

# A SOCIAL ENTERPRISE: CREATING MEANINGFUL PATHWAYS

A thriving Not For Profit (NFP) providing valuable employability skills to disadvantaged individuals and contributing greatly to Hume community services and economic growth.

Enable IT Recycling is a social enterprise that provides a platform to improve job prospects for Melbourne's disadvantaged, through hands-on training and work experience programs in electronic waste (e-waste) management. The organisation was founded by Managing Director, Julie McKay.

"We accept laptops, PCs, monitors, keyboards and mice, servers, hard drives, printers, photocopiers, phones and lots more. Enable's programs redirect electronic equipment, saving it from landfill, whilst creating work skill programs for disadvantaged people in one of Australia's fast-growing sectors," said Julie.

E-waste and computer recycling is the fastest growing waste category in Australia. Enable IT Recycling's participants work in an accredited environment that delivers valuable industry skills and experience to build careers and positioning in their chosen field.

These services create a platform for social inclusion, supporting and engaging participants by providing real work and industry experience. Julie explains the driving force within the organisation.

"In some Hume suburbs, youth unemployment is higher than average. We developed a social enterprise model to combat this through using our commercial trade to generate profits, which are then injected back into the enterprise, supporting program activity. This social enterprise is a multi-pronged approach, delivering social impact through empowering and educating Hume's disadvantaged, whilst caring for the Environment by successfully diverting Australia's largest growing waste-type from landfill," said Julie.

With workforce participation from people with disabilities at 52.9% nationally, Australia is poorly ranked in providing inclusive employment opportunities. The team at Enable IT Recycling break down boundaries by providing practical experience. This experience positions our participants for greater employment opportunities within relevant fields.

All Board Directors have specialised and collectively, broad industry backgrounds. This both effectively drives Enable's mission and strategy, and provides great insight to pinpoint desired skills and accreditations which employers are looking for to address entry barriers.

***"We are training our participants to become valued employees in industries which will give them the highest chance to sustain future employment. Through providing essential, accredited services, Enable IT Recycling breaks down the program activities and goals into achievable milestones customised for all skill levels."***

– Julie McKay, Founder and Managing Director Enable IT.

Enable IT Recycling offers many valuable commercial services, including data destruction, accredited e-waste recycling and redevelopment, warehousing and logistics, and e-commerce of redeemable products. The organisation services clients from all over Victoria, including corporate, retail, public sector, education and many other industries.

Beginning in Maribyrnong, Julie always planned to grow the organisation. The opportunity to move into the Hume City Hub, now sees Enable IT Recycling working in a space of 900m<sup>2</sup>. Securing the space in May 2016 supported an increase in commercial activities which aligns with the organisation's growth strategy. Julie outlines the benefits of upgrading their facility to the Broadmeadows location.

"Warehousing logistics is a large employer in Hume, which means we're in the right spot to create real employment pathways. We've got 8 times the floorspace in our new facility and have leveraged many of the Hume City Council services available, including the Better Impact Volunteering Portal to recruit dedicated contributors, Business Breakfasts as well as leveraging strong relationships from past membership of the Hume Jobs and Skills Taskforce to build our network," said Julie.

Hume City Council has offered key support with their 'Local Jobs for Local People Program', along with the CSIRO collaboration 'ASPIRE'. ASPIRE is an online marketplace which

intelligently matches businesses with potential purchasers or recyclers of waste by-products to reduce landfill.

Fundraising innovation is a large point of difference in the organisation's business model, which supports the goal to both engage and contribute to the community in all aspects of its growth. Being an NFP innovator also allows the flexibility of piloting new methods to practically optimise efficiency and processes.



4240 > HOURS OF EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS 

138 > PARTICIPANTS ENGAGED TO IMPROVE JOB PROSPECTS 

3052 > PAID WORK HOURS SUPPORTING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN THE HUME AREA 

5820 > VOLUNTEER HOURS ENABLED TO SUPPORT SOCIAL INCLUSION 

57.6 > TONNES OF E-WASTE DIVERTED FROM LANDFILL 

ENABLE IT PARTICIPANT

“Program models at Enable are co-designed, we constantly request input from our participants, crew leaders, customers and directors. We’re not afraid to test new methods and training models. We’re comfortable to pilot our new ideas, understanding that they could lead to new markets, services or opportunities to support employability,” explained Julie.

Enable IT Recycling provides appealing partnerships for businesses through their social procurement, offering a valuable service and outlet for corporate social responsibility.

“Enable’s activity gives a great opportunity for us to partner with corporate companies in a different way – our organisation can double as a service provider and corporate social responsibility outlet. This type of Social Procurement is really attractive to many Melbourne organisations, which has led to productive relationships of mutual social and economic value,” said Julie.

Looking to the future, Enable IT Recycling is currently seeking for potential funding partners to broaden their service offering and increase participant capacity.

“We’re excited to explore more ventures, more collaborations and a larger supporter network to provide more pathway opportunities to employment. The appeal to partner with Enable stems from our excellent reputation as an accredited charity and NFP, as well as our commercial acumen as efficient recyclers with high standards and great service,” said Julie.

[enableaustralia.org.au](http://enableaustralia.org.au)