

A large, stylized graphic element on the right side of the page, resembling a thick, curved arrow pointing downwards. It is composed of two main sections: an orange section at the top and a light purple section at the bottom, which meet at a curved junction. The graphic starts from the left edge and curves towards the right edge.

Submission to the Employment Services Reform Discussion Paper

Social Ventures Australia

Date: 1 July 2026

For further information please contact Social Ventures Australia



Acknowledgment of Country

Social Ventures Australia acknowledges and pays respect to the past and present traditional custodians and elders of this country on which we work.

'After the Rains' by Richard Seden for Saltwater People 2024

Summary

Social Ventures Australia (SVA) welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations' discussion paper, *Shaping the future of employment services*.

This submission focuses on two areas:

1. **How the future employment services system can work better with larger employers and industries.** It builds on SVA's March 2023 submission to the inquiry into Workforce Australia employment services¹, which argued for a system focused on secure, stable, quality employment; skills and progression; employer support; reductions in long-term unemployment and underemployment; and stronger outcomes for people at disproportionate risk of exclusion from work.

Our position remains that employment services should not be designed principally around low-cost, short-term exits from income support. If the future system is to contribute to workforce development, productivity, social mobility and better life outcomes, it must be designed to create and sustain quality employment pathways for people who are unemployed, underemployed or excluded from secure work.

2. **The opportunity to drive joined up responses to local employment needs through additional commissioning mechanisms, such as outcomes-based contracting or an outcomes fund.**

Additional mechanisms to allow government and local stakeholders to co-design responses to specific local employment challenges could be effective to meet the needs of diverse cohorts and local circumstances. Outcomes-based contracting is one option. Unlike mainstream employment services, outcomes-based contracts typically involve multiple stakeholders developing a response around a specific problem, cohort or outcome, rather than specifying a predefined service model. This creates flexibility to tailor responses to local circumstances.

The central proposition – working with large employers and industry

A future employment services system will not unlock the potential of larger employers if employer engagement remains a secondary function attached to individual case management. The demand side of the system needs its own architecture, capability, funding and accountability.

In order to increase long term employment outcomes for people at risk of labour market exclusion, and to address changing labour market needs, a set of measures to more effectively engage large employers and industry is needed that includes:

- Use of government funding and procurement levers to drive employer practice change and increase social impact;
- New services directed at supporting employer practice change and brokering effective relationships with case management services;
- Improved quality case management services designed to support placement and retention in good quality jobs.

¹ Social Ventures Australia, Submission to the inquiry into Workforce Australia employment services, March 2023
<https://www.socialventures.org.au/about/publications/response-to-the-inquiry-into-workforce-australia-employment-services/>

About SVA

Social Ventures Australia is a leading social impact organisation. We help solve challenging social problems by putting our extensive know-how to work redesigning systems. We help institutions think differently and work hand in hand with partners and communities to take real action on social change.

SVA's Employment team has been at the forefront of identifying, testing, and advocating for practices that can contribute to systemic change towards a more inclusive and equitable labour market. Since 2022, SVA has been working directly with employers to develop quality job opportunities for non-university educated young people from low socioeconomic backgrounds. We have worked with nearly 50 large employers to pilot new ways of working – including redesigning job roles, establishing new work-based learning opportunities, skilling up supervisors and re-engineering selection and induction processes. As part of this work, SVA has assisted employers to establish new apprenticeships – including selecting Registered Training Organisations and working with Australian Apprenticeship Support Services – and brokered relationships with Workforce Australia, Inclusive Employment Australia and Transition to Work providers. More recently SVA, along with the Australian Business and Community Network (ABCN) and the Smith Family, has launched the [Fair Chance Initiative](#) to promote employer action on economic mobility. This initiative was developed in response to feedback from employers that the lack of any external driver to focus on young jobseekers affected their willingness to invest time or resources in developing pathways into their organisations.

