the NYEB and the national TtW CoP are able to provide opportunities for young people to enter the labour market, and stay connected through this global pandemic. In the video:

+ Young people share their stories of how TtW has supported them on their learning and employment pathways: 'It's my first job ever... I'm very proud of myself... now I can set some goals for my future'.

+ Employer champions of young people share how they are working with local employment service providers, training and skills providers and other employers: 'To ensure that young people are not overlooked'.

+ Members of Community Investment Committees share how they are linking the local to the national at this crucial time: 'To influence better outcomes based in our local situation'.[8]

Working towards sustainable youth employment and meeting local workforce needs

Although the Brotherhood has generated evidence of good practice in the delivery of services to young people, the work of the NYEB aims to influence systemic change in the larger structures and conditions that make up the context of the wider system of employment. This involves supporting services to work beyond the delivery of programs by furthering their engagement with the community to work together in new ways.

The role of the Brotherhood is to provide collaborative leadership and coordination of the NYEB model. It does this by bringing critical stakeholders together and building their capabilities to harness community investment at a local and national level to co-develop solutions, and collate evidence of the key elements required for a coordinated national approach to youth employment. Critical stakeholders of the youth employment ecosystem include employers and industry, youth employment service providers, skills and training, government, local council, research, young people and key community organisations in place (see also **Figure 6**, pp.24–5). The components and practices that drive this collaborative approach to systemic change in youth employment are outlined in the NYEB Theory of Change (see **Figure 2**, pp.6–7).

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... bringing critical stakeholders together and building their capabilities to harness community investment at a local and national level to co-develop solutions...

Figure 2: National Youth Employment Body Theory of Change

Impact	The NYEB informs the development of a coordinated and coherent national approach to youth employment.	
Long-term systemic outcomes	**1** Local **place-focused solutions to youth participation and local workforce needs developed by local and national stakeholders** that maximise the flow, alignment and effectiveness of national and State-based resources and investments in place	
	Locally developed solutions to youth unemployment add value to local efforts, and inform government investments in place, and over time **contribute to inclusive and sustained economic growth**	**Coordinated and coherent policy making** leads to more flexible funding arrangements, incentives and accountability for sectors and services to work together to share learnings, **create employment opportunities and drive innovation** in place
Progressive outcomes	Innovative solutions to youth unemployment are realised through **employment-related projects developed by local CICs**, demonstrating the potential of cross-sectoral collaboration to positively impact employment pathways and the quality of local workforce, and inform national policy making	Increased awareness of structural, policy and practice barriers impeding youth employment in local areas inform **collaborative processes, policy design and investments** that enhance local opportunities and innovative solutions to youth employment
Mechanisms	Establishing a CIC based on **common purpose, trust, engagement with data and evidence, and a commitment to act** enables sharing of diverse perspectives and expertise to develop solutions to address local barriers to employment	**Collaboration and knowledge exchange** between local and national participants links policy and practice
Interconnecting components	**Local Community Investment Committees** ‹›	**National Governance Groups** ‹›
Activities	Each CIC works together to build intentional relationships and share expertise and efforts	Facilitate knowledge exchange and cross sectoral collaboration that connects to local contexts
Stakeholders	Employers, industry, education and training providers, employment service providers, councils, community	NYEB Advisory Group, Cross-Government Community of Interest (CoI), Working Groups, CICs
Outputs	**Community-led projects that meet local priorities** and aspirations for youth	**Multi-sector perspectives** and engagement at local and national levels **informs government decision making** and investments
Problem	Local stakeholders and efforts to improve youth employment opportunities are not aligned, do not reflect diverse stakeholder interests, nor systemically inform national policy	National policies and programs to address youth employment and social and economic development are not designed across relevant government departments nor informed by what is happening in place
Assumptions	**Focusing on place** and building the capacity of key stakeholders in a community to work together to define and address common local priorities will lead to the development of innovative local initiatives that build the capabilities of young people and their communities, and can inform the conditions required to promote sustainable inclusive growth	**Collaborative approaches to policy making**, governance and commissioning will bring together traditionally siloed sectors and stakeholders to better understand the interrelated parts of the employment system and design policy that gives local communities autonomy to innovate and adapt, rather than compete for resources

> It does this by enabling key stakeholders to work collaboratively across local and national levels to invest in employment pathways that align with both the aspirations and capabilities of young people; and the needs of local employers.

	2 Young people's participation in the labour market is enhanced through innovative local initiatives that span both supply and demand side approaches	3 Local employers and industries invest in shaping local workforces and removing policy, social and material infrastructure barriers to employment pathways for young people and job creation
Critical stakeholders from multiple sectors that influence youth employment are supported to **work together to develop flexible strategies for structural change**, based on local evidence, commitment and ongoing learning of what works for employers, community and young people	**Employers are actively invested in the design of policy and programs** that align education and training, employment services and industry objectives to workforce needs, and the aspirations and needs of young jobseekers, in the short and long term	**Young people are valued** as experts of their own lives and are active **contributors to solutions and change**
The interconnected relationships, conditions and practices that build capabilities and work pathways for young people in place are shared with NYEB governance groups, and **learnings are documented, adapted and applied in different communities across Australia**	**Employers** value young people's capabilities and potential contribution to their business and, with multi-sectoral support, **create opportunities for entry level pathways for young people** through tailored recruitment and induction practices	**Young people** experience multi-sectoral support to **make meaningful contribution to the design and implementation of policy and programs** to improve youth employment pathways
Facilitation and evaluation of strategies, collaborative processes, research and sharing of key learnings between local and national governance groups and the wider community builds evidence of what works and potential for adaptation	Platforms and practices are created across the NYEB network for **employers to share knowledge** of how to strengthen work entry pathways **and promote the benefits of investing in young people**	Platforms and practices are created across the NYEB network for **young people to share their experiences and contribute to decision making** at local and national levels to ensure actions and strategies are fit for purpose

An Enabling Organisation ‹›	**Activating Employers** ‹›	**Youth Participation**
Align NYEB components through coordination, service development, research and evaluation, training and support	Facilitate employer collaboration and contribution to policy and practice in youth employment, education and training	Engage young people to contribute their expertise, perspectives and experiences across all levels of the NYEB
NYEB Advisory Group, CoI, Working Groups, demonstration sites, CICs	Employers, government, employment service providers and industry groups, local councils	Young people, employers, NYEB governance groups and Working Groups
Facilitate information flow between NYEB components; **document and share evidence of key elements** and processes to drive learning and policy impact	**Employers are engaged in local initiatives** that build and utilise the capabilities and skills of young people	**Young people are participating in co-developing solutions** to youth unemployment
Lack of facilitative leadership and an authorising environment to bring together diverse sectors, expertise and efforts to improve young people's transitions into employment	Employers are not able to systematically contribute to efforts that mutually benefit the demands of industry and the capabilities and work pathways of young people	Young people's voice and experiences are not valued or reflected in the design and support of their capabilities and work pathways
Diverse sectors across **communities and levels of government need to work together** to build investment in young people as they transition between employment, education and training. **Facilitating collaboration to** build trust, interdependency and accountability will create opportunities to share and **develop new ways of thinking and doing**	**Engaging employers** in the development of employer-orientated solutions to local youth employment initiatives will drive collaboration with other sectors and government, to aid both the supply and demand sides of skills development and opportunities that mutually benefit young people and local economies	**Young people's active contribution** to strategy design and decision-making will build capabilities, expectations and sustainable work pathways for young people and the wider community

Context for reform and systemic change

Australia, along with other countries, is navigating a period of significant social and economic change that is impacting the future of work. It is largely agreed that changes in the modern labour market are the result of four megatrends: globalisation, climate change, technological change and demographic shifts such as population growth, ageing and mobility.[9] Challenges inherent in these changes are being experienced alongside natural disasters and the COVID-19 health crisis, with predicted long-term negative impacts on local and national economies and employment, especially for those already facing disadvantage.[10]

Everyone looking for employment is impacted by these economic and labour market changes, but new risks and opportunities will not be distributed equally across society, especially for those young people with limited work experience or work-readiness skills.[11] Technological change, for example, which has been dubbed the fourth industrial revolution (4IR), has the potential to increase productivity and generate more meaningful jobs. However, it also poses risks without accompanying change to skill development that aligns with jobs growth, social support, and regulation to support the adoption and fair use of technology.[12]
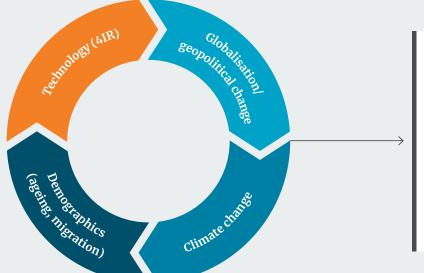
High-risk transitions for young people

Many young Australians are finding it difficult to enter the labour market, and those who do often find themselves in highly insecure, low skilled and poorly paid work. In October 2019 the national rate of youth unemployment was 12 per cent, representing more than 265,000 young Australians, with 18 per cent of those unemployed having looked for work for a year or more.[14] This will only worsen as the world scrambles to deal with the economic fall-out from the global COVID-19 pandemic. The Grattan Institute, for instance, warns that 'younger generations are among those hardest hit by the economic costs of COVID-19… and will also bear the long-term costs of a severe and prolonged recession if government support is not forthcoming'.[15]

Risks inherent in the changing economy were compounded for young people even before the pandemic due to their life stage, as evidenced by:

+ A decline in entry-level positions in areas that have traditionally employed the young, and the displacement in the labour market of young people experiencing disadvantage by those more advantaged now occupying these low-skilled jobs.

+ An increasingly insecure and casualised workforce, typified in the low-paid or seasonal work of the Gig economy, leaving workers underemployed with limited protections.

Figure 3: Global trends in the future of work[13]

+ The future of jobs (loss of existing jobs, creation of new ones, raising of the skills bar)

+ Their quality (increasing casualisation, insecurity, Gig economy)

+ Wage and income inequality (the working poor)

+ Social protection

+ Industrial relations

- The distribution of work with most growth in inner urban areas, poor housing affordability, and low benefit rates for income support, which all impact the mobility of young people in the labour market.

- The global shift to a knowledge economy and a highly qualified workforce has seen a decline in workplace training and expectations that young people come to employers already able to be fully productive employees.

The shift towards a knowledge economy has seen a renewed focus on the critical role that education and, in particular, Vocational Education and Training (VET) have in equipping people with the capabilities they need for the workforce of the future. As research by the National Centre for Vocational Education Research notes:

> *Vocational education and training... is a stepping stone for many into further education, training and work. It is also an essential tool for tackling a range of barriers to workforce participation, which include long–term unemployment, early school leaving, low literacy or numeracy skills, and the need to retrain or upskill. As a result, VET is a fundamental contributor to productivity, workforce development and social inclusion.*[16]

Projected growth occupations requiring a VET qualification provide potential pathways to employment for many young people, including personal and child carers, education aides, ICT support technicians, plumbers and electricians.[17] Young people experiencing disadvantage make up a significant proportion of the VET population, although poor completion rates are an ongoing problem in the sector. Recent data show that only 40–60 per cent of those who enrol in VET go on to attain their qualification,[18] and in 2013 only about 33 per cent of VET completions obtained work in the occupation associated with their qualification.[19] This means that higher enrolments and completion rates in more relevant training are required to ensure a flow of suitably qualified workers to meet projected demand.

In addition to recent Australian Government measures to strengthen the VET sector, including support for career advice and skills achievement under the Skills Package announced in the 2019–20 Federal Budget, preparing young people for lifetime transitions in a fast-changing workforce will require a coordinated effort between all levels of government, VET providers, industry and the community.

Young people transitioning from school to work are still developing identities, self-confidence and directions in life, and many are uncertain about their vocational aspirations and options. These issues are often compounded for those experiencing disadvantage who face a range of challenges – such as negative experiences of schooling, low language literacy and numeracy skills, unmet health and wellbeing needs, or limited social capital – which places them at significant risk of being shut out of education and training and, ultimately, excluded from the labour market.

Marketised employment services system

Unemployment in Australia is largely addressed through an externalised and marketised employment services system that is premised on the assumption that competition between outsourced providers results in increased efficiency, effectiveness and innovation in employment service delivery.[20] However, research suggests that competition across human service delivery, including employment services, often leads to increasingly homogenous services with tight contract management and compliance regimes that hinder providers' flexibility to respond to the needs of service users, especially the most disadvantaged.[21]

Unintended consequences of competition also include the erosion of service and workforce social capital, collaboration and sharing of good practice between providers at the local level. Working to a contract places providers in direct rivalry when leveraging opportunities and building relationships with local employers and other community networks vital to achieving employment for young people. As a consequence, few employers source their workforce from government-funded employment programs.[22]

Despite a plethora of State- and Territory-targeted employment programs, the Federal Government remains the main architect and procurer of the employment service system. However, responsibility for the delivery of active labour market programs is distributed across the country at the local service level.[23] This leaves the government with a limited view of what is happening in practice, and unduly reliant on administrative data to understand provider performance and employment outcomes, thereby inhibiting the capacity for policy or program development or improvement for the duration of contracts.[24] When the government's role is limited to narrow contract management, rather than market stewardship, the public sector has limited capacity to leverage the expertise and social, intellectual and cultural capital of community-embedded providers.

In turn, providers are not encouraged to engage in transparent reporting to government about their challenges or what enables successful local adaptation and implementation of services.[25] Neither are they supported to leverage public sector knowledge and expertise about the dynamics of the national employment services system, the shape of the labour market and the range of effective policy levers for reform.

Until recently, government-led changes to the employment services system have focused on increasing welfare conditionality, tighter eligibility criteria for services, and stronger mutual obligation requirements (including non-compliance penalties) for jobseekers.[26] These shifts reflect deeply held assumptions by some policy makers and governments that individuals are partially, if not wholly, responsible for their unemployment and, subsequently, for gaining employment.

A recent review of the successive iterations of the current employment services system – Job Network, Job Services Australia and most recently jobactive – revealed positive outcomes for some groups of jobseekers. However, it also revealed that the one-size-fits-all model is not delivering for cohorts facing complex barriers to finding work, and recommended an 'increased focus and investment in job seekers who need the most help',[27] including young people.

In recognising this, the Australian Government has invested considerable resources and effort into addressing youth unemployment, most notably through the Youth Employment Strategy, and expanding eligibility for the Transition to Work employment service from 21 to 24 years of age in the 2019–20 Federal Budget.[28] The design and commissioning of the TtW service marks a significant step towards addressing a number of the systemic issues experienced by successive mainstream employment services.[29]

Systemic change – a coordinated national approach to youth employment

Youth unemployment cannot be reduced to individual factors alone; it is also a consequence of structural issues in the labour market, compounded by institutional-level arrangements such as the commissioning and governance of training and employment services. To influence the future of work, change needs to occur across all interacting levels of the system. The International Labour Organization (ILO), for example, has been calling for more diverse forms of collaboration to co-produce an effective response to youth unemployment with government, providers, business, community and, importantly, young people themselves.[30]

A coordinated approach to youth employment requires a systemic response that leverages diverse expertise by:

+ **Bringing together critical stakeholders from multiple sectors and levels** (governance, leadership, management through to practice) and mobilising their expertise to develop coordinated and flexible policy and strategies based on local evidence and ongoing learning.

+ **Investing in a place-based focus with national reach** that enables local innovation and adaptation of employment pathways to meet both the aspirations and capabilities of young people and the needs of local employers.

+ **Supporting organisations to expand their practice approach** and develop intentional community-facing partnerships to build sustainable employment, education and training outcomes.

+ **Encouraging employer investment in shaping local workforces** by designing policy and programs that mutually benefit young people and industry.

+ **Enabling young people to share their expertise and experiences** and contribute to decision making at local and national levels.

+ **Driving reform by building and utilising robust data sources and evidence-based key elements** to inform flexible service and policy design, processes and investment that effect positive change.

Section 2

Harnessing community investment

Section 2: Harnessing community investment

The NYEB's collaborative components enable critical stakeholders from multiple sectors to work together and develop flexible strategies to address youth unemployment, including employers and industry, youth employment service providers, skills and training, government, research, young people and key community organisations.

Effective collaboration that delivers strong outcomes is funded on high trust, and fosters interdependent relations and commitment to accountability that creates opportunities to not only share information but 'develop new ways of thinking and behaving, form new types of relationships and be willing to make changes in existing systems of operation and service delivery'.[31]

The NYEB focuses on harnessing community investment across a local and national level, through:

+ An enabling organisation
+ National governance groups
+ Local Community Investment Committees
+ Activating employers
+ Youth participation.

An enabling organisation – building practice for change

The NYEB is supported by the Brotherhood to act as the enabling organisation, providing facilitative leadership to drive work to support participants to co-develop flexible employment strategies (including education and training), document and share local and national learnings, and inform coordinated and coherent policy making to improve youth employment pathways and outcomes in place.

The NYEB's enabling role involves:

+ Establishing and managing a local and national governance structure, to connect local and national knowledge and innovative ideas to improve youth employment pathways.

+ Building local capacity to co-develop local solutions, through utilising the Brotherhood's on the ground knowledge of service delivery to better support and walk alongside local employment service providers, employers and other critical stakeholders to develop enduring relationships and practice in place.

+ Resource development, including tools and resources, governance and operational processes and the NYEB website.

+ Training and knowledge translation of the NYEB model and practice approach via site visits to organisations, facilitated workshops and forums.

+ Collation and utilisation of community expertise, data and evidence to inform all aspects of the model, through ongoing research and evaluation.

+ Facilitating the documenting and sharing of learnings to build a national platform of knowledge, and inform a coordinated national approach to youth employment.

National governance groups

The NYEB has established the National Advisory Group and expert Working Groups, and the Federal Cross-Government Community of Interest Group, to provide expertise and collaborative governance at the national level. Enabling collaboration at a national level aims to maximise investment in place – the investment of expertise, funding and alignment of activities to avoid duplication of effort – to inform national policy and practice across the sectors that impact employment.

NYEB Advisory Group

The Advisory Group provides high-level strategic guidance and expertise to the NYEB from multi-sector representatives across industry, research, employment, education and training, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partnerships, unions and government. Advisory Group members leverage their particular expertise and networks to advocate for and support the work of the NYEB, including to:

+ Contribute to the development of innovative responses to existing and emerging challenges identified in demonstration sites.

+ Bring different sectors together to deepen understanding of local issues and connection to national policy and context.

+ Advise on the creation of new training and employment opportunities that will mutually benefit young people and employers in place.

+ Support the role of the Community Investment Committees and advise on action-based plans.

Expert Working Groups

The Advisory Group's oversight of the strategic direction of the NYEB is assisted by a series of expert Working Groups that focus on specific areas in youth employment to provide advice on the work at demonstration sites; and provide a national response to regional themes and issues identified through local collaboration.

National Employers Reference Group

The Transition to Work National Employers Reference Group (NERG) convened by the Brotherhood, acts as the employer's working group for the NYEB. Employers from around the country provide advice on how to co-develop better work opportunities and industry links to the wider employment system, such as with education, training and policy.