To inform this submission, SVA convened a workshop on 17 July 2026 with 20 experienced people from employment services, industry, intermediary organisations, academia and employers. The workshop explored how employment services reform can better support employer practice change and quality employment pathways. Participants examined the workforce challenges employers are trying to solve, the outcomes the system should be designed to deliver, the functions required to support those outcomes and the system architectures that could enable them. Participants were asked to contribute in their personal (rather than organisational) capacity. This submission draws on their contributions and expertise but is made on behalf of Social Ventures Australia alone.

SVA also has deep expertise in outcomes-based contracting. For more than a decade, SVA has worked with governments, service providers and investors to design and implement outcomes-based contracts across Australia, including social impact bonds (SIBs) and payment-by-outcomes contracts. SVA has been involved in nine SIBs and a range of other outcomes-based contracts across employment, homelessness, child protection, education and health. We have also supported the Commonwealth Department of Social Services (DSS) over many years on outcomes-based contracting initiatives, including development of an outcomes payment framework, supporting the design and implementation of multiple payment-by-outcomes trials, State and Territory partnership initiatives, and capability building within government. This experience provides SVA with a practical understanding of how commissioning and contracting arrangements can be used to align governments, providers, employers and other stakeholders around shared outcomes.

Summary of recommendations

1. That the Australian Government reviews existing procurement and funding arrangements with a view to identifying opportunities to create job pathways for income support recipients including through increasing employer action.
2. That the Australian Government takes action to improve pathways for people on income support into jobs within the Australian Public Service and promote the value to employers of this work.
3. That the Australian Government continues to evaluate the impact of its activities on its objective of sustained and inclusive full employment and identify opportunities to influence employer action towards these objectives.
4. That the Australian Government establish new arrangements to support employers to identify and address exclusionary practices, and to implement practice changes that promote ongoing access to quality jobs to people who are under or unemployed.
5. New case management services are designed to encourage providers to invest in good quality job placement and in personalised post placement support.
6. Services for larger employers and industries are separately contracted and funded from case management services for individuals.
7. That the Australian Government establish a program that includes standalone intermediaries, with scope to fund sectoral approaches and employer led initiatives where these can demonstrate substantial impact.
8. That the Australian Government establish additional commissioning mechanisms, such as outcomes-based contracting or an outcomes fund, to allow government and local stakeholders to co-design responses to specific local employment challenges outside of the pre-defined service streams.

Section 1: How can employment services best partner with industry and large employers?

Reformed employment services must be accompanied by a new approach to employers

Over the last thirty years, and several iterations of employment services, provider contracts have included an obligation to provide services to employers. While there are examples of employers and providers developing effective partnerships, the overall trend is disengagement of employers from the system.²

Moreover, over this period, the nature of the underlying labour market challenge has changed. The underemployment rate now exceeds the unemployment rate, so that many people have some work, but not enough to gain a secure a decent income or to exit income support. At the same time, employers are demanding more skills and qualifications and offering fewer quality entry level roles. DEWR itself has suggested that this growing skills mismatch between employer demand for higher skills and the skills of those on the caseload may account for the declining rate of employment outcomes from Workforce Australia³. While case management based services will continue to have a role in matching people to vacancies and post placement support, a more significant challenge for any new system is how it can enable participants to move into jobs higher up the skills ladder, while encouraging and supporting employers to invest in creating more inclusive pathways and workplaces.

1. A systems level response

Both the level of disengagement of employers from the current system and the misalignment between the nature of the skills challenge and current employment services design mean that tinkering with current program settings will only see further decline in outcomes. No amount of improvement in the quality of individualised case management support will deliver more larger employers, or better quality job opportunities into the system.

Evidence shows us that the employment practices of many employers are contributing to ongoing exclusion of many jobseekers. Exclusionary practices include inflexible job design and/or hours, unnecessary skills and industry experience requirements and bias against people who have breaks in employment. There is no reason to think that employers will address these practices without external drivers. For example the Employment White Paper found that:

Despite labour market tightness, consultation for this White Paper reported there have been limited changes to hiring practices and workplace flexibility to manage skills shortages.⁴

² Final Report of the Select Committee on Workforce Australia Employment Services, 30 November 2023.