The work of the NERG has been extended to actively engage employers in supporting the development of local employer-orientated youth training and employment strategies across demonstration sites, government policy and employment initiatives, and further collaboration with the NYEB and young people.

Skills and Training Working Group

The Skills and Training Working Group provides expertise and advice on the design and implementation of good practice in education and training that builds the skills and capabilities of young people, and mutually benefits local industry and economic development by its relevance to current and future job opportunities.

The Group focuses on ways to: increase flexibility within schools and the post-secondary ecosystem to test training offers that align with local workforce; and build local governance for driving innovation and streamlining access to employment training and services.

Youth Alliance Working Group

The NYEB leverages the Transition to Work Community of Practice Youth Alliance Working Group, convened by the Brotherhood to provide a platform for the voices of young people impacted by unemployment. The Youth Alliance Group enables young people at a local organisation level to advise on the development of resources, how to share learnings, and how to connect with young people in meaningful ways.

The NYEB will support the expansion of the Youth Alliance to become a national voice for young people, to gain insight and advice on how initiatives can better support those experiencing unemployment or facing challenges on their learning and employment pathways.

Research, Evaluation and Design Working Group

The Research, Evaluation and Design (READ) Working Group (formally the Service Design Working Group) provides expert input into the design, implementation and refinement of evidence informed service models for moving young people into sustainable work, both locally for each NYEB demonstration site and for national scale.

The READ Working Group is working on ways to improve access to relevant national and local data and evidence that will enable key stakeholders in place to plan, navigate and respond to regional themes. The Group also collaborates with the Brotherhood's Research and Policy Centre to conceptualise outcome and impact measurement tools for testing the NYEB model.

Cross-Government Community of Interest Group

The Cross-Government CoI Group aims to maximise and more closely align existing programs and investments in youth employment, and to integrate efforts towards a more coordinated policy approach. The CoI Group is facilitated by the NYEB and coordinated by the Department of Education, Skills and Employment, to bring together representatives from Federal Government departments involved in youth employment pathways, such as Education and Training, Infrastructure, Social Services, and Indigenous and other policy areas of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.

The sharing of information and findings from the NYEB's demonstration sites into the CoI Group deepens understanding of local issues and connection to national policy. Linking national to local also provides insight into how to address blockages and establish flexible funding and incentives for collaboration in youth employment pathways.

Local Community Investment Committees

The NYEB is harnessing community investment locally by developing strong community relationships and establishing Community Investment Committees to provide a central community-owned mechanism for coordinating and building solutions to address youth unemployment in place.

The NYEB has established initial demonstration sites to test the NYEB model for scalability in the areas for scalability. These sites are in the areas of Logan in Queensland, the northern region of Adelaide in South Australia, and the Shoalhaven region in New South Wales, through a partnership with a local youth employment service provider as the NYEB Lead Partner organisation in each region. Working agreements with Lead Partners outline work towards a shared vision of a nation where all young people can realise their aspirations and potential through engagement and participation in meaningful and sustainable work.
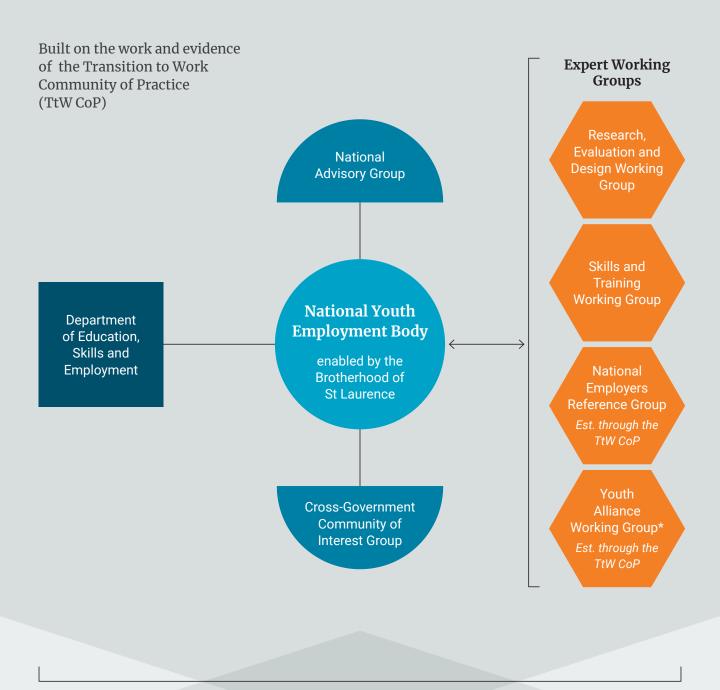
The NYEB focuses on adding value to local mechanisms, on-the-ground expertise and existing community connections within demonstration sites. It supports the Lead Partner organisations to engage local stakeholders, including employer champions willing to invest in young people's capabilities, create opportunities for them to participate in the workforce, and advocate for inclusive workplaces across their networks. In this way, the NYEB supports local stakeholders to share knowledge and discuss how they can work collaboratively to enable innovation that builds employment pathways and the economic development of their community.

A local CIC is established at each demonstration site as a critical collaborative mechanism to recognise the context of place and harness local capabilities and effort, while building and sustaining local governance and action beyond program and political cycles. The CICs are coordinated by the Lead Partner organisation and led by local champion employers, bringing together critical stakeholders from employment services, education and training, employers, government, local council, young people and community organisations in place. Critical stakeholders bring knowledge of, and connection to, existing State and Federal Government programs operating in the region, links to support and training organisations, and experience of what brings value to young people and economic development in place.

The CICs work to share this diverse local knowledge; leverage community support and partnerships to understand barriers to youth employment; and identify and co-develop opportunities and action-based plans that add value to work already taking place in the community.

The scaling of CICs to further sites experiencing high youth unemployment is planned, as is alignment with similar initiatives to avoid duplication of efforts. CICs are also in a position to become a central local mechanism for information and coordination of place-based strategies, programs and investments for all stakeholders of youth employment in the local community.

Figure 4: Governance structure of the National Youth Employment Body

Built on the work and evidence of the Transition to Work Community of Practice (TtW CoP)

Expert Working Groups

National Advisory Group

Department of Education, Skills and Employment

National Youth Employment Body

enabled by the Brotherhood of St Laurence

Cross-Government Community of Interest Group

Research, Evaluation and Design Working Group

Skills and Training Working Group

National Employers Reference Group
Est. through the TtW CoP

Youth Alliance Working Group*
Est. through the TtW CoP

Community Investment Committees

Shoalhaven region NSW, Logan QLD and northern region of Adelaide SA

Representatives from industry, skills and training, youth employment services, all levels of government

*To be incorporated in the NYEB in phase 2 of the work.

The enabling role of the NYEB in the establishment of collaborative ways of working in place, and at the national level, has been designed to gain the perspectives, expertise and commitment of multiple stakeholders and sectors that influence youth employment. Further components outlined below recognise and support the important contribution of employers and young people to local and national strategies to strengthen youth employment pathways. A particular focus on young people and employers ensures that strategies are fit for purpose; that they mutually benefit both economic and business development and the aspirations and capabilities of young people.

Activating employers

> *Employers in a community create work pathways through recruiting labour, defining workforce needs, investing and driving the future of work through their business, and in creating workplace cultures that define how employees are supported, skilled and trained.*[32]

Employers are critical contributors to all aspects of the NYEB model. Their engagement and activation are vital to:

+ Co-design pathways to and in employment for young people.

+ Champion and drive local and national investment in the skills and capabilities of young people.

+ Bring an economic development focus to the local and national work of the NYEB.

+ Increase understanding of the needs of employers in real time and provide information on the demand side issues of the local labour market.

The NYEB involves employers as real partners in the co-design of strategies and policies across diverse areas, including skills and training, rather than casting them only as clients of an employment service provider. The National Employers Reference Group and Community Investment Committees in particular, are fostering deeper and more effective community and employer partnerships that are crucial to developing employer-orientated initiatives to improve learning and employment opportunities for young people.

Youth participation

Leveraging the expertise and experience of young people in the design and implementation of the NYEB model is critical to its success. This allows for more tailored and relevant strategies that support young people in the areas they need, while also assisting young people to develop the social capital and agency essential for success in the labour market.

The NYEB draws on the Advantaged Thinking approach utilised in the Brotherhood's Youth Transitions programs. Advantaged Thinking challenges us to have a mindset shift in relation to young people – to put young people at the centre of practice – challenging us to re-think how we see, speak about, and how we listen to and work with young people.

> *Advantaged Thinking asserts that, rather than investing in these young people's problems, the community needs to re-direct investment into building their abilities and harnessing them for personal, as well as social, good.*[33]

The NYEB is establishing ways to better include the lived experiences of young people in place, and support them to contribute to decision making across all levels of the NYEB. The Brotherhood is supporting Lead Partner organisations, who each have specialised expertise in working with young people and gaining their viewpoints, to engage young people in the work of the NYEB. The TtW CoP Youth Alliance Working Group is also being expanded to include young people connected with NYEB demonstration sites and other Federal Government youth employment initiatives, to promote and generate young people's knowledge of how to better support their access to quality training and education, real work experience opportunities, and specialised support.

Section 3

*The practice –
How we are
working in place*

Section 3: The practice – How we are working in place

The NYEB is working to foster collaboration that empowers participants, communities and policy makers to review and respond to youth unemployment in new and innovative ways. In practice, the NYEB model enables a place-based focus with national reach. Local communities are supported to harness their expertise to co-develop strategies to improve youth employment pathways, and inform a national conversation on how to build the capabilities of young people and meet the needs of employers in place.

The NYEB is working with communities with persistently high youth unemployment rates. The NYEB is building the practice of communities to increase both a local and national understanding of place and how this can inform the strengthening of youth employment pathways. This deeper understanding of the complex social, political and economic factors impacting youth employment in place is utilised to mobilise the key stakeholders required to identify local priorities, drive local solutions, and enable flexible national support to bring about change.

The process of building a more comprehensive and meaningful picture of place and harnessing the strengths it offers is iterative and developmental. The Brotherhood works with its partners through initial connections and development of relationships, to the establishment of Community Investment Committees, and through supporting ongoing action that evolves with new learnings of the changing landscape. The Brotherhood facilitates discussions to collate the real-time expertise of employers and the wider community, together with research to access labour market data, policy and program scans, and the mapping of networks and key stakeholders, to continuously inform the work of the CICs and other NYEB partners to strengthen youth employment outcomes in place.

This section outlines how the NYEB is enabling this through collaborative efforts and action, and includes emerging findings that are grouped across three key areas of practice*, and aligned activities to enable collaborative action to support practice in place (as depicted in **Figure 5**).

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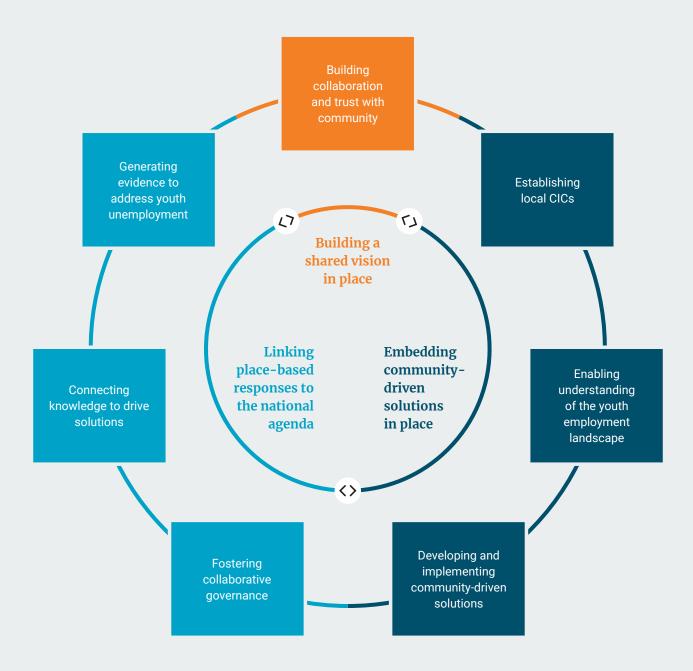
Community ownership is key... it's place-based... and there needs to be ownership and sustainability to everything we do.

Shoalhaven CIC participant

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* These three areas of work correlate with the NYEB's interrelated components and mechanisms to reach sustainable youth employment and workforce outcomes, as stepped out in the NYEB Theory of Change (see Figure 2).

Figure 5: Key areas of NYEB practice to enable collaborative action in place

Building collaboration and trust with community

Establishing local CICs

Enabling understanding of the youth employment landscape

Developing and implementing community-driven solutions

Fostering collaborative governance

Connecting knowledge to drive solutions

Generating evidence to address youth unemployment

Building a shared vision in place

Linking place-based responses to the national agenda

Embedding community-driven solutions in place

The NYEB's practice approach is based on evidence and built and developed through the Brotherhood's learnings and multilevel practice expertise across service development and delivery, policy, and the wider system of youth employment. The Brotherhood's non-competitive role as an enabler, positions the NYEB to foster collaboration and harness the expertise of key stakeholders to co-develop action-based practice and policy responses, build the evidence base and drive reform of youth employment pathways.

Many employment service providers and other critical stakeholders across the employment system are undertaking good practice with young people, and have strong relationships with industry and other sectors. It is currently difficult, however, to undertake and participate in intentional community wide reform that is needed to create possibilities for system change.

The NYEB is working with critical stakeholders to build relationships that go beyond bilateral to multilateral, and where there are existing multilateral networks, align our work to build an intentional platform of active work rather than mere information exchange.

Case studies under each area of practice below reveal emerging evidence of how participants are engaging with the NYEB, and each other, both locally and nationally to address structural and systemic barriers faced by young people and community in navigating the employment system.

Building a shared vision in place to develop sustainable youth employment pathways

Building collaboration and trust with community

> Building collaboration and trust with Lead Partner organisations and their community takes time, and is facilitated by an enabling organisation acting to build momentum and legitimacy, and bring people together around a common vision for place–based action to improve youth employment.

The Brotherhood is testing the NYEB's collaborative model across selected communities in Australia, and works closely with a Lead Partner organisation in each site to support, guide and build their capacity to drive cross-sector collaboration and improve employment outcomes for young people, business and community.

Partnerships between the Brotherhood and Lead Partner organisations are established by consistent and open dialogue and extensive face-to-face site visits to build trust and relationships, to provide clarity on the vision and purpose of the work, roles and responsibilities, and the scope of commitment required to drive the NYEB model in the community.

Connecting and working in new ways towards a shared vision for the Shoalhaven

Mission Australia was selected as the preferred Lead Partner organisation to drive the NYEB's work in the Shoalhaven region of New South Wales. Relationships and community embeddedness, especially in rural areas, are considered critical components to the success of the NYEB's work in place. Mission Australia is a local youth employment specialist, well known for its community collaboration and work with young people.

To establish a strong relationship with Mission Australia, the Brotherhood travelled to the Shoalhaven region regularly to meet with the local team, present and discuss the NYEB's vision, build an understanding of each other's way of working and explore what an NYEB partnership would involve, including the establishment of a local Community Investment Committee.

> *What we were being asked to do with the trial became clearer as we met a couple of times.... We thought there was a prescriptive way of doing it...but as we kept talking... I realised that it is meant to work for this community. So, we take the core aspects of it, and look at how we think we should run it in our area, and that made it a lot easier to develop what it would look like in our area.*
>
> — **Shoalhaven CIC participant**

Meeting regularly with Mission Australia also increased understanding of the strengths and challenges of the local youth employment landscape, and furthered discussion of what a shared community vision for improving youth employment pathways with the NYEB might involve.

Challenges currently faced by community to address youth unemployment include the need for:

+ Evidence and data to understand why youth unemployment remains consistently high in the region, despite current investments.

+ Coordination between services and programs, to address a complex and competitive service environment that often results in duplication, lack of sustainability and sharing of learnings.

+ Action-based strategies, to increase young people's access to relevant skills and training opportunities.

The Brotherhood supported Mission Australia to identify and connect with key stakeholders in the community to discuss these challenges and develop a shared vision of the purpose of a CIC in addressing these challenges. The complex service environment across the Shoalhaven, and the bushfires impacting the area, made setting up and building new relationships quite challenging. Mission Australia persisted, and with the support of the Brotherhood,

encouraged stakeholders to explore how the NYEB's collaborative approach could add value, rather than just become another 'program' in an already busy service environment.

> *Community ownership is key...it's place–based, so it needs to be focused around where we work, and there needs to be ownership and sustainability to everything we do.*
>
> — **Shoalhaven CIC participant**

Through Mission Australia's existing work and knowledge, they knew of several existing forums or networks in the region related to employment, and in the process of identifying key stakeholders for the CIC, they connected with the Shoalhaven Aboriginal and Youth Employment (SAYE) forum. The SAYE forum was recognised as an existing mechanism with the potential to be tapped into to establish a CIC, with representation from the local council, employment service providers and TAFE.

Working together with the SAYE forum, it was decided that a separate CIC was needed to provide an intentional and specialised focus on young people, with key features including:

+ The involvement and lead role of employers.

+ The involvement of the Lead Partner organisation (the local youth employment specialist), providing a focused collaborative approach and connection to young people experiencing disadvantage in the region.

+ An action-based committee, driven through the development of a youth employment action plan, critical to the momentum of the forum and to demonstrate opportunities for change locally.

+ Formal connections between the CIC and NYEB national governance structures.

Mission Australia and the SAYE forum, supported by the Brotherhood, endorsed and established a local CIC, providing a unique opportunity for intentional collaborative partnerships with critical sectors, to coordinate and strengthen local investments and pathways in youth employment. The SAYE provides a mechanism for input from all community voices, and to collate and feed research into the CIC. The CIC then prioritises and actions this information, translating it into strategies that focus on strengthening youth employment outcomes.

Working together, a CIC presents the opportunity to harness existing expertise and investments to address and strengthen learning and work pathways in new ways.

> *With employment you actually need heavy involvement across every sector, including every level of government. Yesterday [at the CIC meeting] you had two representatives of the Federal Government, two representatives of the State Government, and two from the local government... not once, since I've been here, have the six of us met together.*
>
> **— Shoalhaven CIC participant**

The Brotherhood supported the establishment of the CIC through providing:

+ Access to evidence, research and evaluation expertise, which complimented local connections and knowledge to concretely position the CIC's work in the local context.

+ Support to mobilise employer champions and critical community members to join the CIC and develop action-based plans.

+ Opportunity to leverage the formal connections of the NYEB's national governance structures, gaining advice on how to alleviate blockages at State or Federal levels.

Mission Australia is already seeing the value of developing stronger cross-sectoral partnerships with key community stakeholders, which would have been difficult to achieve independently, including:

+ The Regional Employment Facilitator and Chair of the SAYE forum, providing information and experience to the CIC of his work to connect jobseekers to local employment pathways, and alignment of investments and opportunities in place.

+ Stronger relationships with the head of the local Business Chambers of Commerce and the council's economic development team, leading to a more intentional connection to local employers and industry and intel on the needs of the local labour market.

+ A stronger relationship with TAFE, leading to the running of pre-apprenticeship TAFE training in Nowra. This was previously a limited opportunity for young people, which can now be accessed and begin to meet demand from trades people in the region.

+ A new partnership with SYC-run program Sticking Together,[34] which has led to joint training initiatives for young people to gain employment in a post-bushfire response.

NYEB-supported cross-sectoral and intentional partnerships in community demonstrate what is possible in youth employment when key stakeholders work collaboratively in place to make change. The role of the Brotherhood is to support Lead Partner organisations to expand their practice to develop deeper partnerships within their community to intentionally address youth unemployment locally.

NYEB partners and participants are asked to make contributions to the NYEB's work that pull levers in their relevant sector to drive change in youth employment. Through this collaboration and coordination, the NYEB enables communities to collectively tackle more complex issues and factors relating to youth unemployment than they could have achieved independently. While this may require additional work for NYEB partners in the short term, it will inevitably benefit their work to drive down youth unemployment.

To ensure the relevance and contribution of the NYEB model to existing community efforts and expertise, criteria has been developed to guide the selection of demonstration sites, including the existence of:

+ **Experience of high youth unemployment and/ or underemployment in the region** – for which an effective collaborative mechanism can begin to address.

+ **A community-embedded and youth-focused employment service provider willing to partner with the NYEB, coordinate and drive collaborative efforts** – providing practice expertise and connections with young people, and strong community networks for community-led work in place.

+ **Key stakeholders who can create an authorising environment to act and make decisions** – to gain legitimacy of the vision and work of the NYEB, advocate for and enact change within their organisation and community.

+ **Employer investment in young people** – to share inside knowledge of industry, create real work opportunities and pathways, and ensure the supply and demand issues of the labour market are considered.

Embedding community–driven solutions in place

Establishing local Community Investment Committees

> A Community Investment Committee is a critical mechanism to harness local expertise and investments to develop place–based solutions to address youth unemployment.

The NYEB supports the Lead Partner organisation at each demonstration site to leverage community and national networks and lead the establishment of a local CIC. Strengthening youth employment outcomes in place requires community-led, cross-sectoral collaboration of key stakeholders to co-develop solutions.

Stakeholders involved with CICs, and the NYEB national governance groups, represent different sectors and areas of work that together influence the wider youth employment system and, in turn, have an impact on each young person in varying ways. Critical stakeholders include representation from employers and industry, youth employment service providers, skills and training such as VET and group training providers, local council, State and Federal Governments, young people and key community organisations.

The CICs bring these stakeholders together to:

+ Share diverse local knowledge.

+ Co-design and trial innovative, action-based approaches to youth employment that leverage community expertise and investments.

+ Coordinate and strengthen work already taking place in the community, while also informing national policy and practice through the NYEB national governance groups.

The CIC is coordinated and co-led by the Lead Partner organisation bringing essential: expertise in what works to support young people experiencing disadvantage into work; strong relationships with local employers; and engagement with young people who can be invited to contribute their perspectives to the CIC.

The engagement of local employer champions to drive the actions of the CIC is vital to designing pathways to employment that are fit-for-purpose for young people.* It is also crucial to match pathways with local industries and employment opportunities, and ensure young people are prepared and equipped for the work of today and the future. Employer investment in young people involves creating real work opportunities and pathways, such as hosting workplace tours or workshops, mentoring, offering volunteer or workplace positions, or sharing inside knowledge of industry.**

The benefits of involving youth employment service providers and employers in the CIC, along with other critical stakeholders (outlined in **Figure 6**), includes their connection to further programs, networks and stakeholders with specific expertise who can be invited to assist the CIC when required, according to different strategies planned. Youth employment service providers, for example, are connected to the expertise of local employers, training providers and labour-hire firms; employers are connected to industry peak bodies; education providers to career advice organisations; and government to knowledge of current data, initiatives and investments related to youth employment.

Expertise and efforts in these sectors are often siloed to single departments, organisations or individuals. Conversely, the CICs are designed to mobilise different sectors and harness a variety of expertise and efforts to enable a coherent and coordinated approach to youth employment.

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* For more information on the role of employer champions see 'Resource B: Community Investment Committee employer champions of youth employment' in Section 4.

** For examples of employer contribution and investment in young people see Transition to Work Community of Practice 2020, Employers. Available at: https://www.ttwcommunity.com.au/employers/.

Figure 6: Critical stakeholders in youth employment pathways[36]

Critical stakeholders in youth employment pathways	CIC role	Benefit of membership
Employers The CIC is led by a local employer, who champions good practice in investing in the capabilities of young people in the region. Other employers or industry leaders also participate in the CIC as valued members.	As employer champions: — drive and lead the actions of the CIC within the community — advocate for investing in young people throughout employer networks — contribute to the development of youth employment solutions, from start to finish — take responsibility to follow-up and make changes within own business/industry.	Build understanding across diverse sectors of the needs of employers and industry and demand-side issues of the local labour market. Increased understanding and awareness amongst employers of the experiences of young people. Increased knowledge of good practice in providing opportunities to young people. Employer networks leveraged to support and create jobs and opportunities for young people.
Youth employment service providers The CIC is coordinated by the NYEB Lead Partner organisation, a community-embedded youth-focused provider. Other employment service providers may also participate in the CIC as valued members.	As Lead Partner: coordinate and manage the CIC As member and Lead Partner: — work with networks to advocate and drive change — adapt and innovate to improve and support young people into sustainable youth employment pathways.	Improved expertise for intermediaries to support young people Improved opportunities for young people to access employment pathways Improved engagement and integration with different sectors in the community, leading to the development of more effective and aligned programs and services.
Education and training Local education and training providers, such as TAFEs, high schools and RTOs.	Work with other key stakeholders to understand local needs (e.g. of business, young people) to create and align education and training opportunities to enable young people to transfer into meaningful and sustainable work.	Better informed on the needs of young people and industry. Develop and align education and training options for young people Access to other sector expertise to create more coordinated approaches and more efficient resourcing and design of youth employment pathways.

Critical stakeholders in youth employment pathways	CIC role	Benefit of membership
State and Federal governments Members working, or have expertise working, at a policy or program level relevant to youth employment pathways, such as in employment, industry, education and training, and infrastructure. **Local government** Members working, or have expertise working, at a local level in areas such as infrastructure, economic development, urban planning and community services	Federal and State to advise and work to align investments in the region, e.g. employment support investments. Local government to invest in local initiatives to improve youth employment pathways e.g. efficient local transport. All to connect and share information with the different sectors and levels of government.	More effective programs and policies in achieving outcomes for young people at local and national level. Better informed on current investments and their impacts at the local level. More effective integration between departments and intentional collaboration across sectors.
Community organisations Local social, recreational, wellbeing support groups, or cultural groups with a practice/service delivery focus on working with young people.	Provide expertise on what is working well for young people in the region and where there is potential to innovate and change.	Increased multisector understanding of the context of local young people. Increased collaboration, adaption and integration of services in the community. New opportunities to fill gaps or align work to prepare and support young people into work.
Young people Aged between 15 and 25 who are supported to participate and meaningfully contribute their lived experience, with informed consent.	Bring an understanding of young people's aspirations, needs and experiences to inform the building of pathways that increases young people's access to meaningful work and learning.	Improved access to work and learning opportunities in the community. Youth have a direct voice to key stakeholders in the local and national employment ecosystem. Strengthened agency and capacity to contribute to decision making and co-development of solutions that affect them directly.

❝

With employment you actually need heavy involvement across every sector, including every level of government.

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Shoalhaven CIC participant

Mobilising stakeholders from different sectors of the community is vital in establishing the membership of a local CIC, in order to utilise their diverse expertise, role and legitimacy within the community to make change that will improve youth employment outcomes locally.

Mobilising critical stakeholders to bring about change in place

Workskil Australia made the decision to become a NYEB Lead Partner organisation to add value to their work to improve employment pathways across the northern area of Adelaide, SA. To mobilise critical stakeholders and sectors around a common vision, Workskil identified key challenges in local youth employment pathways that the NYEB model and the establishment of a CIC could address, including:

+ Lack of coordinated and sustained investment to support and prepare young people for work beyond program and political cycles.

+ Disconnect between the intent and result of procurement investments aimed at providing employment for cohorts experiencing disadvantage.

+ Gaps in skills and training, and the gaining of skills that do not match local employment opportunities.

In discussing potential members of a CIC with the Brotherhood, Workskil noted they already have strong connections with a range of small, medium and large businesses, which were developed through a structured employer engagement program within their organisation to connect people to jobs. Through the NYEB's sharing of research and learnings from other CICs, Workskil recognised the benefits of engaging employers as active contributors to the CIC to improve youth employment and move beyond a recruitment-orientated relationship with employers. The CIC offers a platform where employers are supported to:

+ Co-design more streamlined and tailored pathways for youth recruitment in the region.

+ Share their insights, challenges and enablers to strengthening youth employment.

+ Participate in a formal governance structure to enhance the local talent pool of people to meet their business needs.

+ Take up the opportunity to give back and build the social capital of young people and the community.

Workskil's strong local connections with employers meant they were able to identify and quickly mobilise two local employer champions willing to play a leading role in the CIC.

+ Datacom – a national IT company who have worked with Workskil and TAFE to design tailored courses for young people to prepare for work at their business. Datacom recruits for entry-level positions with prerequisites of capabilities, rather than experience, and have specifically positioned their work in areas that have higher numbers of young people who do not continue to university.

+ OTR – a local family business that has grown into a leading convenience retailer employing over 3,100 South Australians. OTR has made special efforts to employ local people, including groups at risk of experiencing vulnerability, such as those with a migrant or refugee background and young people.

The NYEB has supported Workskil to build momentum around the CIC and mobilise other critical representatives from sectors that influence the youth employment landscape, and who provide an authorising environment for the CIC to enact change in youth employment locally. This entails the involvement of stakeholders who are in a position to make decisions and commit to a CIC shared vision and actions.

Inaugural Adelaide North CIC members include senior level representation from TAFE, local council, community organisations and several State Government departments, to co-design approaches with employer champions and Workskil.

Over two initial meetings the Brotherhood facilitated the CIC group to identify key community priorities that the CIC will pursue to strengthen youth employment outcomes locally.

1. Tailoring skills and training to industry and employment opportunities – now and into the future.

2. Supporting capacity building for small and medium enterprises to invest in young people.

3. Career development and education for young people.

4. Developing a central hub or 'one-stop-shop' for information, collaboration and coordination in youth employment.

The contribution of employers to the discussion was critical to developing an action plan of youth employment strategies to meet priorities, as they were able to give a unique perspective of what is required in a pathway to successfully prepare and support young people for a position in their business. Key insights from an employer led to the following group discussions on how to support the employment of young people and the needs of business:

+ **How to increase the appeal of different jobs in a business amongst young people, to grow a talent pool of interested young people**

   Exposure to different industries and roles, such as through work experience and career education from an early age, would broaden young people's knowledge of employment and increase the appeal of different jobs. This is vital for growth industries such as health and aged care, which are struggling to attract young people.

+ **How to increase the retention of young people, so that investment in skills development remain within the company**

   Work experience gives young people a more realistic view of what a job entails, which can increase the likelihood of them attaining a job and remaining with a business who has invested in their training and work preparation.

+ **Innovative approaches to developing a workforce that is well prepared for work**

   The co-design of a virtual reality training component by Datacom and TAFE SA provides young people with simulated on-the-job work skills development, and a sense of what the job would really be like. Datacom has had great success with the model.

The identification of priorities and development of an action plan proved vital to building the momentum of the group and driving community buy-in across sectors, and to demonstrate what a coordinated youth employment pathway could look like when it is tailored to place.

The Adelaide North CIC action plan of strategies includes two youth training projects to:

+ Develop and trial a skills and training pathway that equips young people for jobs in the growth areas of aged care and the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) through collaboration and co-design between employers, TAFE, youth employment providers and young people. Building on the success of the Datacom training offer with TAFE, training could include a simulated experiential learning component, and should the trial be successful, produce an evidenced and replicable model to scale-up with other employers and industries.

+ Develop and coordinate a 'Green Army' style program, which has proven to be successful in providing young people with paid training and experience in conservation, land care and environmental technology. Following extensive bushfires in the Adelaide Hills there is a need for these skills and an opportunity for young people to contribute to community.

The Lead Partner organisation has found that the CIC provides new and important opportunities for:

+ Deeper engagement with employers and increased understanding of industry needs.

+ Formalised and intentional cross-sector collaboration to develop structural solutions to complex issues, in ways that could not be achieved by working alone, nor without the support of an enabling organisation.

+ Formal connection to policy makers at a national level, to regularly communicate local experiences and the need for relevant and tailored approaches to local context.

The Brotherhood supports Lead Partner organisations to engage employer champions,* and other representatives, by providing evidence and advice on how to identify critical stakeholders and the attributes they will bring. The Brotherhood then works alongside Lead Partners to frame key messages and communications, and engage with stakeholders.

The Brotherhood also provides tools, resources and training to support the Lead Partner to build relationships and establish a CIC, including the *National Youth Employment Body: Community Investment Committee Toolkit* (see overview of the toolkit in **Section 4**). The toolkit draws on the Brotherhood's facilitation of the Transition to Work Community of Practice and input from the NYEB demonstration sites, to outline a process that positions the CIC to mobilise critical stakeholders and identify opportunities to strengthen local youth employment pathways and develop community-led action plans to respond to these.

Enabling understanding of the local youth employment landscape

> Place-based responses require an in-depth and real-time understanding of current and future job opportunities and pathways for young people.

Investment and effort are needed to understand the different context of each community, including their unique labour market, local service system, and the roles and impact of government. While enablers and barriers experienced by young people are broadly similar across communities, each is experienced according to the unique context and social and economic infrastructure of where and how they are able to live, learn and work. A focus on place is important to the NYEB model for building the capacity of a local community to work together and draw on local strengths to find new ways to address youth unemployment and improve outcomes for young people experiencing disadvantage.

Case study 3

Bringing together data and local knowledge to inform youth employment pathways

Driving down youth unemployment requires a comprehensive understanding of the local labour market to identify local employment opportunities, what they involve and the key barriers to accessing them, in order to inform action and develop approaches to take up these opportunities. The Brotherhood worked with NYEB national governance groups, Lead Partner organisations and critical stakeholders at local demonstration sites, to increase understanding of the structural factors that impact local youth employment pathways in place and inform strategies, policies and investments to address these.

The Brotherhood's Research and Policy Centre collated information from NYEB stakeholders and analysed data to develop a scan of each demonstration sites' local labour market to ensure the NYEB and local Community Investment Committees were informed by the best available evidence on issues, policy

responses, emerging industries, as well as potential opportunities in each region. Each labour market scan gives current local data regarding employment and related issues in the region such as transport, housing, education and training, and employment service responses^.

Labour market scans were shared with local CICs upon completion to gain feedback and promote discussion to ensure that the research was balanced with local knowledge of on the ground realities regarding youth employment. Researchers from the Brotherhood presented key findings of the labour market at CIC meetings across the three sites, beginning with Logan in September 2019. CIC members were invited to discuss and test the findings based on their own knowledge and experience, as well as outline what they believe are the most important issues in shaping local youth employment.

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* For more information on engaging employers to improve youth employment pathways see 'Resource E: NYEB pathways to employment' in Section 4.

^ For more information on the Brotherhood's development of scans see 'Resource C: NYEB labour market scans' in Section 4.

Members of the Logan CIC identified local issues including concerns that were not captured in the labour market scan, such as the disconnect between education and training pathways and the needs of local employers. Other concerns across the CIC's included a fragmented employment service system, young people's access to transport, and the community's perceptions of young people.

> *I went on a door knock one day and spoke to 80 people, and I think it was like 55 or 60% of people said that transport was their biggest issue in the Shoalhaven... I harp on about transport, but it's a big thing. Like [CIC member] said yesterday, it cost us $7,000 from start to finish for someone to get their licence.*
>
> **— Shoalhaven CIC participant**

Discussion with local CIC members across demonstration sites underlined the importance of local knowledge and experience. While research and data provide important information of the region, the harnessing of local expertise and real-time intelligence enables a more multi-layered and in-depth picture of the landscape, including current and upcoming work opportunities, how various networks and investments work together, and where there are gaps in services or research.

Labour market scan findings and follow up CIC discussions increased understanding of the local and broader context of youth employment and developed a sense of collective ownership from CIC members of their response to issues identified. This drove and informed the development of action-focused plans and approaches to address issues and strengthen youth employment outcomes. Critical stakeholders are engaged in the co-design of youth employment pathways across sites, including TAFE, local council, employment service providers, employers and industry.

> *I think it's important that they [the CIC] remain focused...on where the bang for the buck is and where we can make a difference...Putting something together and then trying to use that to make a difference...rather than it being a get together, identify the issues, then walk away.*
>
> **— Logan CIC participant**

The Brotherhood works with Lead Partners and CIC members to develop a meaningful picture of the local youth employment landscape through:

+ The development of a labour market scan for each region including data on population demographics, employment, current and predicted growth industries, transport, housing, education, and relevant initiatives and programs.

+ Facilitating iterative workshops on the local labour market and youth employment landscape to stimulate and guide discussion, identify opportunities to strengthen youth employment outcomes locally and to inform local strategies to improve youth employment.

+ Guiding and facilitating dialogue with key stakeholders across employment and industry, youth employment service providers, skills and training, government, local council, and key community organisations to understand what investments, policies, programs and networks exist in the region to support young people.

+ The coordination of initial data and information on relevant government investments and programs, to inform the CICs on how to better link investments at a local level; and the Australian Government on potential investment alignment to improve outcomes for young people and business.

Developing and implementing community-driven, action-based solutions in place to improve employment outcomes for young people, and business and community

Driving local youth employment solutions in a CIC requires support to: identify community priorities and develop action-based work to meet short, medium and long-term goals; and harness local expertise and effort and national investments, together with data and research, to build and maintain momentum.

The development of action-based plans is critical for ensuring early and ongoing commitment and momentum to drive youth employment solutions that enhance local economic development. Providing clarity on what the CIC is doing and being able to envision and measure impact and change, provides the impetus to move beyond the simple sharing of information and mitigates the risk of the CIC becoming a forum for information exchange only.

Developing action–based solutions in place

The NYEB is supporting CICs to address community priority areas to strengthen youth employment in place. Key youth employment priorities in the Logan region of Queensland were identified through several Logan CIC meetings. These included a workshop on the local youth employment landscape, NYEB discussions with Lead Partner yourtown and its networks, and NYEB participation in local forums.