³ DEWR [Annual Report 2024-5](#)

⁴ Working Future: The Australian Government's White Paper on Jobs and Opportunities. September 2023, p.235

Similarly, JSA research suggests that many employers who struggle to fill jobs opt to re-advertise or give up, rather than redesign position requirements (5%).⁵

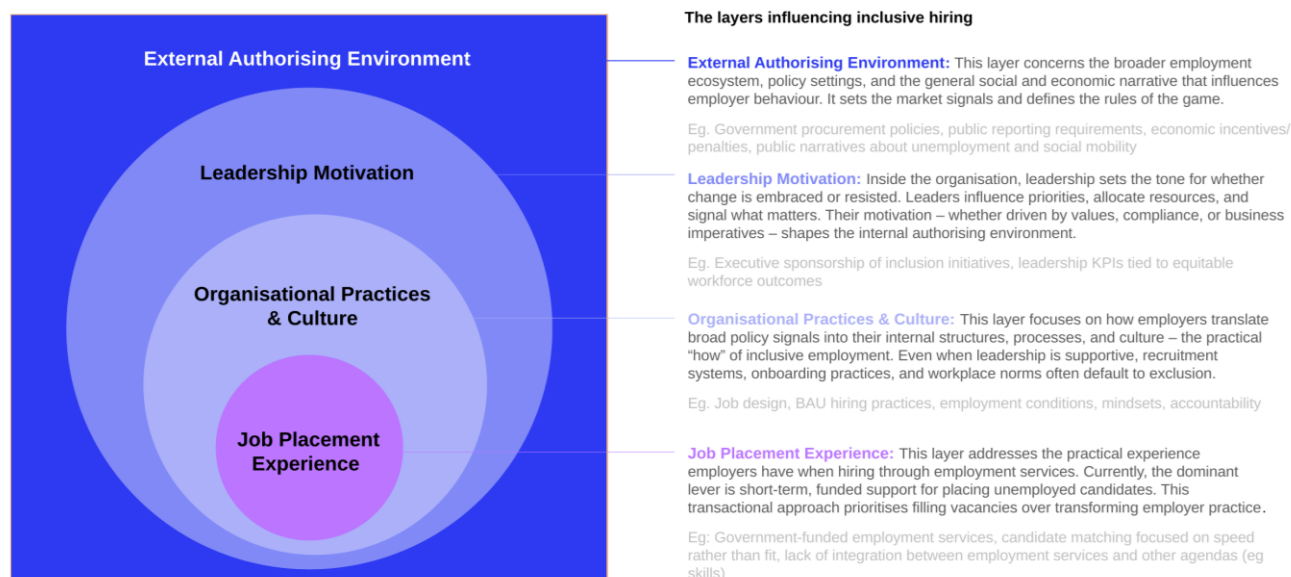
Rather than treat employers' practices and preferences as fixed, programs and interventions should be designed to support employers to make changes in practices and preferences that create more accessible opportunities while addressing long term labour market challenges. This means a more systemic response to employer practices and behaviour, addressing the types of jobs made available and how, rather than just the experience at point of placement.

Figure 1 illustrates this more systems based view of employer practice. It recognises that specific job placements are nested within organisational culture, practices and policies which may operate to exclude particular groups. There are many examples: requiring specific industry experience or qualifications, ruling out people with breaks in employment, inflexible hours/job design, workplace discrimination, negative view of the unemployed. Changing these attitudes, practices and policies requires significant action within organisations, including authorisation at the leadership level.⁶ In turn, organisational leaders are more likely to respond where there are external drivers – like mandatory reporting (e.g. the Workplace Gender Equality Agency), procurement incentives or perception that action is widely expected ('social license'). A new approach to engagement with large employers and industry needs to include interventions at each of these levels in order to be effective at scale.

Figure 1

Systemic levers for inclusive employment

Employers operate within a complex system of influences, from policy settings to leadership priorities and organisational practices. To drive inclusive employment, we need to understand and act on these four levers together.



⁵ National Skills Commission, *2022 Skills Priority List Key Findings Report*, 2022.

⁶ E.g. Diversity Council of Australia (2019), [Change at Work](#).

2. Authorising environment and motivating employers to act

Increased employer motivation to employ and invest in jobseekers is a precondition for improved employment outcomes and progress towards the government's goal of sustained and inclusive full employment. Better service provision can make it easier for motivated employers to act, but it will not create a reason to act. If employers are not motivated, expected or required to create quality opportunities for people who face barriers to employment, employment services reform will not achieve the desired increase in engagement by employers.

Governments already apply a range of levers to influence employer practices. For example:

- Mandatory reporting under the Commonwealth Workplace Gender Equality Act;
- Indigenous Procurement Policy (Cth);
- Australian Skills Guarantee, which includes targets for apprenticeships, learning workers and women;
- Victorian Social Procurement Framework, which includes references to 'priority jobseekers' as well as people with disability and women;
- NSW Digital Skills and Workforce Compact, through which employers, including government agencies, commit to hiring 20% of entry level jobs through 'alternative pathways' by 2030.

Outside the Victorian Social Procurement Framework, none of these initiatives promote employment of jobseekers. Each reflects important social objectives, but it is worth noting OECD reporting that, without explicit inclusion of socioeconomic background, diversity measures often favour the most privileged within minority groups, leaving behind the most disadvantaged.⁷ While we note concerns over additional obligations on employers who may be seeking to access government contracts or funding, we believe there may be opportunities to minimise administrative burden, while increasing alignment with the inclusive full employment objective, by streamlining obligations.

This direction is consistent with the Australian Government's commitment in the White Paper that it will:

...continue to drive cultural change by providing support to businesses to embrace diverse hiring and innovative job design, as well as through using its purchasing power.⁸

This was also reflected in the report of the Select Inquiry into Workforce Australia Services, which recommended:

The Committee recommends that the Australian Government develop and implement a Commonwealth Social Procurement Framework to leverage Commonwealth spending on major projects and large service contracts to create more employment and training opportunities for long-term unemployed and disadvantaged jobseekers. The Framework should align with and complement existing approaches in the Commonwealth at the State and Territory level and be developed with input from key sector enablers such as Social Traders, National Disability Services, Fair Work, and Supply Nation.⁹

⁷ OECD (2025) [To Have and Have Not, Bridging the Gap in Opportunities](#).

⁸ Select Committee Inquiry into Workforce Australia Employment Services. p236

⁹ Select Committee Inquiry into Workforce Australia Employment Services, Recommendation 5 at para 4.179

In addition to using funding levers, government should consider how it can counteract public and government narratives that discourage employers from considering people on income support. Past governments have contributed to negative perceptions of jobseekers in how they have spoken about income support recipients. This is a long-term challenge and one that is hard to reverse, however the Australian Government could contribute to altering perceptions by increasing its own efforts to recruit from the caseload and to work with providers.

Regardless of which model for service provision it adopts, efforts to improve outcomes will only be effective if accompanied by improved motivation and willingness among employers to engage.

SVA recommends:

1. That the Australian Government reviews existing procurement and funding arrangements with a view to identifying opportunities to create job pathways for income support recipients, including through increasing employer action.
2. That the Australian Government takes action to improve pathways for people on income support into jobs within the Australian Public Service and promote the value to employers of this work.
3. That the Australian Government continues to evaluate the impact of its activities on its objective of sustained and inclusive full employment and identify opportunities to influence employer action towards these objectives.