> *What could we do differently here? Because some of those systems aren't working...How can we look at other ways of trialling getting young people jobs?*
>
> — **Logan CIC participant**

The Brotherhood facilitated several progressive discussions with the Logan CIC to ensure the priorities identified genuinely reflected community knowledge, and to gain a greater understanding of current local views and efforts towards youth employment pathways, and potential solutions to systemic barriers faced in the region.

> *I would think breaking down the silos [is a priority for the NYEB]. And the competitiveness in terms of funding and stuff. So that everyone works better together. Everyone has their speciality in different areas and should be working better together in those specialities.*
>
> — **Logan CIC participant**

CIC agreement was reached on the following interconnected priority areas, from which to develop an action plan:

+ To create and strengthen skills and training pathways that connect young people to local employment opportunities.

+ To develop solutions to local structural barriers faced by young people on their journey to employment, such as limited public transport and the ability to gain a driver's licence.

+ To create local employment opportunities for young people by supporting and enabling small and medium business to invest in young people.

+ To involve young people to meaningfully contribute and have a voice in the CIC.

+ To develop the CIC as a central point for coordination and information on youth employment in Logan.

The CIC decided to focus initially on creating a skills and training pathway that aligns with a predicted growth industry in the region, such as the health and aged care sector. An employer champion of the CIC provided feedback on what employers need for young people to be job ready, including baseline skill requirements, and what would enable employers to invest in young people and support them in these roles.

> *A lot of the programs are based around accredited training and the achievement of either a qualification or a skill set, which is pulled out of one of the national training packages. It is not necessarily aligned to what the individual employers in that area are looking for.*
>
> — **Logan CIC participant**

A CIC member from TAFE explained that while the training packages offered by TAFE are limited, there is some flexibility to adapt packages to be more relevant to a particular industry. A CIC member from a State Department agreed to explore how to leverage and align existing programs and investments with the development of a new youth employment pathway.

> *Systems change is one thing, but systems change or policy change, program change, in this area, you're battling against national policy, national frameworks.*
>
> — **Logan CIC participant**

As an outcome of the meeting, the NYEB and Lead Partner organisation yourtown connected with networks across the region to gain further expertise on building a youth employment pathway into the health and aged care service industry. It was also important to ascertain alignment or duplication of existing efforts in Logan. It became apparent that the National Disability Insurance Scheme was an area of opportunity, with a growing need for young people to work with younger NDIS participants. Next steps will be to connect with the NDIS to explore baseline training requirements, bring NDIS and TAFE together to co-design the course, and provide support for young people to contribute to the co-design of the initiative.

It will also be important to consider the extra support young people may need for success on this pathway, such as support to access transport, gain Australian Business Numbers and business advice, and participate in on-the-job work experience during training. As a first step, the Lead Partner organisation are developing a volunteer initiative in the health and aged care sector, which will provide young people with critical exposure to the different roles involved, and to grow the number of young people interested in this area of employment.

A Logan CIC action plan has been drafted with support from the Brotherhood, and includes activities to achieve key priorities and contributions from each member to implement short- and long-term goals. As the enabling organisation the Brotherhood is also providing ongoing

support to the Lead Partner and CIC to implement the final action plan through:

+ Assistance with monitoring progress and adapting the plan where necessary.

+ Working with CIC members to explore how they can leverage support from within their own sector and higher level government or institutions to address systemic barriers.

+ Ongoing advice and feedback from the NYEB national governance groups and connection to their networks.

+ Documentation of the CIC's collaborative place-based approach to strengthening youth employment pathways, and translation of learnings to national stakeholders.

The Brotherhood provides continual feedback and advice to Lead Partner organisations on the development of action plans and guidance on driving the CICs towards outcomes. The Brotherhood's support includes:

+ Providing advice on ways to prepare, organise and drive the CIC meetings to ensure all members are involved and contributing towards outcomes.

+ Attending face-to-face CIC meetings and facilitating or guiding discussions to elicit actions.

+ Weekly teleconferences with Lead Partner organisation staff, to drive and support follow-up actions between meetings.

+ Providing documentation and templates, and supporting evidence.

The Brotherhood also facilitates workshops with NYEB partners and participants in demonstration sites to stimulate discussion on community priorities (opportunities, challenges, gaps) and perceptions of youth employment pathways in the region.* The workshop process encourages new ways of looking at problems and solutions, and new ideas of how local efforts could be aligned to national initiatives. Information from the workshop, together with intelligence from local industry, employment experts and across NYEB national governance groups, is then utilised in the development of CIC youth employment action plans.

Linking place-based responses to the national agenda

Fostering collaborative governance to develop innovative and systemic national solutions to youth employment

Multi-sectoral and multi-level governance structures bring together the expertise of key public and non-public stakeholders from across diverse sectors and departments to address the interrelated factors that impact youth employment in place.

Bringing diverse stakeholders together with different perspectives and ideas on how to solve the complex issue of youth unemployment requires collaborative leadership from an enabling body. In this enabling role, the Brotherhood facilitates opportunities to build knowledge, connections and space for collaborative working and systems thinking approaches to addressing issues. Systems thinking brings to light the many different relationships and components that make up a problem or possible solution, and challenges assumptions about the way things are and how they could be changed.[37]

A key feature of CICs are their connection to national policy makers and agendas. CICs are supported to invite members from Federal Government departments and national peak bodies, providing a line of communication, and exchange of information and knowledge between national and local experiences and potential solutions. Providing continual information flow and lived experiences of local needs and what is working or not working well, has the potential to inform the alignment of national investments, policies and programs to support change that impacts on the local area.

The NYEB also enables each Lead Partner organisation to share local barriers and opportunities for young people directly with policy makers at national CoI Group meetings. The face to face sharing of local contexts increases understanding of how policy impacts place and everyday experiences in different ways, and the unintended consequences of the current employment system.

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* For an overview of currently available workshops see 'Resource D: NYEB workshops' in Section 4.

Influencing change: from local to national

In establishing the Shoalhaven CIC, the NYEB Lead Partner organisation, Mission Australia, held conversations with key local stakeholders on the major gaps and opportunities for young people in accessing employment. Transport was consistently identified as a major barrier to young people entering and retaining work, or gaining skills and training opportunities, in the region, especially for those in satellite towns.

> *For me, it's making the pathway for young people and employers easier to get to. And looking at all the blockages and all the system issues that can get in the way. And really getting to the bottom of what's happening in the employment landscape – from the level of employers, to government, to local service providers, and looking at everything in–between.*
>
> **— Shoalhaven CIC participant**

The Brotherhood enabled members of the Shoalhaven CIC to present at an NYEB Cross-Government CoI group meeting on the barriers and opportunities for youth employment in the Shoalhaven region, and the effectiveness of national investments and programs at a local level.

> *It's been something that I've always talked about for years [youth employment issues], and it was great that I got that opportunity to talk in Canberra the other day. Because I see those roadblocks that young people have. I see the roadblocks that employers have.*
>
> **— Shoalhaven CIC participant**

A key topic of discussion was Shoalhaven's very limited public transport options, and the difficulty for young people experiencing disadvantage to access finance, or the time of parents or others for driving lessons needed to gain their licence.

The CoI Group agreed to elevate transport to its regular agenda, creating a mechanism through which local issues such as transport are brought to a national level and shared across relevant government departments; with potential to inform cross-cutting and adaptive policies that enable young people to access work and learning opportunities.

Reporting back to the NYEB Advisory Group also elicited ideas of how the Shoalhaven region could approach the challenge of transport and member offers to leverage their networks to connect the CIC to further opportunities.

Collaborative effort of the CIC and key stakeholders to harness local expertise and investment of multiple sectors, is driving the development of local ideas and commitment to a shared vision and responsibility to improve the employment ecosystem in place. CIC participants have noted that their involvement with the NYEB has made them think about youth employment differently, and lead them to consider the different levels of the system and government that impact it.

> *This work has expanded my knowledge and thinking. It has made me look outside the square and made me think of new opportunities.*
>
> **— Shoalhaven CIC participant**

The NYEB's collaborative governance structures provide an effective mechanism to:

+ Facilitate and maintain intentional relationships based on trust and mutual commitment within and across governance groups, and to communicate a shared vision.

+ Share progress and reflect on learnings across governance groups, and wider audiences.

+ Better understand and respond to local challenges and community experiences of youth unemployment in place.

+ Gain national level input and advice on local priorities and challenges identified by community, and innovative ideas on how to address these.

+ Increase understanding of the multiple structural factors that impact youth employment in place and how current government policy and investments can more effectively address youth unemployment.

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>
> *... it's making the pathway for young people and employers easier to get to. And looking at all the blockages and all the system issues that can get in the way.*
>
> Shoalhaven CIC participant

Connecting knowledge across the youth employment ecosystem to drive new understanding and solutions

> Bringing together different forms of knowledge, held by key stakeholders in place and across different parts of the youth employment system, brings new understanding of issues and agency to learn, innovate and work together to make change. Enabling young people to contribute meaningfully to this process is vital.

Employers, policy makers, employment service providers, skills and training providers, community organisations and researchers involved in the NYEB are committed to reaching the same goal, yet each see the issue of youth unemployment from a different place in the system, from different experiences and contexts, and different viewpoints of how it can be solved. Rather than producing division, the NYEB is connecting these different knowledges in intentional ways, enabled through collaborative mechanisms that build trust and strengthen collaborative thinking, ongoing learning and action.

Learnings from local NYEB demonstration sites and CICs are better connecting policy with local practice expertise and the multiple sectors that play a critical role in youth employment. Local CIC's, for example, have identified the need for stronger and more flexible connections between employers and the education system, to ensure training is tailored to current and future employment opportunities.

In response to locally identified need, partners across the NYEB are linking their efforts and knowledge to drive action. CIC employer champions are co-designing youth employment training packages with TAFE, while TAFE is exploring flexibility within their training packages to tailor courses for young people and industry, and Federal Department representatives of the Cross-Government CoI Group are providing information and exploring potential coordination of existing investments to support young people on their pathway. The NYEB is concurrently providing the connecting interface to link local communities to national policy makers to enable change across the wider system of youth employment.

Responses to youth unemployment, however, also need to be co-designed by young people themselves, so that their experiences can shape solutions. Young people's feedback and experiences are crucial to creating successful pathways and opportunities for young people, and for establishing strong relationships between employment service providers, employers and young people.

The NYEB is developing practices that better support young people to contribute to the design of youth employment strategies in meaningful ways. Support needs to both empower young people and sectors across the system to invest in and learn from young people's contribution. This requires more than a token involvement that tries to represent the experience of all young people, and instead promote ongoing involvement of young people at local and national levels to engage with a range of young people's perspectives and experiences.

The NYEB is working with locally embedded services that have strong connections with young people in place to connect them, both locally and nationally, to different stakeholders within the employment system.

Listening to the voices of young people

In May 2019 the National Employers Reference Group (NERG) met in Sydney, bringing together over 13 employers from across the country, with representatives from all levels of government and a range of employment service providers. The NERG represents a wide range of industries and employers of all sizes to provide a diversity of views and share information on a national scale to inform innovative practice and supportive policy and investments.

Local experiences of how employers have overcome challenges and collaborated to create pathways for young people to move into work were shared, including initiatives of a local Jobs Council and innovative recruitment practices of a growing fast food franchise. The NERG also heard from a youth panel, made up of young people being supported into work by local employment service providers. These young people shared their experiences of moving into employment for the first time and identified workplace examples that have helped or hindered them in achieving and maintaining employment. Positive support included workplace mentors, both formal and informal training programs, communication about the culture and expectations of workplaces and increased exposure to different job types through limited internships.

One young woman, shared her experience of working casually for a national retail chain, where constantly fluctuating hours made it difficult for her to sustain an independent livelihood. Once she turned 18, she was supported by her employment service provider to apply to a large local manufacturing company for a three-month paid internship. Through this experience she was able to learn a lot about workplace culture and the types of positions and employment pathways available through the company.

Ultimately though, she was able to recognise that she wasn't interested in a career in manufacturing, but recommended the experience to her brother, who successfully completed the internship and went on to secure further employment with the company. She instead identified that her career aspiration was to work in supporting other young people, leading her to enrol in a Certificate IV in Youth Work.

The young woman was given the opportunity to attend the NERG through her Transition to Work provider, which is part of the National TtW Community of Practice. One of the employers attending the NERG was so impressed by her performance on the panel, that he approached her after the meeting and offered to connect her with someone from a supermarket chain he was connected to, even though he worked in a different State. As a result of this she was interviewed and successful in securing a casual job with more regular hours, through which she could support herself whilst continuing her study.

Employers attending the meeting provided feedback on the value of the youth panel in building their understanding about young people and the types of opportunities and support they could implement in their own work places. The employers also agreed that involving young people at key future meetings was critical to continue to build understanding.

> *It is so essential that as employers we hear directly from young people and their stories of applying for and starting new jobs. We often don't get the opportunity to talk with young people outside our businesses and take the time to listen to their experiences. Hearing from the young people present helped inform changes we can make to our recruiting procedures and how as a whole organisation we can support young people, ensuring we give them every opportunity to excel.*
>
> **— NERG participant**

The purpose of young people attending the NERG was not to connect them to employment opportunities, but rather to inform employers about the types of challenges that young people face when starting work and what is most effective in preparing them to successfully engage in the world of work and to build a career. Providing young people with the opportunity to represent themselves and their aspirations, however, also served to expand their connections and opportunities.

> *The young people who spoke today were so passionate. It was clear that they really wanted to work and would be an asset to any company. As employers, it really is about ensuring we can put the right supports in place to make sure that we can tap into all that potential.*
>
> **— NERG participant**

The NYEB is co-developing ways for all stakeholders to better support young people to actively contribute to the design and implementation of policy and programs to improve youth employment pathways. The NYEB will support young people to:

+ Contribute experiences and expertise on opportunities and barriers of youth employment pathways at national levels, including through participation with the TtW Youth Alliance, and at national NYEB events and Working Groups.

+ Give advice on the work of the CICs and the experiences of young people at the local level.

+ Connect with employers to build mutual understanding and new solutions, including through Lead Partner organisations and the NERG.

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It is so essential that as employers we hear directly from young people... and take the time to listen to their experiences.

NERG participant

Generating evidence to address youth unemployment

> Key factors of successful place-based approaches need to be shared both locally and at a national level to enable review and adaption of practice and policy, to build evidence and strengthen youth employment solutions.

The NYEB's learnings are being shared across its national governance groups, linking local information to national policy makers. Documentation of the NYEB's collaborative process at demonstration sites, for example, is increasing policy maker's understanding of different local contexts and what is needed at a policy level to better align investments in place.

Monitoring the collaborative process and documenting findings is also building the legitimacy of the NYEB's work and an authorising environment among partners to act in new ways. The Brotherhood's Research and Policy Centre is investigating the key elements of effective collaboration that lead to new thinking and agency to work in new ways, through investigating: how participants interact, their views of the NYEB's purpose and their role in its work, and their understanding of the potential impact of the NYEB model on youth employment pathways. It is also utilising a developmental evaluation approach to provide feedback to the NYEB on the development of its collaborative strategies and governance structures, enabling the NYEB to review and refine its work in real time.

Examining young people's pathways to employment

A key part of initial interviews with NYEB participants is a steps inventory[38] activity, which seeks to create a visual representation of their perception of the youth employment system. The NYEB researcher guides the interviewee to chart the logical steps they think a young person would take through the youth employment system. The interviewee is then asked to identify: issues young people may face at different steps, any linkages and alignment between organisations within the system, and the purpose of each step in assisting the young person into employment.

This activity is revealing important details on:

+ How the youth employment system is logically meant to function

> *I think the whole system could be better if we actually focused on the young person getting into meaningful work, with that particular and individual definition of meaningful work being taken into consideration.*
>
> — **Expert Working Group participant**

+ Perceptions and assumptions about how young people navigate the system

> *The onus is on the young person to access the [employment] service...logistically just getting there, in our region, that could be quite problematic...If they're relying on public transport, an appointment's been made and they've got to make that appointment they may not be able to get there because of public transport.*
>
> — **Shoalhaven CIC participant**

+ Areas of critical concern within the current system from the perspective of NYEB participants

> *I think the whole [youth employment] system is flawed...the employment providers are fighting each other for candidates, their focus is to fulfil contracts, the numbers for those contracts...Those providers are protecting the relationships that they've built with businesses and not sharing them with other providers, even though that might be a better outcome for a candidate.*
>
> — **Logan CIC participant**

These reflections are vital in developing a clearer picture of the current youth employment system, as well as providing NYEB participants with an opportunity to reflect on their views of the current system, and where they feel the NYEB should focus its efforts and potentially intervene.

The Brotherhood's RPC is working with the NYEB to identify the interconnected relationships, conditions and practices, adaptable to place and context, which enable young people to transition into meaningful and sustainable work. These findings are documented and shared to inform a national approach to youth employment. Research activities currently being undertaken with NYEB stakeholders to better understand these elements include:

+ Collation of data and information on local labour markets and future job opportunities to aid local CICs to develop action-based plans that align with an increased understanding of the local context.

+ Facilitation of workshops on theoretical underpinnings of the NYEB's work and the local youth employment landscape.

+ Interviews with members of the NYEB national governance groups and local CICs, and analysis of findings utilising a developmental and realist evaluation approach to understand what works, in which circumstances, and for whom.[39]

Facilitating change within the complex space of youth employment is not a linear process and the Brotherhood is testing and refining its co-developed model as understanding grows in each local context. To increase understanding of the adaptation of common elements across different contexts, the Brotherhood is working to bring together CICs from the three demonstration sites into an inaugural NYEB Community of Practice, to share learnings and make recommendations for enhancing the NYEB model. This is critical for ongoing learning and improvement of the model in place, and for fostering collaboration which empowers participants to review and respond in innovative ways.

Section 4
Tools and resources

Section 4: Tools and resources

The NYEB is responding to local and national knowledge requirements to support place-based approaches and link local to national through the development of tailored information and tools. These tools are designed to help build the capacity of NYEB Lead Partner organisations to facilitate collaboration with multiple stakeholders and drive the work of the NYEB locally.

While resources continue to be developed by the NYEB in response to learnings and experiences of local and national stakeholders, an overview of selected resources is included below:

+ **Resource A: NYEB Community Investment Committee Toolkit** – provides an overview of the toolkit, including key elements and steps of developing a CIC in a local region, and supporting resources.

+ **Resource B: Community Investment Committee employer champions of youth employment** – provides an outline of what an NYEB employer champion of youth employment is, what they can do as part of the NYEB, and how they are supported to contribute to the co-design of strategies and policies across diverse areas of youth employment.

+ **Resource C: NYEB Labour market scans** – provides an overview of the process to develop labour market scans of each region participating as a demonstration site in the NYEB model, to build an understanding of youth employment issues unique to the local context.

+ **Resource D: NYEB workshops** – provides an overview of a series of facilitated workshops to increase understanding of the NYEB model, its underpinning concepts, and practical strategies for strengthening youth employment pathways within communities.

+ **Resource E: NYEB Pathways to employment** – provides information and guidance around the types of opportunities that employers can flexibly provide young people at different phases on their pathway to employment, to bring mutual benefits to both young people and employers.