3. Addressing organisational practices and culture

Leadership motivation is necessary, but not always sufficient, to achieve change. Employment practices, including job design, attraction and selection processes and training and development arrangements, are often entrenched, and their exclusionary effects are not always visible to those implementing them. Evidence shows that efforts to increase placements of marginalised groups without addressing broader workplace culture and practices may succeed in the short term but are unlikely to achieve long term sustainable change.¹⁰ Similarly, wage subsidies may increase the likelihood of an individual getting work but, unless combined with organisational change, are unlikely to create opportunities for people in the future.

SVA recommends:

4. That the Australian Government establish new arrangements to support employers to identify and address exclusionary practices, and to implement practice changes that promote ongoing access to quality jobs to people who are under or unemployed.

Further discussion of possible program models is below.

¹⁰ E.g. Diversity Council of Australia (2019), Change at Work, Deloitte Access Economics (2021) Indigenous Employment Program Evaluation – Final Report

4. Job placement opportunities

Current employment service settings favour rapid exit from income support over other objectives. The vacancies that are easiest to access for providers are those that are low skill, have a low turnaround time for placement, and high-volume recruitment. Often these jobs are characterised by insecurity (e.g. casual/labour hire), high turnover, lack of access to workplace training, and poor career progression prospects. The system rewards providers who can place jobseekers in these types of roles. Placements into precarious roles often require only a superficial understanding of employer practices, and frequently the staff within providers charged with placement and post placement support have limited knowledge of the individual jobseekers they place. They are poorly equipped to deliver high-quality job matching, to be able to identify or negotiate adjustments, or to support employers or jobseekers through challenges. In SVA's work connecting larger employers with providers there have been some excellent outcomes, but these have been achieved despite program settings, often with considerable intervention.

Larger employers seeking to fill permanent, quality roles, often have longer recruitment timelines. Ensuring a good fit between jobseeker and job is essential, particularly where employers have many applicants to choose from. A higher quality case management service which prioritises quality job placements over speed and provides more time for case managers to get to know their clients, will better serve the needs of larger employers and industry.

The Australian Government has committed to improving quality and personalisation for jobseekers, particularly those facing more complex obstacles to employment. It has recognised that this may mean upskilling, particularly in delivering Stream 3 services. More broadly, the government is seeking to move away from the current transactional, compliance focused approach to service provision, to a service that is embedded in and connected to a wider range of community supports.

SVA supports these objectives and notes that, if implemented as intended, these require substantial cultural, organisational and practice change across government and providers, and upskilling of case management staff. Amongst the changes we would hope to see are improvements in the capacity and capability of case managers to help participants navigate the local labour market, to advocate on their behalf to employers and to provide effective post placement support.

In this context it is unrealistic to expect this system to also achieve substantial uplift in engagement by larger employers, or for it to make substantial progress towards addressing skills gaps.

SVA recommends:

- 5.** New case management services are designed to encourage providers to invest in good quality job placement and in personalised post placement support.
- 6.** Services for larger employers and industries are separately contracted and funded from case management services for individuals.

5. Preferred model: Service for larger employers and industry

SVA proposes that a new program be established to engage large employers and select sectors.

The objectives of this service would be supporting employers to:

- Open up long term quality employment opportunities for jobseekers (where quality includes job security and opportunity for progression); and
- Develop new pathways to address current and emerging skills gaps and provide access to opportunity for jobseekers; and
- Support adoption of inclusive workplace practices; and
- Embed changes so that their impact will be sustained over time.

Proposed functions of a service would include:

- Working with employers to redesign jobs, create pathways, adjust recruitment and progression practices so as to increase inclusion; and
- Acting as a single point of contact to access candidates and support across multiple employment and skills focused programs ('Hiding the wiring'); and
- Supporting establishment of skill pathways, brokering relationships with training providers, apprenticeship system, social enterprises etc.; and
- Assistance to measure impact and outcomes of practice changes and to improve these over time.