Many of these resources and other information, including stories of how employer champions are investing in young people and creating opportunities for them to participate and excel in the world of work, are available at the NYEB website https://nyeb.bsl.org.au/.

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> *These tools are designed to help build the capacity of NYEB Lead Partner organisations to facilitate collaboration with multiple stakeholders and drive the work of the NYEB locally.*
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> —
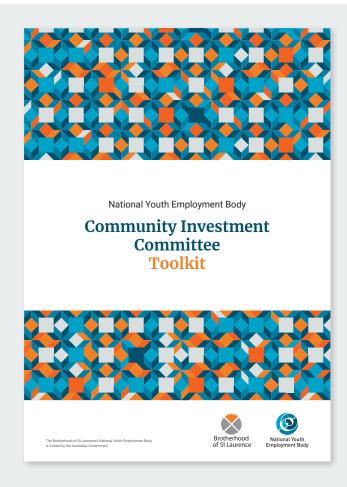
Resource A
National Youth Employment Body
Community Investment Committee Toolkit

The toolkit is designed as a guide for those interested in developing a Community Investment Committee in their area, and is primarily aimed at youth employment service providers, employers, and local policy makers within a local region experiencing high youth unemployment.

The toolkit provides broad guidance on the key elements and steps of developing a CIC, with the intention that they be adapted and contextualised according to place and local conditions and context.

The toolkit is organised under the following key steps of establishing a CIC, with key actions and supporting resources provided at the end of each section.

+ **Identify the value and purpose of Community Investment Committees** – provides some guiding questions as to whether a CIC is relevant for a local area and if local collaboration is feasible, and highlights how a CIC can add value to local investment in young people.

+ **Understand and harness place** – outlines the importance of local context and the need to increase understanding of different social and economic factors, experiences and stories that make up a local and national ecosystem in which young people transition to work.

+ **Prepare and structure the Community Investment Committee** – provides guidance on the effective coordination and management of a CIC, including the essential operational roles required to establish a CIC.

+ **Mobilise the right people** – outlines the key stakeholders the NYEB understands to be critical to strengthening youth employment pathways, and why their contribution is vital.

+ **Facilitate and act** – outlines the main elements to consider in facilitating a CIC such as holding meetings, building trust and engagement, co-developing goals, and maintaining the momentum of the group.

+ **Monitor and review** – outlines how the NYEB will support the CIC to: track its progress, reflect on and adapt its process and actions, participate in ongoing review, and mobilise knowledge that links the local to the national.

National Youth Employment Body

Community Investment Committee
Toolkit

The Brotherhood of St Laurence's National Youth Employment Body is funded by the Australian Government

Brotherhood of St Laurence

National Youth Employment Body

Resource B
Community Investment Committee employer champions of youth employment

Employer champions of youth employment can make a real difference to the lives of young people and the success of a business and community. Joining a Community Investment Committee provides the opportunity for employer champions to lead the co-design of local youth employment opportunities with key sectors, including: skills and training, community organisations, government and young people.

What is an employer champion of youth employment?

Employer champions believe in young people and their capabilities, and the value that young people bring to the workplace and their community. Employer champions: share their knowledge and expertise; collaborate with key sectors (skills and training, community organisations, young people and government) to build youth employment pathways and economic development in their community; and promote the benefits of investing in young people both locally and nationally.

Employer champions are:	Investing, or willing to invest, in building the skills of young people, and creating opportunities for them to learn about and participate in the workforce in meaningful ways.	Advocating for young people and their capabilities.
Connected to their community and have built strong local networks.	Willing to champion young people within their networks, and to motivate other employers and the wider community to believe in the capabilities of young people.	Investing their time to collaborate with other industries and sectors in the creation of meaningful employment opportunities for young people.
Willing both to share their knowledge and expertise and to consider the knowledge and expertise of others.	Contributing to developing and trialling solutions in place that tackle blockages to youth employment.	Willing to engage with evidence of good practice and to advocate for change at a national policy level.

What can an employer champion do to bring about change?

Employer champions actively collaborate and contribute to the co-design of strategies and policies across diverse areas of youth employment, including to:

1 **Provide business expertise on the skills and capabilities required for successful transitions into work**

   Share insights and expertise with the CIC on the training and preparation required to enable young people to be ready for work. Inform other sectors in the CIC on business experiences working with young people, to increase understanding of what employers and businesses need to better support young people and create employment opportunities and experiences.

2 **Co-develop strategies and solutions with key sectors**

   Play an active role in designing and contributing to youth employment pathways that address identified structural barriers to the employment of young people in jobs available now and in growth and skill shortage industries. This includes working with government, youth employment services, skills and training, and community organisations.

3 **Open and build industry networks to harness local and national efforts and investments**

   Utilise and build on connections with other employers and businesses in the community to bring people and resources together to build the networks and connections of young people within their wider community and to promote young people's capabilities and talents. Employer champions can use their own experience to encourage other employers to provide work experience and industry tasters, mentoring and other opportunities for young people to learn and develop workforce understanding and skills, which can be utilised by local industry. They can also work with employment services and education providers to co-develop tailored work pathways to meet local labour opportunities.

4 **Advocate the benefits of investing in young people**

   Take part in related events and opportunities to share success stories, relate how they are investing in young people and advocate for inclusive workplaces that give young people 'a hand up, rather than a hand out'.

How the Brotherhood of St Laurence and the NYEB support you

Every contribution from employer champions is an important step towards changing how young people are supported to learn and work in their community.

We support employer champions to contribute to the NYEB model with:

+ Tools and resources, and training in the NYEB model.

+ Learning, sharing knowledge and networking opportunities across key sectors.

+ Connection to research and expertise across NYEB governance groups, and employment services focused on supporting young people.

+ Increased connection to young people and understanding of their needs and aspirations.

Resource C
National Youth Employment Body labour market scans

The Brotherhood's Research and Policy Centre has undertaken research to develop labour market scans of each region participating as a demonstration site in the NYEB model. These scans collate data, statistics and literature about the current state of employment across specific regions or jurisdictions. The documents are intended to build an understanding of youth employment issues unique to the local context, while incorporating local expertise from NYEB Community Investment Committees.

Labour market scans generally provide a statistical overview of employment and related elements in a geographically bound area. While they can serve several purposes, a key use of scans is in providing an evidence base for debate on how policy and services could move forward in relation to issues relating to employment and economic performance.

The NYEB labour market scans focus on factors impacting youth employment and are primarily utilised to assist local NYEB Community Investment Committees by:

+ Providing an overview of the available demographic and research data relating to youth employment in the local area.

+ Exploring how these demographics have been shaped by, and are shaping, broader challenges in the region and current youth employment issues.

+ Generating discussion of issues, local strengths and opportunities, and ideas on how the CIC can address youth employment issues now and into the future.

Demographic information is captured from recent Australian Bureau of Statistics data and any pertinent academic and grey literature to outline the age profile, cultural composition, educational attainment and employment rates, along with other aspects of each area. The scan also provides an overview of existing policies at local, State and Federal levels, and key service and support organisations related to youth employment. An analysis of this information presents emergent themes of key issues, followed by pertinent questions to raise with the CIC group for discussion.

CICs are encouraged to reflect on the themes and questions raised in the document to validate or challenge findings, and to ultimately share their own insight and knowledge of:

+ Local issues not captured in the data.

+ How the community and government are responding to existing youth employment issues in the region.

+ How the CIC could enact change in the short, medium and longer term and the role of evidence in informing these actions.

The Brotherhood has undertaken labour market scans covering the current three demonstration sites in Logan, the northern region of Adelaide and the Shoalhaven region. Local feedback from critical stakeholders on the usefulness and accessibility of the scans throughout this process has been integral to their development.

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>
> *Labour market scans collate data, statistics and literature about the current state of employment across specific regions or jurisdictions... to build an understanding of youth employment issues unique to the local context...*

Resource D
National Youth Employment Body workshops

The NYEB offers a series of facilitated workshops that aim to increase understanding of the NYEB model, its underpinning concepts and practical strategies for strengthening youth employment pathways within communities. The workshops provide participants with the foundation to co-develop sustainable, action-based solutions to strengthen youth employment. The workshops can be delivered to all NYEB stakeholders and partners, and tailored to relevant audiences invested in working with others to address structural barriers to youth employment in their community and nationally.

An overview of currently available workshops is provided below.

Workshop Series One: Introduction – Overview of the NYEB model and approach

Workshop Series One: Component 1 – Overview of the National Youth Employment Body	This workshop introduces the NYEB model and how its key components and mechanisms aim to inform a coherent and coordinated national youth employment approach that is adaptable to place. Participants will have the opportunity to reflect on existing values and practices in youth employment and consider their potential role and meaningful contribution to the NYEB model.
Workshop Series One: Component 2 – Approach to research and evaluation	Provides an introduction and overview of the Brotherhood's approach to research and evaluation of developing models, and how this approach can inform work in real time. Participants will develop an understanding of adaptive research methodologies and their relevant application, and consider ways to embed research and concepts in their own practice.
Workshop Series One: Component 3 – Theoretical underpinnings	Explores the key theories and principles that inform the NYEB model, including national and international evidence on supporting young people's transitions to meaningful and sustainable work, and how these are implemented in the NYEB's work. Participants will develop an understanding of the evidence and theories and the benefits of building research into practice to develop structural, demand and supply side strategies to address youth unemployment.

Workshop Series Two: Harnessing community investment

Workshop Series Two: Component 1 – Setting up a community-led forum to harness expertise and investments in place – a local Community Investment Committee	This workshop provides an overview of what is involved in establishing a CIC– identifying its value and purpose, and provides guidance on: how it can be operationalised, who should be involved, and the development and progression of goals. Participants will increase their capacity to develop a shared vision locally on youth employment, identify and collaborate with key stakeholders identified as critical to co-developing youth employment solutions in place, and leverage the work of other forums in the community.
Workshop Series Two: Component 2 – Understanding place: mapping the local labour market, investments and opportunities	This interactive workshop utilises a desktop review of the local labour market, policy and program landscape to provide key stakeholders with a starting point to scope current investments and opportunities in the local area, and to identify opportunities to build on youth employment pathways within their region. Participants will build a greater understanding of opportunities in the local area and how labour market and network knowledge can be used to develop strategies to enhance youth employment pathways within the region.
Workshop Series Two: Component 3 – Developing a youth employment action plan to strengthen and sustain youth employment outcomes in place	This workshop provides an overview of what it means to harness community investment, and guidance on the practical application of learnings through the co-development of a youth employment action plan. Participants will develop strategies to engage local stakeholders, build on local efforts, and co-develop a plan that outlines goals and responsibilities to reach short- and long-term goals to improve youth employment pathways in their region.

Workshop Series Three: Sharing knowledge and expertise

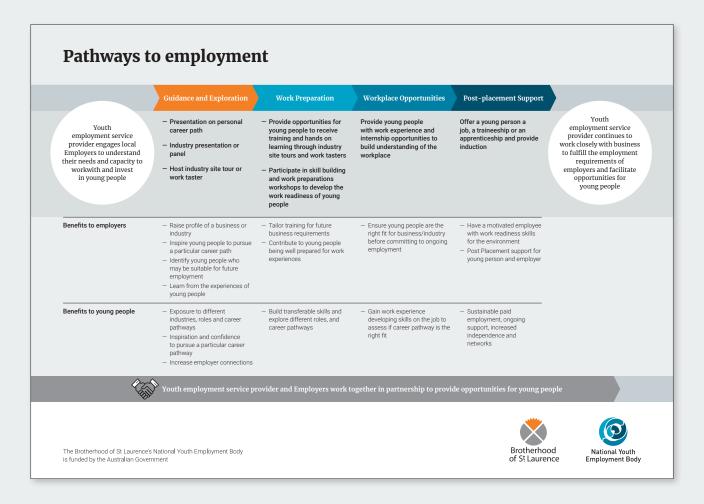|	
Workshop Series Three: Component 1 – A national NYEB Community of Practice	This workshop brings together participants of the NYEB to share learnings in a national Community of Practice and contribute to ongoing development of the NYEB model, locally and nationally. Participants will provide feedback on the NYEB model, share challenges and successes, and develop recommendations and strategies to strengthen and scale the NYEB model.

Resource E
National Youth Employment Body pathways to employment

This tool was developed for the Transition to Work Community of Practice to help TtW services facilitate engagement with employers. It provides information and guidance around the types of opportunities that employers can provide young people at four different phases on their pathway to employment, and steps out the benefits for both employers and young people as they participate in the activities of each phase. The four phases are intended to be flexible and activities may be operationalised in a variety of ways, depending on the needs of the young person and the resources and characteristics of the local community context.[40]

Pathways to employment

	Guidance and Exploration	Work Preparation	Workplace Opportunities	Post-placement Support	
Youth employment service provider engages local Employers to understand their needs and capacity to work with and invest in young people	— Presentation on personal career path — Industry presentation or panel — Host industry site tour or work taster	— Provide opportunities for young people to receive training and hands on learning through industry site tours and work tasters — Participate in skill building and work preparations workshops to develop the work readiness of young people	Provide young people with work experience and internship opportunities to build understanding of the workplace	Offer a young person a job, a traineeship or an apprenticeship and provide induction	Youth employment service provider continues to work closely with business to fulfill the employment requirements of employers and facilitate opportunities for young people
Benefits to employers	— Raise profile of a business or industry — Inspire young people to pursue a particular career path — Identify young people who may be suitable for future employment — Learn from the experiences of young people	— Tailor training for future business requirements — Contribute to young people being well prepared for work experiences	— Ensure young people are the right fit for business/industry before committing to ongoing employment	— Have a motivated employee with work readiness skills for the environment — Post Placement support for young person and employer	
Benefits to young people	— Exposure to different industries, roles and career pathways — Inspiration and confidence to pursue a particular career pathway — Increase employer connections	— Build transferable skills and explore different roles, and career pathways	— Gain work experience developing skills on the job to assess if career pathway is the right fit	— Sustainable paid employment, ongoing support, increased independence and networks	

Youth employment service provider and Employers work together in partnership to provide opportunities for young people

The Brotherhood of St Laurence's National Youth Employment Body is funded by the Australian Government

Brotherhood of St Laurence

National Youth Employment Body

Pathways to employment

Activities glossary

Guidance and Exploration	Work Preparation	Workplace Opportunities
Presentation on Personal Career Path Career path presentations provide young people with a personalised story that can inspire and motivate them. It helps young people to realise that every career starts somewhere and can take many twists and turns. It also helps young people connect different skill sets with different positions.	**Site Tour** Site tours provide young people with the opportunity to observe and learn about a workplace guided by a manager or a staff member at one or more sites or departments. A site tour might focus on one aspect of a business or provide an overview of the different types of roles and professions within a particular workplace.	**Work taster** Work tasters provide young people with the opportunity to learn about the world of work through a trial or 'taste' of different types of work which can inspire them to develop broader visions about their future work prospects. Work tasters are delivered in the workplace and are usually a short, one-off trial ranging in length from half an hour to a full day.
Industry presentation Industry presentations provide young people with comprehensive information about career options and the outlook for a particular industry or profession.	**Sharing networks and experiences** Providing young people with exposure or access to different people, events or activities run by your organisation or within your community, can provide young people with expanded networks and opportunities.	**Work experiences** Work experience is a structured workplace learning placement which provides young people with insight into the day to day activities of a particular occupation or industry and an experience of workplace culture. Work experience can be delivered through: — National Work Experience Program https://docs.jobs.gov.au/documents/national-work-experience-programme-information-businesses — PaTH internships https://www.jobs.gov.au/youth-jobs-path

Brotherhood of St Laurence

National Youth Employment Body

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Appendix

National Youth Employment Body – Theoretical underpinnings

Appendix: National Youth Employment Body – Theoretical underpinnings

The work of the National Youth Employment Body or NYEB draws on national and international evidence, and the concepts and approaches that support good practice across the youth employment system.

These theoretical approaches are organised below according to the areas of systemic change that the NYEB is striving to influence:

+ A focus on place

+ Coordinated and coherent policy making

+ Aligned and active employer engagement

+ Youth participation

+ Enabling collaboration.

A focus on place

The NYEB supports locally developed solutions to youth unemployment that also inform government investments in place, and over time contribute to inclusive and sustained economic growth.

A focus on place is important to the NYEB model for building the capacity of a local community to work together and draw on local strengths to find new ways to address local priorities and the structures of disadvantage underlying youth unemployment. The NYEB's focus on place also seeks to link local experiences and expertise to a national level, to inform a national conversation on how to build the capabilities of young people and how to build on and support the efforts of local communities to drive sustainable and inclusive economic growth in place.

The current competitive employment service system hinders collaboration and the sharing of expertise between employment service providers, industry and other sectors in local communities, to improve or adapt policy and practice to better meet the needs of jobseekers in place. Coordinating local effort by drawing on networks that harness the connections and knowledge of local communities, can provide a platform to deliver inclusive, quality programs and services that build the capabilities of young people, that is, provide opportunities that give young people the freedom to make choices.

Places are produced and reproduced by the daily activities and intersections between people engaging in place. The mobilisation and integration of diverse complementary effort and expertise at local, regional and national levels and across multiple sectors, not simply service providers and government, is critical to the flexible delivery of the conditions and opportunities required to increase young people's social capital and mobility in place. Access to opportunities and support necessitates contributions from education providers, employers and health providers alike, in collaborative ways that respond to and grow local relationships, capacity and contexts.

Place-based approaches

The NYEB is supporting a place-based approach across each of its demonstration sites. Place-based initiatives or programs are defined as those delivered to bring about change in a specific geographical area and population, often with a focus on responding to communities facing disadvantage or complex social issues.[1] Place-based initiatives build on the assets and strengths of a local community, involve all interested groups from local residents to government departments, and are structured to build the capacity of the community to contribute to local solutions.

Common attributes of good practice in place-based work include:[2]

+ Local autonomy and governance mechanisms for 'joined-up working' to bring different voices together and make decisions around a shared approach.

+ Coordination of efforts and capacity development.

+ Flexible approaches to delivery and investment to advance local aspirations.

+ Support to locally based organisations with community knowledge to deliver services and 'leverage their networks to help them do other things'.[3]

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Place is not only a physical space, it is also made up of cultural, social and discursive spaces through which people engage and interact.[4] The social networks, practices and opportunities of place shape the lives of those in a neighbourhood and impact the transition of young people into work and independent adult life. Growing up in poor neighbourhoods, for example, can reproduce social inequities and normalise social exclusion, where young people are connected to their community in ways that help them 'get by' rather than 'get on'.[5]

Planning for places for young people should be informed by the aspirations of young people themselves; and move beyond adult concerns about keeping young people safe from the community or the community safe from youth. Fincher and Iveson call for an approach to planning for places for young people based on 'young people's capacities and interests',[6] which calls for a different understanding of childhood that 'recognizes the things that children and young people can do rather than… assumptions about what they can not do'.[7]

Place is pivotal to the delivery of employment services. Unemployment, like other social and economic issues, has a strong geographical dimension, and the opportunities and networks jobseekers need are both enabled and curtailed by local community context.[8] Research has shown the necessity for local service implementation through partnerships at the community level, and the value of community-embedded organisations in leveraging the trust and resources of a local area.[9] Collaborative approaches recognise the importance of relationships and experiences in place and 'allow for the crafting of fit-for-purpose local solutions addressing local priorities whilst allowing for local stewardship'.[10]

Harnessing community investment

A key element of the NYEB's approach to place-based work is described as harnessing community investment. This approach draws on and values the expertise and existing work of the community, and acknowledges that outside resources, such as national policy and investment, are more effectively utilised when the community is activated.[11] Harnessing community investment follows the principles of the asset-based community development approach and the concept of co-production.

Asset-based community development draws on existing local assets and community associations to connect and leverage each other's efforts in effective and powerful ways to sustain economic development.[12] While it does not ignore structural challenges or individual circumstances, people are instead valued and supported to address challenges as active co-producers of solutions, rather than defined by their needs alone.[13]

> *Assets based approaches are an integral part of community development in the sense that they are concerned with facilitating people and communities to come together to achieve positive change using their own knowledge, skills and lived experience of the issues they encounter in their own lives.*[14]

Co-production or co-creation approaches to the design and delivery of public services also recognise people and community as assets with expertise and capabilities; and work to create 'an equal and reciprocal relationship, between professionals, people using services, their families and their neighbours'.[15] Co-production requires

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14   Scottish Community Development Centre (SCDC), 'Assets based approaches' [webpage], SCDC, Glasgow, UK. Accessed 6 November 2019 at: https://www.scdc.org.uk/what/assets-scotland/.

public service staff to empower the abilities and agency of citizens and facilitate the building of peer support networks where people can give as well as receive support to tackle challenges, and encourage mutual trust, purpose, responsibility and resilience.

By engaging people as co-creators of human services, co-production offers a way for governments and service providers to frame a new social contract based on participatory citizenship.[16] This does not, however, abdicate government responsibility for policy outcomes nor the part they ought to play in supporting the collaborative pathways and structural conditions that enable citizens and government and public organisations to work together and co-produce as equal holders of knowledge.

Co-production requires new ways of working with people as active collaborators, not passive recipients, of service design and delivery; new ways of commissioning services and measuring success; new opportunities for local adaptation and innovation; and new ways of recognising and raising the value of the 'core economy' of social relationships rather than the market economy alone.[17]

Social capital

The NYEB's utilisation of a place-based approach to address youth unemployment is underlined by efforts to strengthen young people's social capital, through mobilising the social capital of their community for place-based action. Social capital is seen as a resource gained from formal and informal social networks and connections that bring value to individuals and wider society. Three main types of social capital are commonly identified:[18]

+ Bonding social capital defining the connections we have with people we know who can act as a safety net.

+ Bridging social capital that connects us to those who are not familiar and provide opportunities outside our close networks.

+ Linking social capital that connects us to those in authority, such as institutions that can leverage access to resources.

Young people experiencing disadvantage often lack quality social capital, which can reinforce structural and systemic inequalities for individuals who may not have the income and connections to participate fully in social and economic life.[19] It is difficult to build social capital and the networks that help young people get ahead, however, without also creating the conditions needed to access them.[20]

The NYEB is working with community to increase understanding of the nature of youth unemployment and what is needed for young people to access quality social capital in place, such as new opportunities to engage with learning, employers and the world of work. In this way, communities are supported to both build social capital for individuals and become a more effective source of social capital for collective action on youth unemployment.

Inclusive and sustainable growth

The NYEB is driving an inclusive growth agenda in place, advocating that economic growth, social development and inclusion should go hand in hand.[21] Inclusive growth is concerned with sustained economic growth that is broad-based across sectors to reduce poverty, by growing both employment and productivity. The inclusive growth approach seeks to mobilise and engage a large part of a country's labour force, providing equal opportunity for people to access markets and resources;[22] and equal opportunity to contribute to and benefit from growth and prosperity.[23]

15   D. Boyle, A. Coote, C. Sherwood & J. Slay 2010, *Right Here, Right Now: Taking Co-production into the Mainstream*, NESTA, London, p. 9.

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21   P. Smyth 2011, 'Inclusive growth: The new action imperative', *Brotherhood Comment*, April, BSL, Fitzroy, Vic.

22   E. Ianchovichina, S. Lundstrom & L. Garrido 2009, *What Is Inclusive Growth?*, World Bank Discussion Note. Accessed 17 April 2019 at: http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTDEBTDEPT/Resources/468980-1218567884549/WhatIsInclusiveGrowth20081230.pdf.

23   Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) & Ford Foundation 2014, *All on Board: Making Inclusive Growth Happen*, OECD Inclusive Growth Initiative, OECD, Paris, p. 80. Accessed 3 December 2019 at: http://www.oecd.org/inclusive-growth/All-on-Board-Making-Inclusive-Growth-Happen.pdf.

When applied to young people transitioning to work, an inclusive growth approach to economic development prioritises investment in building their capacity for social and economic participation. For young people who face varying barriers to participation, investment in targetted education, health and job creation infrastructure and programs is critical. An inclusive growth approach holds that engaging young people in meaningful employment will not only promote economic productivity but will also benefit the young people themselves, as well as businesses needing job-ready labour.[24]

> The NYEB works to harness diverse efforts and expertise in place through the establishment of employer-led Community Investment Committees (CICs), which bring critical stakeholders and sectors of the local community together to develop local initiatives to strengthen the social capital, capabilities and skills of young people in their community. Local CICs avoid duplication by building on existing networks and efforts, and tailor efforts to local conditions and labour markets, recognising the social, economic and cultural context of the community. The NYEB is also supporting the connection of local efforts to wider investments and structures, in order to link place-based practice with national policy.

Coordinated and coherent policy making

The NYEB is working to support coordinated and coherent policy making that leads to more flexible funding arrangements and incentives for sectors and services to work together to share learnings, create new job opportunities and drive innovation in place and across Australia.

Local communities cannot address the social and economic structural and institutional issues that influence employment alone. Different policies developed in 'siloed' government portfolios such as education, employment and social services, often produce fragmentation, duplication and inefficiencies on the ground.[25] In this context, policy is not able to understand and respond to specific experiences in place or the interconnected factors that grow or hinder young peoples' economic and social inclusion in place.

Conversely, collaborative approaches to policy making, governance and commissioning work bring traditionally siloed sectors, departments and stakeholders together, to better understand the interrelated parts of the employment system and design adaptive policy that give government and local communities flexibility to innovate and adapt within a complex and dynamic system.

Systems thinking

The NYEB is informed by systems thinking approaches to policy making to increase understanding of how things are connected to each other within a larger whole.[26] Systems thinking challenges assumptions about the causes of a problem, and 'provides new opportunities to understand and continuously test and revise our understanding of the nature of things'[27] and the systems that uphold them.

Jackson describes important elements of critical systems thinking, including: flexibility and working in pluralistic ways, cross sector and interdisciplinary collaboration and practice, and 'looking at the world in terms of wholes',[28] rather than reducing it to simple parts.

24 M. Horn 2011, 'Strategies for inclusive growth: Strengthening the critical role of active labour market interventions', presentation at Inclusive Growth in Australia Roundtable, 21 October, BSL, Fitzroy, Vic. Accessed 17 April 2019 at: http://www.bsl.org.au/pdfs/Horn_Strategies_for_inclusive_growth_presentation_final_Oct2011.pdf.

25 J. Borlagdan & D. Bowman 2013, A better deal for young people in Australia: Towards inclusive growth, unpub. BSL, Fitzroy, Vic., p. 31.

26 D. Peters 2014, 'The application of systems thinking in health: why use systems thinking?', *Health Research Policy and Systems*, 12 (article no.51).

27 ibid.

28 M. Jackson 2001, 'Critical systems thinking and practice', *European Journal of Operational Research*, 128(2):234.

Meadows also explains that systems thinking enables dynamic analysis of the behaviour and history of the system, and recognition of 'the value of what's already there'.[29] Systems thinking asks us to learn by experiment, involving 'small steps, constant monitoring, and a willingness to change course', which requires timely and accurate information and feedback to make ongoing decisions.[30]

Systems thinking makes it clear that employment is not only about employment, and that the issue of youth unemployment cannot be reduced to, or solved by, easily identifiable single factors, individuals, sectors, or government portfolios. Sustainable and meaningful employment is about the health of the entire system, and how its different parts interconnect to support a young person's access to opportunities.

The Lankelly Chase Foundation puts forward common qualities, or system behaviours, that enable place to work effectively as a system for people experiencing disadvantage. These system behaviours are about perspective, power and participation; and can be utilised as indicators to understand the health of the system in place:[31]

+ Perspective
  — People view themselves as part of an interconnected whole
  — People are viewed as resourceful and bringing strengths
  — People share a vision
+ Power
  — Power is shared and equality of voice actively promoted
  — Decision-making is devolved
  — Accountability is mutual

+ Participation
  — Open and trusting relationships enable effective dialogue
  — Leadership is collaborative and promoted at every level
  — Feedback and collective learning drive adaptation.

Collaborative policy making

The NYEB understands that complex issues such as unemployment require more diverse forms of collaboration and co-design across the broader system to achieve individual, social and public value, rather than more regulation and competition.[32] Guiding principles put forward by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) to address the crisis of youth unemployment include:

+ Effective policy coherence across economic, employment, education and training, and social protection policies.
+ Involvement of social partners in policy development through social dialogue.
+ Innovative and multi-stakeholder partnerships engaging governments, social partners, educational institutions, communities and young people.[33]

There are concerns that the role of government is now framed narrowly as that of a funder, regulator and contract manager; relegated to 'fixing problems' rather than recognised as 'a more active value creator – investing, not just spending'.[34] This limits the capacity of government to fulfil its role as creator of public value; to connect with the reality of service delivery; and to leverage the social, intellectual and cultural capital of community-embedded providers.

Economist Mariana Mazzucato puts forward that 'achieving public value cannot be the work only of the public sector' and the process should 'include a wider set of stakeholders', to define and address national challenges with mission-oriented innovation policy.[35]

29 D. Meadows 2001, 'Dancing with systems', *Whole Earth Review*, Winter. Accessed 28 October 2019 at: http://donellameadows.org/archives/dancing-with-systems/.

30 ibid.

31 M. French & T. Lowe 2018, *Place Action Inquiry: Our Learning to Date, December 2018*, Lankelly Chase Foundation, London.

32 BSL 2018, *A Fit-for-purpose National Youth Employment Service, Submission to the Future Employment Services Consultation*, submitted by BSL on behalf of Transition to Work Community of Practice, BSL, Fitzroy, Vic., p. 39.

33 International Labour Office 2012, *The Youth Employment Crisis: A Call for Action*, Resolution and Conclusions of the 101st Session of the International Labour Conference, ILO, Geneva, p. 4.

34 M. Mazzucato 2018, *The Value of Everything*, Allen Lane, London, pp. 264–5.

35 M. Mazzucato 2017, *Mission-oriented Innovation Policy: Challenges and Opportunities*, University College London (UCL) Institute for Innovation and Public Purpose Working Paper (2017–01), UCL, London, p.28.

Public value often refers to the value that governments can create, through direct actions or as a system 'steward', which benefit citizens as a collective. The achievement of outcomes, trust and legitimacy, the quality of service delivery and efficiency, all impact on public value creation.[36] Public value is thus more than the value of public goods and outputs; it also focuses on 'what has meaning for people, rather than what a public-sector decision-maker might presume is best for them. More significantly, it connotes an active sense of adding value, rather than a passive sense of safeguarding interests'.[37]

Collaborative governance

It is argued that collaborative modes of governance are appropriate for innovations that address complex problems and seek broader policy reform.[38] Collaborative governance brings public and private stakeholders together to make decisions collectively on how to provide public services or goods.[39]

> *From the perspective of collaborative governance, the locus of public policy formation is not so much what the government can and should do, but what kinds of collaborative efforts need to be in place to resolve the problem and how these efforts can be effectively fostered.*[40]

Collaborative governance and policy making can be supported by moving away from competitive tendering and compliance-driven contract management, towards collaboration with non-government networks and more flexible, though still contestable, funding arrangements in which accountability is based on trust.[41] Smarter 'fit-for-purpose' commissioning creates incentives for providers to work together towards a mutual goal, share best practice and learnings, and foster networks within the wider community to leverage opportunities, rather than compelling them to compete for scarce resources.[42]

Lessons have been drawn from the Brotherhood's work with the Transition to Work Community of Practice, which was commissioned as a 'collaboration focused market', to encourage employment service providers 'to collaborate across regions'.[43] This collaborative approach has greatly supported the capacity of Transition to Work providers to engage effectively with other support services, local council, education providers and employers to provide opportunities and support to participants. By removing the imperative to compete with each other, providers are able to devote time and resources to engaging with the community transparently and productively.

Adaptive policy

The NYEB is focused on supporting the development of policy that both enhances and responds to local learnings and practices as opportunities and challenges arise. 'Policies shouldn't be presented as static solutions to be implemented, instead, policy should create room for actors to respond flexibly, and for the system as a whole to evolve and adapt'.[44] When faced with complex issues and systems an adaptive approach to policy making 'allows policymakers to cope with the uncertainties that confront them by creating policies that respond to changes over time and that make explicit provision for learning'.[45]

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36   N. Faulkner & S. Kaufman 2018, 'Avoiding theoretical stagnation: A systematic review and framework for measuring public value', *Australian Journal of Public Administration*, 77(1):69–86.

37   J. Alford & J. O'Flynn 2008, 'Public value: A stocktake of a concept', presentation at Twelfth Annual Conference of the International Research Society for Public Management, pp. 7–8.

38   J. O'Flynn, H. Dickinson, S. O'Sullivan, W. Gallet, K. Currie, M. Pettit, A. Pagan & T. Robinson 2014, *The Prime Provider Model: An Opportunity for Better Public Service Delivery?*, Social Policy Working Paper No. 18, BSL, Fitzroy, Vic.

39   C. Ansell & A. Gash 2008, 'Collaborative governance in theory and practice', *Journal of Public Administration Research & Theory*, 18(4):545.

40   W.-F. Lam 2015, 'In collaborative governance, policy matters to everyone and everyone matters in policy', *South China Morning Post*, 6 September, p. 2. Accessed 24 July 2019 at: https://www.scmp.com/comment/insight-opinion/article/1855681/collaborative-governance-policy-matters-everyone-and.

41   BSL 2016, op. cit.; O'Flynn et al. 2014, op. cit.; J. O'Flynn & J. Alford 2012, *Rethinking Public Service Delivery: Managing with External Providers*, Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke, UK.

42   BSL 2016, op. cit.

43   Department of Jobs and Small Business 2018, *The Next Generation of Employment Services: Discussion Paper*, Australian Government, Canberra, p. 66.

44   A. Shaw 2019, 'Complex systems thinking: Reducing the "art" in policy design', presentation at NYEB Service Design Working Group, 27 August, BSL, Fitzroy, Vic.

45   E. W. Walker, A. Rahman & J. Cave 2001, 'Adaptive policies, policy analysis, and policy-making', *European Journal of Operational Research*, 128(2):282.

Multi-stakeholder deliberation and collaboration supports the design and implementation of policy by gaining access to different knowledge, ideas, interests and views of success; and 'builds social cohesion, shared vision and capacity for collective action that are essential to enable rapid adjustment and response to unanticipated conditions'.[46] In implementing policy, local stakeholders also need to be enabled to respond and adapt to complexity in innovative ways that retain and build social capital and collaboration.[47]

The perspectives and contribution of frontline workers are not often considered in the development or reform of policy, yet they have much experience of how the system does and doesn't work to support people in community. The Systems Changers programme in the UK focused on supporting frontline workers to contribute to systems change by seeing the system, finding flex in the system and experimenting with change. The programme provided space for participants to see the system and the agency they have within it differently, take on new evidence and form supportive peer relationships, and gave permission to question and experiment.[48]

> The NYEB's collaborative governance mechanisms are bringing multi-sector perspectives and ongoing engagement of critical stakeholders in the youth employment space across local and national levels to link policy and practice. Together with local CICs, the NYEB national governance groups are bringing increased knowledge and awareness of the structural, policy and practice barriers impeding youth employment in local areas, and working to enhance innovative local practices, opportunities and solutions through ongoing review and learning.

Aligned and active employer engagement

The NYEB is working towards the active investment of employers in the design of policy and programs that align education and training, employment, services and industry objectives to workforce needs and the aspirations and needs of young jobseekers in the short, medium and long term.

Conventional solutions to unemployment have placed an emphasis on building the skills and employability of jobseekers – the supply side of the labour market. However, as noted by the OECD and ILO, 'providing youth with skills is not sufficient to improve their labour market outcomes if these skills do not match those demanded by employers'.[49]

There is wide recognition that a different approach is needed to how governments, organisations and services engage and collaborate with employers to address unemployment:[50]

> To work effectively for all Australians, the employment system must understand industry needs and broker relationships with employers, which would enable them to provide or advise on the skills, training and career pathways required that lead to real, available jobs.[51]

To achieve sustainable inclusive growth, however, the NYEB is seeking to understand how employment policy can support both the supply and demand side issues of the labour market, and how they can better interact to bring mutual benefit to both jobseekers and employers, along with the wider community. Innovations that include the active involvement of employers as partners in the co-production of employer-orientated solutions, is being shown to drive local collaboration with other sectors, aiding both the supply and demand sides of skills provision and employment.[52]
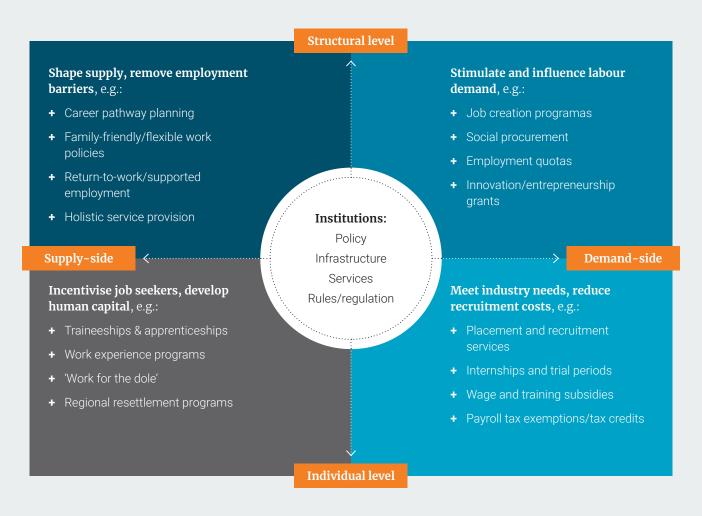
46   S. Tyler 2009, 'Multi-stakeholder deliberation', in D. Swanson & S. Bhadwal (eds), *Creating Adaptive Policies: A Guide for Policy-making in an Uncertain World*, International Development Research Centre, Sage Publications, New Delhi, p. 42.