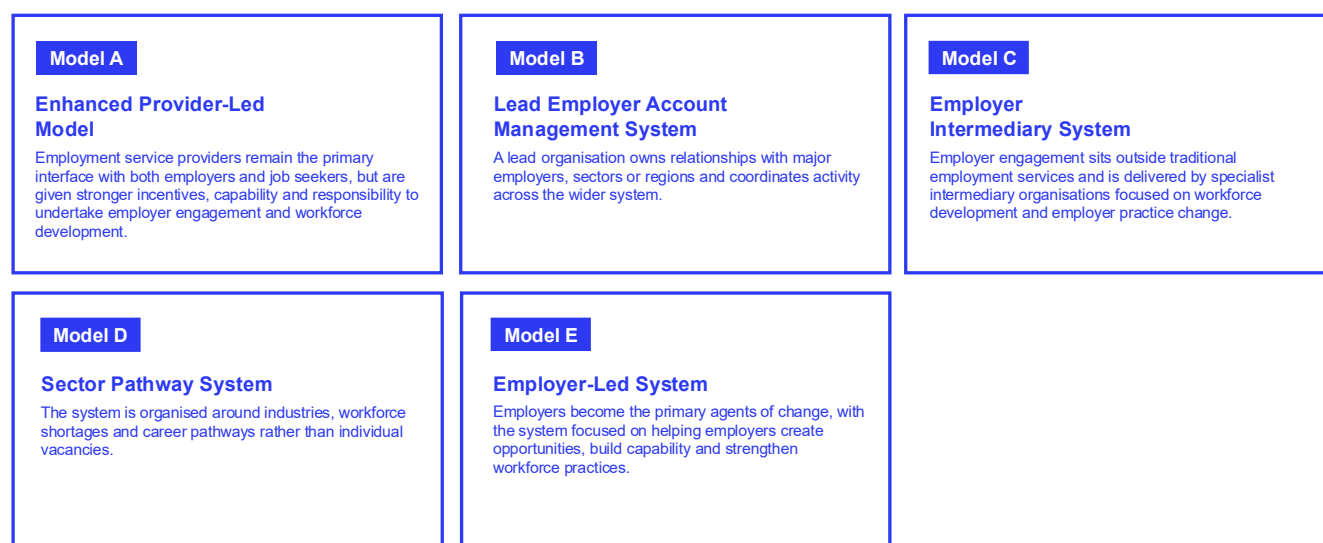
Additional functions could include:

- Developing long term pathways for multiple employers in a location/sector; and
- Connecting with schools and school-work transition supports (e.g. offering work experience, SBATs, careers engagement); and
- Supporting long term workforce planning in specific industries or regions; and
- Building the capacity of employment services providers to support clients into and within work.

Program resources would be directed at secure employment in areas which may require skills or offer skills progression. Case management services (streams 2 and 3) and local services (e.g. Local Jobs Program) would still place people into lower skill, less permanent roles, where this aligns with jobseeker needs and aspirations.

SVA has identified five possible models for a program addressing large employers and industry: an enhanced provider-led model; a lead employer account management system; an employer intermediary system; a sector pathway system and an employer-led system (Figure 2).

Figure 2



In order to help refine our thinking, SVA invited 20 sector experts to a design workshop, which included consideration of these models. Our response is informed by their input. Each model was considered in terms of its ability to address the needs of different types of large employers (Table 1), and to cope with particular external stressors.