47   D. Swanson, S. Barg, S. Tyler, H. D. Venema, S. Tomar, S. Bhadwal, S. Nair, D. Roy & J. Drexhage 2009, 'Seven guidelines for policy-making in an uncertain world', in ibid., pp. 12–24.

48   A. Mouser & A. Bowers 2017, *Systems Changers, 'From Where I Stand': How Frontline Workers Can Contribute to and Create Systems Change*, Lankelly Chase with the Pont People and Snook, London.

49   OECD & ILO 2014, *Promoting Better Labour Market Outcomes for Youth: Report on Youth Employment and Apprenticeships*, prepared for G20 Labour and Employment Ministerial Meeting, Melbourne, 10–11 September, OECD, Paris, p. 8.

50   J. van Kooy, D. Brown, D. Bowman & S. Mallett 2017, *Transition to Work National Community of Practice: Insights from Year 1*, BSL, Fitzroy, Vic.; OECD 2014, *Reviews on Local Job Creation: Employment and Skills Strategies in Australia*, OECD Publishing, Paris; M. Ross, C. Gatz, R. Kazis, J. Ng & N. P. Svajlenka 2015, *Unemployment among Young Adults: Exploring Employer-led Solutions*, Brookings Metropolitan Policy Program, July, Brookings, Washington, DC, pp. 1–38; Jesuit Social Services (JSS) 2015, *Jesuit Social Services Response: Victorian Government's Employment Programs Review – Background Paper*, JSS, Melbourne, pp. 1–28; I. Burkett & T. Wren 2015, *The Case for a Regional Demand-led Employment Brokerage Role for GROW*, Grow: G21 Region Opportunities for Work, Geelong, Vic.

51   Social Ventures Australia (SVA) 2016, *Fundamental Principles for Youth Employment*, SVA, Sydney, p. 9.

52   van Kooy et al. 2017, op. cit.; P. van der Aa & R. van Berkel 2014, 'Innovating job activation by involving employers', *International Social Security Review*, 67(2):11–27.

Demand and supply sides of the labour market

Many jobseekers face different forms of disadvantage when attempting to get and keep sustainable employment in their community. These challenges are often called labour market 'supply-side' issues. In a competitive market, supply-side factors may include previous work experience, relevant qualifications and credentials, understanding of and compliance with workplace norms, mobility and access to transport infrastructure, and caring or household responsibilities.[53]

Demand-side elements in the labour market, on the other hand, relate to employers' attitudes and expectations, workforce and skills requirements, and recruitment, retention and management strategies.[54] Demand is shaped by external and contextual factors at different levels including the nature of local businesses and vacancies, and national and international macroeconomic conditions.[55]

Figure A: Examples of supply- and demand-side responses to reduce unemployment[56]

Structural level

Shape supply, remove employment barriers, e.g.:
+ Career pathway planning
+ Family-friendly/flexible work policies
+ Return-to-work/supported employment
+ Holistic service provision

Stimulate and influence labour demand, e.g.:
+ Job creation programas
+ Social procurement
+ Employment quotas
+ Innovation/entrepreneurship grants

Institutions:
Policy
Infrastructure
Services
Rules/regulation

Supply-side

Demand-side

Incentivise job seekers, develop human capital, e.g.:
+ Traineeships & apprenticeships
+ Work experience programs
+ 'Work for the dole'
+ Regional resettlement programs

Meet industry needs, reduce recruitment costs, e.g.:
+ Placement and recruitment services
+ Internships and trial periods
+ Wage and training subsidies
+ Payroll tax exemptions/tax credits

Individual level

53 D. Bowman & J. van Kooy 2016, Explainer: Supply and Demand Interventions in the Labour Market, unpub., BSL, Fitzroy, Vic.; D. Bowman & A. Randrianarisoa 2018, *Missing the Mark: Employer Perspectives on Employment Services and Mature Age Jobseekers in Australia*, BSL, Fitzroy, Vic.

54 P. Spoonley 2008, 'Utilising a demand-led approach in a local labour market', *Local Economy*, 23(1):20–3.

55 Bowman & van Kooy 2016, op. cit.

56 Adapted from diagram in Bowman & van Kooy 2016, op. cit.

Much research, policy and practice has focused on supply driven solutions to unemployment, with increased understanding of the characteristics of young people, their employability skills and different pathways into work. There is also a move to better understand the 'demand for entry-level workers and the market forces that shape employer decisions about hiring and investing in skill development' – the demand side of employment.[57] The Australian Government funded Transition to Work Community of Practice,[58] for example, enlists employers to lead Community Investment Committees and contribute to economic development for young people in their local area.

Further work is needed to support young people on their transition to employment to become learning and job ready. The NYEB is bringing employers into collaborative networks to better understand what is needed to create opportunities for entry level pathways for young people, and how employers can be supported to contribute to the design and implementation of strategies.

The OECD's recommendations for better engaging Australian employers in skills development opportunities at the local level include:[59]

+ Government leadership and provision of incentives to encourage business-education partnerships and employer participation in the vocational education and training system, along with more TAFE outreach with employers and industry experts.

+ Strengthening networks of local stakeholders including government, industry/employers and training sectors involved in the design and delivery of flexible employment related policy and programs to ensure they respond to local needs and demands, while also improving communication among relevant stakeholders to support employers.

+ The establishment of a formal coordinating organisation to leverage existing local networks of employers and engage them in the value of co-design.

Ross and colleague's review of employer-led solutions to youth unemployment in the USA also revealed the following recommendations for improving employment outcomes for entry-level workers, and better alignment of the demand and supply side of the labour market:[60]

+ Employers better define and predict skills and workforce needs and invest in more effective recruitment and training for those skills.

+ Support for workforce intermediaries and employer partnerships, to meet workforce needs, build innovation and create pathways to better jobs and careers.

+ Improved collaboration and information flow between employers and educators about skill requirements and the capabilities of potential employees.

Shifting the role of employers

Much demand-led employment activation policy positions employers as clients of competitive employment services.[61] Yet in Australia, employers use of the employment services system is very low,[62] with employers reporting an oversupply of unsuitable candidates from providers[63] and poor connections with changing staff who do not understand their needs, and expressing views that the long-term unemployed 'are in some way "deficient" compared with other jobseekers'.[64]

van der Aa and van Berkel argue for employer-orientated policy that moves employers beyond the role of client, to give responsibilities to employers as partners or co-producers in the design and implementation of local efforts to support people to get jobs.[65]

> *The focus does not lie exclusively on the employers' demands, but more explicitly on the objective of supporting certain groups of the unemployed to find a job. In this role, employers are not only "serviced", but play a more active role themselves in the design and implementation of the policies.*[66]

57   Ross et al. 2015, op. cit., p. 1.

58   Transition to Work Community of Practice 2019, 'Employers' [webpage]. Accessed 4 June 2019 at: https://www.ttwcommunity.com.au/employers/.

59   OECD 2019, *Engaging Employers and Developing Skills at the Local Level in Australia*, OECD Reviews on Local Job Creation, OECD Publishing, Paris, pp. 15–21.

60   Ross et al. 2015, op. cit., pp. 24–7.

61   van der Aa& van Berkel 2014, op. cit.

62   Employment Services Expert Advisory Panel 2018, *I Want to Work: Employment Services 2020 Report*, Department of Jobs and Small Business, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra, p. 8.

63   Nous Group 2018, *Employment Services 2020: Consultation Report*, Department of Jobs and Small Business, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra, p. 18.

64   Bowman & Randrianarisoa 2018, op. cit., p. 9.

65   van der Aa & van Berkel 2014, op. cit.

66   ibid., p.16.

In the context of youth employment, the role of employers could include working with governments, training providers and community groups to co-develop tailored employer-orientated initiatives and policies that meet business needs as well as providing young people with the appropriate training and support they need to succeed.

The implementation of employer-orientated policy that focused on local social return procurement in the Netherlands showed, for example, that when employers chose to become actively involved as co-producers, rather than participate as clients, they were more willing to be flexible about their demands and working conditions, and offer opportunities such as training and guidance to those employed under the innovation.[67]

In acknowledging that supply and demand-orientated activation policies interact, however, van der Aa and van Berkel conclude that the biggest challenge in developing employer-orientated policies is 'striking the balance between the interests of unemployed people and employers'[68] and understanding what factors and wider conditions need to be in place for stakeholder benefits to be shared.

> The NYEB is creating platforms and practices that facilitate employer collaboration and contribution across employment, education and training to strengthen work entry pathways and promote the benefits of investing in young people. The NYEB, with the National Employers Reference Group and Community Investment Committees in particular, are fostering deeper and more effective community and employer partnerships that are crucial to developing mutually beneficial employment solutions that align with both business and local economic development needs, and also support the needs of jobseekers experiencing disadvantage.

Youth participation

The NYEB is working to ensure young people are valued as experts of their own lives, and are actively supported to contribute to solutions and change.

The NYEB is working to support the active contribution of young people to strategy design and decision-making processes to build capabilities, expectations and sustainable learning and work pathways of young people and their community. 'Young people are in the best positions to come up with effective and creative solutions to issues that affect them'.[69] Yet young people have not traditionally had a voice or been represented in a decision-making capacity in the design or implementation of policy or programs, even those which target young people specifically. This has often resulted in systems and services not meeting the needs or building the capabilities of young people.[70]

Young people are diverse and navigate different transitions into adulthood. Young people experiencing disadvantage often lack social capital, which can reinforce structural and systemic inequalities because individuals may not have the income and connections to participate fully in social and economic life.[71] Yet, 'in the public discourse, this group attracts negative attention as a problem that needs fixing. The solutions tend to emphasize individual deficits and personal issues rather than the broader social, environmental and structural factors'.[72]

To assist a young person through work and learning transitions, the Brotherhood's youth centred models and approaches start with where individuals are at and strive to enable each young person to identify who they are now, who they want to be in the future and what they want to do.[73] Young people need to develop personal and social capabilities to support a stable and resilient sense of self, along with capabilities that foster agency,[74] and to access the resources, opportunities and people they need to expand their skills and capabilities, in ways that they value.[75]

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67 ibid.

68 ibid., p.25.

69 Oaktree Foundation & Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) 2016, *Practice Note: Youth Participation in Development*, ACFID, Canberra, p. 4. Accessed 17 April 2019 at: https://acfid.asn.au/sites/site.acfid/files/resource_document/ACFID%20Practice%20Note%20-%20Youth%20Participation%20in%20Development%20FINAL.pdf.

70 ibid., p. 4.

71 S. Hodgkin 2011, 'Participating in social, civic, and community life: Are we all equal?', *Australian Social Work*, 64(3):248.

72 Horn 2011, op. cit., p. 4.

73 D. Brown with S. James, S. Mallett, N. McTiernan, N. Orchard & E. Cull 2017, *Transition to Work Community of Practice: Practice Guide*, BSL, Fitzroy, Vic., p. 21.

74 The Foyer Federation 2013, *MyNav, Destination Independence – Navigating the Journey to Independent Adulthood*, The Foyer Federation, UK, pp. 16–7. Accessed 25 March 2019 at: https://foyer.net/wpcontent/uploads/2013/03/MyNav_Destination_Independence.pdf

75 S. Mallett, S. James, N. McTiernan & J. Buick 2014, *Education First Youth Foyer Practice Framework*, Hanover Welfare Services and BSL, Melbourne, p. 51.

Youth transitions

National and international research consistently highlights the importance of young people's school to work transition for their future life chances. Employment services have a critical role to play for young people given their life stage, the way in which labour market changes are impacting on them, and the scarring long-term effects of unemployment and underemployment in early life.[76] A youth-specific employment strategy is needed to understand and address the specific risks for young people entering the labour market at this time of turbulent change, which is compounded by their life stage.[77]

Schmid's theory of Transitional Labour Markets considers the labour market as a 'system of employment transitions over the life course'[78] and offers policy approaches to manage or bridge the inherent social risks that occur across the main life transitions or flows between: school and work, job to job, employment and unemployment, household work and employment, and the transition from employment and retirement or disability.

Schmid argues that employment transition risks need to be shared by workers, employers, government institutions and social partners to 'prevent labour transitions from becoming trapdoors to social exclusion and to instead transform them into gateways that open up a wide range of opportunities or capabilities'.[79]

Reform elements that could mitigate risks for young people transitioning from education to employment include:[80]

+ Inclusive investment in social and human capital.

+ Developing learning, working, earning and identity building skills.

+ Dual learning systems that build skills and institutional bridges between school, work and life.

+ Fair risk sharing of the costs and benefits, not just by individual employees, but also investment across employers, government and social partners, to give 'people hand-ups instead of hand-outs'.

+ Establishment of learning communities at a local level to better connect education and training with the labour market.

Capabilities

Policy and programmatic sectors are increasingly looking to the capabilities approach as a way of providing more productive and effective responses to address complex social issues.[81] The capabilities approach places agency at the forefront of wellbeing – the agency of an individual to decide what a good life means, and the agency or freedom to make decisions and have access to the resources they need to determine their own lives.

The capabilities approach values people's essential capabilities and the real opportunities they have for being and doing what, for them, makes a good life.[82] Put simply, it is an approach that focuses on what people can be, rather than on their limitations or problems. Building capability not only at the level of the individual, but also at the level of service providers, employers and the community strengthens the interrelated connections that influence a young person's capacity to flourish.[83]

Amartya Sen's capabilities framework is based on the understanding that the freedom to achieve wellbeing is a moral right and is understood in terms of people's opportunities or 'substantive freedoms' for doing and being what they have reason to value.[84] That is, the freedom to (do or be), as opposed to the more common negative freedom, freedom from (restraint, oppression etc.).[85]

76 R. McQuaid 2014, 'Youth unemployment produces multiple scarring effects', *London School of Economics British Policy and Politics Blog*, LSE, London. Accessed 17 April 2019 at: http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/politicsandpolicy/multiple-scarring-effects-of-youth-unemployment/; OECD 2010, 'Lost generation?', *OECD Observer*, no. 279, OECD, Paris.

77 Mallett & Brown 2018, op. cit.

78 G. Schmid 2017, 'Transitional labour markets: Theoretical foundations and policy strategies', in *The New Palgrave Dictionary of Economics*, Palgrave Macmillan, London, p. 2.

79 G. Schmid 2006, 'Transitional labour markets: Experiences from Europe and Germany', *Australian Bulletin of Labour*, 32(2):114–38.

80 Schmid 2017, op. cit., pp. 5–7.

81 L. Wheelahan 2016, 'Patching bits won't fix vocational education in Australia – A new model is needed', *International Journal of Training Research*, 14(3):1–15; OECD & Ford Foundation 2014, op. cit.; I. Robeyns 2005, 'The capability approach: A theoretical survey', *Journal of Human Development*, 6:93–117.

82 A. Sen 1999, Development as Freedom, NY Knopf, New York; M. Nussbaum 2011, *Creating Capabilities: The Human Development Approach*, Belknap Press, Cambridge, UK.

83 P. James 2018, 'Creating capacities for human flourishing: An alternative approach to human development', in P. Spinozzi & M. Mazzanti (eds), *Cultures of Sustainability and Wellbeing: Theories, Histories and Policies*, Routledge, Abingdon, UK, pp. 23–45.

84 A. Sen, A 2005, 'Human Rights and Capabilities', *Journal of Human Development*, 6(2):151–66.

85 S. Deneulin & L. Shahani (eds) 2009, *An Introduction to the Human Development and Capability Approach*, Earthscan, IDRC, Ottawa.

A focus on positive freedom, or opportunity, aligns with concerns about social and economic inequalities, in which many people do not have the freedom to lead the kind of life they value, such as those facing disadvantage or poverty. In such circumstances, people may be forced to do or be something they would not choose if they were given a plausible alternative. Positive freedom thus necessarily presupposes a set of valuable options is available, and refers to the freedom to choose between those options.

Nussbaum critiqued and modified Sen's approach, emphasising that people's actual capacity to express, show or realise capabilities is affected by their life circumstances or context. For Nussbaum then, it is not good enough to focus on what people can be, on their potential; we must also focus on what people can do, on the quality of life that they are actually able to achieve.[86] Nussbaum argues that the aim of public policy should thus be the promotion of capabilities and this requires both the building of internal capabilities and availability of external institutional and material conditions to achieve these.[87]

In regard to youth employment programs, the capabilities approach underlines the importance of context in building or consolidating capability. Without effective access to opportunities and resources young jobseekers are effectively denied the freedom to develop their capabilities for economic and social participation.

The capabilities approach is a key underpinning theory of the Brotherhood's Advantaged Thinking framework, along with inclusive growth, social capital, and asset-based community development. Drawn from Colin Falconer's work in the UK, Advantaged Thinking guides the way the Brotherhood works with young people, focusing on enabling them to build their capabilities for achieving a sustainable livelihood.[88]

Advantaged Thinking is a shift away from deficit, disadvantaged or problem-saturated thinking and acting, to identifying, developing and, most importantly, investing in the skills, capabilities and assets of young people.[89] An Advantaged Thinking approach sets as a primary goal, a shift in both how the government and community sectors invest in young people, and how employers and the community see young people and their capacity to contribute.

> The NYEB is establishing connection points across the NYEB network for young people to share their experiences and contribute to decision making at local and national levels to ensure actions and strategies are fit for purpose. This includes the further development of the Youth Alliance and supporting youth representation on local Community Investment Committees and across NYEB national governance groups, to promote and generate knowledge of how to better support young people's capabilities, provide access to quality training and education, real work experience opportunities, and specialised support.

86 Nussbaum 2011, op. cit.

87 H. Kimberley, R. Gruhn & S. Huggins 2012, *Valuing Capabilities in Later Life: The Capability Approach and the Brotherhood of St Laurence Aged Services*, BSL, Fitzroy, Vic.

88 BSL, Advantaged Thinking Program Framework, unpub., BSL, Fitzroy, Vic., p. 2.

89 Brown et al. 2017, *Transition to Work Community of Practice*, op. cit., p. 23. Also see http://foyer.net/.

Enabling collaboration

The NYEB is working to support critical stakeholders from multiple sectors to work together to develop flexible strategies for structural change, based on local evidence and ongoing learning about what works, for young people, employers and community.

National and international evidence shows that marketised employment service systems struggle to enable the kind of flexible, nimble and integrated services that are required by young jobseekers, particularly those experiencing disadvantage.[90] Collaboration serves as an alternative to market-based and hierarchical modes of coordinating relationships, and instead relies on establishing a high level of trust and a strong commitment to sharing responsibilities and risks around a common aim.[91]

The NYEB is working to establish and maintain collaborative networks, which involves bringing together, and overcoming, multiple interests and perspectives of youth employment, and differing levels of agency and comfort with change. This requires collaborative leadership that can facilitate intentional relationships, shared vision and decision making to drive a 'process catalyst'[92] towards changing mindsets and systems.

The emergent NYEB model is being tested in a complex ecosystem where there is no clear, easily implemented solution. Ongoing developmental type evaluation and learning of what works to drive collaborative processes and positively impact youth employment at the local and national level is vital to build knowledge, drive improvement in real time, and maintain focus and legitimacy of collective innovation.

Collaborative networks

The Brotherhood is facilitating the establishment and linking of local and national collaborative networks towards shifting a youth employment system that does not currently meet the needs of young people experiencing disadvantage. Collaborations, or collaborative networks, are often formed to address complex problems that cannot be solved by one organisation or sector alone, with a successful collaboration bringing individuals and organisations from across sectors together to enhance each other's capabilities and expertise, and create more than the sum of its parts.[93]

Collaboration is more than cooperation and connecting people to share information, or the coordination of independent bodies to develop joint plans and actions to achieve a goal. In a truly collaborative relationship partners are interdependent and 'willing to develop new ways of thinking and behaving, form new types of relationships and be willing to make changes in existing systems of operation and service delivery'.[94]

Thus, the main focus of a collaborative network is not to solve problems or achieve tasks, but to 'achieve the strategic synergies between participants that will eventually lead to finding innovative solutions'.[95] Butcher and colleagues outline several success factors of cross-sector collaborations:[96]

+ Developed to address a specific issue in place, allowing a diverse approach.

+ Understood and authorised at a senior level, providing space for flexibility, experimentation and distributed decision making; and middle managers recruited to the cause.

+ Develop new ways of operating outside traditional forms of governance.

90   BSL 2017, *Reforms to Human Services: Response to the Productivity Commission*, BSL, Fitzroy, Vic.; S. J. Olney 2016, False economy: New public management and the welfare-to-work market in Australia, PhD Thesis, The University of Melbourne, Melbourne; Horn 2013, op. cit.; M. Considine, J. M. Lewis & S. O'Sullivan 2011, 'Quasi-markets and service delivery flexibility following a decade of employment assistance reform in Australia', *Journal of Social Policy*, 40:811–33; T. Eardley 2002, 'Mutual obligation and the job network: The effect of competition on the role of non-profit employment services', *Australian Journal of Social Issues*, 37(3):301–14.

91   BSL 2016, op. cit., p. 8.

92   M. Mandell & R. Keast 2009, 'A new look at leadership in collaborative networks: Process catalysts', in J. A. Raffel, P. Leisink & A. E. Middlebrooks (eds), *Public Sector Leadership: International Challenges and Perspectives*, Edward Elgar Publishing, Cheltenham, UK.

93   T. B. Lawrence, N. Phillips & C. Hardy 1999, 'Watching whale watching: Exploring the discursive foundations of collaborative relationships', *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 35(4):479–502; O'Flynn & Alford 2012, op. cit.; J. O'Flynn 2009, 'The cult of collaboration in public policy', *Australian Journal of Public Administration*, 68(1):112–6.

94   R. Keast & M. Mandell 2014, 'The collaborative push: Moving beyond rhetoric and gaining evidence', *Journal of Management & Governance*, 18(1):13.

95   ibid.

96   J. R. Butcher, D. J., Gilchrist, J., Phillimore & J. Wanna 2019, 'Attributes of effective collaboration: Insights from five case studies on Australia and New Zealand', *Policy Design and Practice*, 2(1):75–89.

- Collaborative skills and intelligence of relationships and culture of collaborators.

- Reciprocal flows of communication and assurance between all stakeholders.

- Realistic timeframes to build relationships, legitimacy and trust.

- Realistic goals and effective measurement of progress and evidence.

- Consideration of collaboration sustainability and maintaining commitment to the mission.

Authorising environment

An authorising environment is needed to gain legitimacy and support for the NYEB's collaborative approach, and the necessary resources and operational capacities, to take action and sustain efforts to create value.[97] The NYEB has found that value needs to be locally authorised and that collaborations must gain legitimacy, support and leadership from the local community,[98] and in turn be accountable to the community. Authority and space to make change is not fixed and must be continually negotiated. Gaining and growing authority to address complex challenges requires an understanding of what kind of authority is needed and how it is structured in and across place.[99]

While shared power and decision making is a key feature of collaborations, effectiveness still depends on an authorising environment that provides agency to act in new ways, not only for the collaboration but for each participant needing to answer to multiple authorisers within their own organisations.[100] All staff, 'particular at the senior level…have to show it is ok to try and "fail", to ask "why", to engage with a range of voices and perspectives'.[101]

Collaborative leadership

Collaboration infers that no one person or entity is in charge of the group, yet some form of leadership is still required to maintain and grow the network's value, commitment, learning and action. The NYEB aims to provide facilitative rather than directive leadership; 'building relationships and climate, sustainability and commitment, focus on process, not just task, and building a new whole and systems change'.[102] Keast and Mandell explain this type of leadership as a 'process catalyst', with the role of:[103]

- Making and maintaining connections, and building trust and respect, among participants.

- Building and influencing the shaping of a shared vision, and communicate the vision and collaborative ways of working to others.

- Creating an environment that supports inclusiveness and openness, and learning of new perspectives and ways of behaving.

- Monitoring and review of interactions and processes, and remaining alert to opportunities and constraints of a collaborative environment.

- Networking within the collaboration and across sectors, promote the work and gain buy in.

- Encouraging others to be comfortable with taking risks.

97   M. Moore & S. Khagram 2004, *On Creating Public Value: What business might learn from government about strategic management*, Corporate Social Responsibility Initiative Working Paper No. 3, John F Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA.

98   ibid.

99   Butcher et al. 2019, op. cit.

100 ibid.; M. Andrews, L. Pritchett & M. Woolcock 2017, 'Managing your authorizing environment', *Building State Capability: Evidence, analysis, action*, Oxford Scholarship Online, Oxford University Press, Oxford, UK, Ch. 9. Accessed 26 November 2019 at: https://www.oxfordscholarship.com/view/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198747482.001.0001/acprof-9780198747482-chapter-10.

101 Mouser & Bowers 2017, *Systems Changers*, op cit., p. 61.

102   Mandell & Keast 2009, op cit., p. 169.

103 R. Keast & M. Mandell 2013, *Collaborative Leadership*, Fact Sheet 9, Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth, Canberra.

Developmental–Realist evaluation

The Brotherhood continues to build knowledge of good practice in youth employment and is measuring the achievements of the NYEB, including collaborative behaviour, to build the legitimacy and accountability of the model to all stakeholders.[104]

Given the complexity of the employment system, diverse stakeholders and perceptions, and the interplay of factors found across sectors, the Brotherhood is utilising a developmental-realist approach to enable ongoing learning and responsive action during the process of developing the NYEB model in real time, rather than fixed outcomes and outputs.[105] This evaluative approach forms part of the Adaptive ARC (Ambition, Reality, Change) methodology[106] used by the Brotherhood's Research and Policy Centre, designed for programs that are developing, complicated and disruptive.

Developmental evaluation is a 'structured way to monitor, assess and provide feedback on the development of a project or program while it is being designed or modified'.[107] Michael Quinn Patton suggests that developmental evaluations are primarily used in complex environments for social interventions where 'what to do to solve problems is uncertain and key stakeholders are in conflict about how to proceed'.[108] Through consistent interactions between research and demonstration sites, the Brotherhood's developmental evaluation approach will enable learning and action on learnings during the process of developing or significantly redefining the model.[109] Rather than pre-determined tracking mechanisms, measurements develop 'as outcomes emerge…and can change during the evaluation as the process unfolds'.[110]

Realist evaluations are primarily concerned with exploring the question of "what works for whom in what circumstances and how?, rather than simply "does it work?".[111] This approach, first developed by Pawson and Tilley, seeks to identify the underlying generative mechanisms that explain how the outcomes were caused and the influence of context. A realist evaluation design is 'suited to assess how interventions in complex situations work because it allows the evaluator to deconstruct the causal web of conditions underlying such interventions'.[112]

Together these approaches recognise the multi-level and multi-sectoral nature of youth unemployment and the range of possible responses, in both the long and short term, towards a multi-level solution.[113] This enables the NYEB and key stakeholders to learn, reflect and adapt as the work develops, while ensuring that findings are situated within the context that they emerge.

> The NYEB provides the opportunity to share and build place–based solutions for young people, increase coordination and application of evidence, and reduce fragmentation of expertise across sectors at a national and local level. The NYEB is supporting critical stakeholders from across multiple sectors that influence youth employment to collaborate and develop a shared vision, trusting relationships, new ways of working together, and new ideas on how to develop flexible strategies for structural change.
>
> The NYEB is also facilitating the evaluation of collaborative processes and strategies, ongoing research, and the sharing of key learnings between its national governance groups, local CICs and wider audiences to build evidence of what works to drive policy impact and potential for adaption across place. This is not a linear process and the NYEB is testing and refining its model as new learnings emerge and understanding grows in each local context.

104 Keast & Mandell 2014, op cit., pp. 9–28.

105 J. Gamble 2008, *A Developmental Evaluation Primer*, The J. W. McConnell Family Foundation, Montreal, QC.

106 See J. Borlagdan 2019, 'Education First Youth Foyers outcomes report launch event' [presentation], BSL, Fitzroy, Vic., p. 8. Accessed 24 February 2020 at: https://www.bsl.org.au/media/brotherhood-blog/six-years-of-research-shows-this-model-works-an-integr/.

107 Australian Institute of Family Studies 2018, *Developmental Evaluation, CFCA Resource Sheet – February 2018*, AIFS, Melbourne. Accessed 19 February 2020 at: https://aifs.gov.au/cfca/publications/developmental-evaluation.

108 M. Q. Patton 2010, *Developmental Evaluation: Applying Complexity Concepts to Enhance Innovation and Use*, Guilford Press, New York, p. 1

109 Gamble 2008, op cit.

110 Patton 2010, op cit., p. 24.

111 R. Pawson & N. Tilley 1997, *Realistic Evaluation*, Sage, London.

112 BetterEvaluation, 'Realist evaluation' [webpage], BetterEvaluation. Accessed 19 February 2020 at: https://www.betterevaluation.org/en/approach/realist_evaluation.

113 van Kooy et al., 2017, op. cit.; Bowman, Borlagdan & Bond 2015, op. cit., pp. 31–2.

Summary of concepts guiding the NYEB

Inclusive growth	is concerned with sustained economic growth that is broad-based across sectors to reduce poverty. It focused on inclusiveness and equal access to markets and resources, and on productive employment rather than income redistribution. It seeks to strengthen both the supply side of labour (resources and capacities of the individual), and the demand side of labour (opportunities for productive employment).[114]
Capabilities	the capability approach identifies and valorises people's fundamental capabilities; the real opportunities people have for being and doing what, for them, constitutes a good life.[115] The capability approach appreciates the diversity of people's lives and their multiple views on 'a good life'; recognises the interdependent nature of disadvantage and lends itself to a holistic and multidisciplinary approach to enabling people to improve their lives.[116]
Harnessing community investment	draws on the existing strengths and assets of a community and builds relationships to plan and make decisions towards increasing their livelihoods and wellbeing.[117] This approach mobilises the community's good work and experience and works with key local agencies and organisations to build on, rather than duplicate, current activities. Local effort is also linked to activities and investment at a national level, to inform a more coordinated approach to youth employment.
Place-based	approaches recognise the interrelationship between people and place and focus on a specific geographical context and the community's aspirations for change. Place-based approaches aim to build local autonomy and the capacity of the community to develop and lead local solutions, leverage networks for integrated efforts that are flexible and respond to locally identified priorities.[118]
Demand and supply sides of the labour market	Supply side elements in the labour market focus on the employability characteristics of workers such as personal attributes, skills and qualifications, previous work experience, mobility and access to the workplace, and care responsibilities. Demand side elements relate to the needs and expectations of employers, such as workforce and skills requirements and recruitment strategies.[119] It is argued that engaging employers in the co-development of solutions will aid both the supply and demand sides of skills provision and labour for young people.[120]

114   E. Ianchovichina, S. Lundstrom & L. Garrido 2009, *What Is Inclusive Growth?* Available at: http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTDEBTDEPT/Resources/468980-1218567884549/WhatIsInclusiveGrowth20081230.pdf.

115   Sen 1999, op. cit.; Nussbaum 2011, op. cit.

116   H. Kimberley, R. Gruhn & S. Huggins 2012, *Valuing Capabilities in Later Life: The Capability Approach and the Brotherhood of St Laurence Aged Services*, BSL, Fitzroy, Vic.

117   A. Mathie & G. Cunningham 2003, 'From clients to citizens: Asset-based community development as a strategy for community-driven development', *Development in Practice*, 5:474–86.

118   Hudson & Rees 2015, op. cit., p. 5; Wilks, Lahausse & Edward 2015, op. cit.

119   Bowman & Randrianarisoa 2018, op. cit., p. 8.

120   van der Aa & van Berkel 2014, op. cit.; van Kooy et al. 2017, op. cit.; OECD 2014, op. cit.; Ross et al. 2015, op. cit.

Youth transitions	a period of transition from the dependence of childhood to the independence of adulthood,[121] marked by rapid physical, neural, social and emotional development and change. The complexity and duration of young people's transition from education to paid work, to forming key relationships, leaving home and living independently is influenced by dynamic economic, technological, environmental and social environments and change.[122]
Transitional labour markets	consider the labour market as a system of increasingly complex employment transitions over the life course. The theory offers approaches to manage or bridge the social risks that occur across main life transitions, which need to be shared by workers, employers, government institutions and social partners to prevent social exclusion and transform risks into opportunities and capabilities.[123]
Social capital	is broadly defined as the resources provided to an individual through the social networks they hold. 'Social capital is all about the value of social networks, bonding similar people and bridging between diverse people, with norms of reciprocity. Social capital is fundamentally about how people interact with each other'.[124]
Systems thinking	seeks to understand how things are connected to each other within a larger whole. In understanding the multiple relationships, components and dynamics of a problem, assumptions can be challenged leading to holistic ways of thinking about problems and the systems that uphold them, collaboration to influence change and flexibility in testing new ideas that align with our values.[125]
Collaboration	involves individuals or organisations establishing a strong commitment to work together towards a shared goal. Collaboration that builds high trust, interdependent relations and commitment to accountability creates opportunities to not only share information but 'develop new ways of thinking and behaving, form new types of relationships and be willing to make changes in existing systems of operation and service delivery'.[126]
Collaborative leadership	'is focused on facilitating – rather than directing – and safeguarding the collaborative process. It is about making connections between the right people, bridging diverse cultures and getting members used to sharing ideas, resources and power'.[127]
Collaborative policy	aims to achieve effective policy coherence across traditionally siloed policy sectors; involve social partners in policy development through social dialogue; and develop multi-stakeholder partnerships engaging governments, social partners, institutions, and communities.[128]

121 United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Definition of Youth, Fact Sheet. Accessed 29 April 2019 at: https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/documents/youth/fact-sheets/youth-definition.pdf.

122 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) 2011, *Young Australians: Their Health and Wellbeing 2011*, cat. no. PHE 140, AIHW, Canberra; AIHW 2015, '4.6 Transitions to independence', *Australia's Welfare 2015*, Australia's Welfare Series no. 12. cat. no. AUS 189, AIHW, Canberra. Accessed 29 April 2019 at: https://www.aihw.gov.au/getmedia/5abd29ae-b699-4745-9b8e-04b2ddbe59ea/AW15-4-6-Transitions-to-independence.pdf.aspx.

123 G. Schmid 2017, 'Transitional labour markets: Theoretical foundations and policy strategies', *The New Palgrave Dictionary of Economics*, Palgrave Macmillan, London.

124 P. Dekker & E. M. Uslaner 2001, 'Introduction', in P. Dekker & E. M. Uslaner (eds), *Social Capital and Participation in Everyday Life*, Routledge, London & New York, p. 3.

125 M. Jackson 2001, 'Critical systems thinking and practice', *European Journal of Operational Research*, 128(2):233–44.

126 Keast & Mandell 2014, op. cit., p. 13.

127 Keast & Mandell 2013, op. cit., p. 1.

128 International Labour Organisation 2012, 'The youth employment crisis: A call for action', Resolution and conclusions of the 101st Session of the International Labour Conference, ILO, Geneva, p. 4.

Collaborative governance	arrangements bring together cross-sectoral stakeholders to collaborate to co-produce and implement policy or manage programs, particularly in the context of complex public issues that may not be easily addressed by government alone.[129]
Collaborative commissioning	moves away from competitive tendering and compliance-driven contract management towards collaboration with non-government networks and more flexible, though still contestable, funding arrangements in which accountability is based on trust.[130] It creates incentives for providers to work together to share best practice and learnings, and foster networks across sectors and the wider community to leverage opportunities and drive innovation, rather than compete for scarce resources.[131]
Adaptive policy	is designed to respond to anticipated and unanticipated conditions, and enables stakeholders to adapt to complexity in innovative ways through the provision for ongoing learning.[132]
Developmental-Realist evaluation approaches	are useful for complex issues and environments where solutions are not clear. The combination of these approaches enhances learning, reflection and adaption as work and practice develops, while ensuring that findings are situated within the context that they emerge.[133]

129 D. Brown & S. Mallet 2017, 'Report 1: Conceptual Framework for the National Community of Practice', in van Kooy et al. 2017, op. cit., p. 14; C. Ansell & A. Gash 2008, op. cit.; O'Flynn, et al. 2014, op. cit.
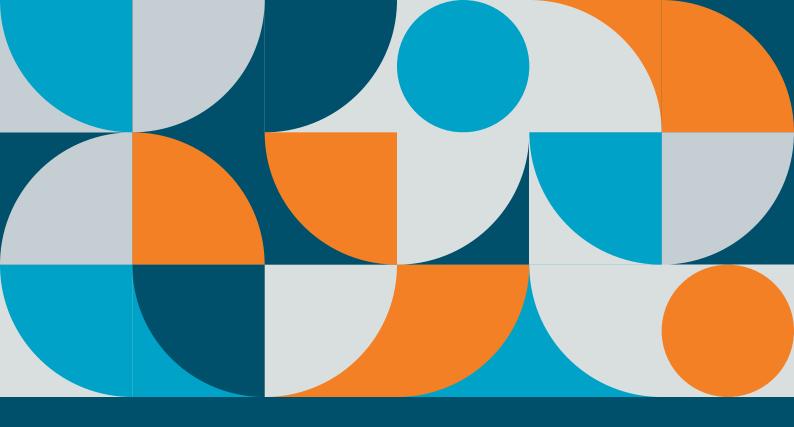
130 BSL 2016, op. cit., p. 30.

131 BSL 2017, op. cit., p. 9.

132 Walker, Rahman & Cave 2001, op. cit., pp. 282–9; Swanson & Bhadwal (eds) 2009, op. cit.

133 M. Q. Patton 2010, *Developmental Evaluation: Applying Complexity Concepts to Enhance Innovation and Use*, Guilford Press, New York; Pawson & Tilley 1997, op. cit.

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