Table 1

Employer lens	What distinguishes them	What the system needs to provide
National multi-site operator	A dispersed workforce with high-volume, recurring hiring delivered through central and local structures. These employers often want a single relationship but rarely find one organisation that can meet needs across the country.	National account management, demand aggregation, consistent local delivery and a coordinated interface that reduces complexity.
Public sector or health employer	A mission-driven employer with acute shortages in regulated, hard-to-fill occupations under credentialing requirements and public accountability. Workforce planning is often constrained by budgets, classifications, sign-off processes and training pathways.	Training-integrated pathways, workforce development partnerships, support for supervisors and better alignment between employment services, training and operational workforce planning.
Financial-services or technology employer	A large regulated employer competing for scarce digital talent, where entry-level roles often require current technical capability, security checks and risk management. These employers may see mainstream employment services as irrelevant to their talent pipeline.	Curated access to non-traditional and reskilled talent, rapid training-pathway partnerships, work-integrated learning and support to widen and de-risk talent pipelines.
Fast-scaling or project-driven firm	A commercially driven organisation facing surge hiring, subcontracting chains and project-based demand. Long-term projects can still translate into short-term packages of work, pushing risk down the chain.	Project-aligned pathways, workforce planning, procurement levers, and early engagement with schools, training and local workforce systems.

Each model was also considered in terms of its effectiveness in responding to four scenarios:

- A national employer arrives with 500 vacancies across six regions. What happens? How does your future model respond?

- Youth unemployment increases to 20%. Now, 90% of job roles require post-secondary qualifications and employment experience. How does your future model respond?
- A consortium has won a contract for a big renewal energy project in a regional community with high youth unemployment. How does your future model respond?
- An employer offers many low-quality, high-churn jobs. How does your model protect job quality?

In discussing the various models and their potential, it was noted that some elements of these models exist or have existed in the past. Job placement services have, in the past, been separately funded from case management (**Model A**), a National Workforce Network was established across providers to share vacancies¹¹ (**Model B**), Launch into Work and JobsBank resemble **Model C**, while there are examples of companies establishing internal functions to work with providers and other intermediaries, particularly where they are subject to employment targets (e.g. Major Project Skills Guarantee) and/or are seeking to work across multiple layers of subcontractors (**Model E**).

Overall, the discussion suggested that different models may work better for different types of employers and industries, however **Models C-E**, which sit apart from case management services, are most likely to succeed. These models are most likely to be able to overcome competition and fragmentation, not just within a future version of Workforce Australia, but between different programs with different objectives and eligibility requirements. They are also more likely to be able to develop the level of trust and expertise required to influence practice changes within employer organisations.

Model C (standalone intermediary or intermediaries working with employers) may offer the most flexibility in offering support to employers and/or industries regardless of type, and as needs arise. It could offer a combination of light touch support and deeper engagement. It may, however, struggle to get traction with employers – making the external drivers mentioned above more critical.

Model D (program focused on developing pathways) offers the opportunity to work closely with Jobs and Skills Councils, and to target specific areas of skills need. It could support development of the types of long-term sectoral programs that have proven effective in the US,¹² or work with initiative like the NSW Digital Skills and Workforce Compact to create opportunities. It could work with schools and support apprenticeship models. However, there is a risk that its reach could be too narrow – requiring a critical mass of employers with aligned needs to work. Opportunities to work with employers that might have multiple, diverse roles could be missed. This model could be included as an option within a wider program

Model E (Employer led system) has the advantage of being embedded in employer organisations, rather than seeking change from outside, and may be more likely to create lasting practice change. Funding would be attached to employer organisations, creating a driver for change. This approach could be less effective than others in developing long term strategic responses to industry or economy wide challenges. It carries additional risk in being tied to the specific interests of an employer (that may change over time).

SVA recommends:

7. That the Australian Government establish a program that includes standalone intermediaries, with scope to fund sectoral approaches and employer led initiatives where these can demonstrate substantial impact.

¹¹ Select Committee on Workforce Australia Employment Services para 12.74

¹² Rattledge, Alyssa, Cynthia Miller, and Kelsey Schaberg. 2023. ["Sector Strategies for Workforce Development: A Synthesis of the Research for Employers and Local Governments."](#) New York: MDRC.

Section 2: Applying additional commissioning mechanisms to drive innovation and joined up responses to local needs

This section responds to the following questions in the Discussion Paper:

Q.14 How could the future service accommodate the needs of diverse cohorts, including better linkages to other services?

Q.15 How can a nationally consistent service respond to local circumstances?

Additional mechanisms for designing and commissioning responses to locally-defined employment challenges could be effective to meet the needs of diverse cohorts and local circumstances, including to better connect employment services and other local services.

The discussion paper outlines that there will be differentiated commissioning approaches between targeted services and intensive services, with intensive services having a greater focus on engaging with community-based organisations. However, there may still be circumstances where addressing a local employment challenge requires government and local stakeholders to design a response around a specific problem, cohort or labour market challenge, rather than commissioning delivery through a pre-defined service stream.

Complementary programs such as the Local Jobs Program already provide mechanisms for responding to specific cohort and place-based needs. The opportunity is not necessarily to create more programs, but to create additional mechanisms for designing and commissioning responses to locally-defined employment challenges.

Outcomes-based contracting is one option. Unlike mainstream employment services, outcomes-based contracts typically involve multiple stakeholders developing a response around a specific problem, cohort or outcome, rather than specifying a predefined service model. This creates flexibility to tailor responses to local circumstances.

This shared problem-solving approach is often supported by more relational contracting arrangements, including shared objectives, joint governance, information sharing, collaboration mechanisms and flexibility to adapt services and responses over time.

Outcomes-based contracting can also support:

- **Collaborative commissioning:** where Commonwealth, state and territory governments, or multiple agencies, pool resources and align around a shared set of outcomes where benefits accrue across multiple systems.
- **Collaborative delivery models:** including consortium, lead agency and partnership arrangements where coordination between employment providers, training providers, specialist services, community organisations, employers and other actors is required to address a local challenge.

A dedicated outcomes fund, similar to the [Commonwealth Outcomes Fund](#), may be the mechanism to do multiple outcomes-based contracts that respond to local employment challenges across different geographic areas.

The Foyer Central Social Impact Bond is an example of an outcomes-based contract which has been designed around a specific problem and involves multiple governments and delivery partners collaborating to achieve shared outcomes, including employment. See case study below for more information.

Foyer Central Social Impact Bond

- The [Foyer Central Social Impact Bond](#) (SIB) ¹³ provides young people who have been in out-of-home care in New South Wales with stable housing and strengths-based supports, building their capacity to access resources and opportunities, connect with education, training and employment, and make positive decisions.
- Foyer Central is delivered by Uniting NSW.ACT (Uniting) and St George Community Housing (SGCH) in partnership with the NSW Department of Communities and Justice.
- In commissioning the project, the NSW Department of Communities and Justice sought to encourage early intervention, innovation and flexibility in service delivery, partnerships and a focus on outcomes. The NSW Government had also undertaken [analysis of linked datasets](#) to quantify the significant long-term government service usage for people with experience of out-of-home care, reflecting the potential to improve their social outcomes.
- Uniting provide tailored supports and coaching to young people and SGCH provide young people with stable accommodation for up to two years. Uniting also partners with TAFE NSW, specialist support services, community groups, employers and housing providers to support young people while at Foyer Central and prepare them for their transition to independence.
- The Australian Government (Department of Social Services) is supporting Foyer Central through the provision of outcomes data and outcomes-linked funding to the NSW Department of Communities and Justice.
- The Foyer Central SIB is governed by a joint working group, which comprises representatives from Uniting, SGCH, Social Ventures Australia and the NSW Government. The joint working group meets quarterly and monitors the implementation and performance of the program. Sub-working groups are often established and meet more frequently to collaborate on specific issues.
- The joint working group has also been used to agree contractual and operational changes over time, illustrating how governance arrangements can support adaptation and continuous improvement rather than simply monitoring performance.

SVA recommends:

8. That the Australian Government establish additional commissioning mechanisms, such as outcomes-based contracting or an outcomes fund, to allow government and local stakeholders to co-design responses to specific local employment challenges outside of the pre-defined service streams.

¹³ Social Impact Bonds (SIBs) are outcomes-based contracts that use upfront private investment to fund service delivery, with investors repaid by government only if agreed outcomes are achieved.



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