



# Jobs and Skills Roadmap



**Think  
Regionally  
Achieve  
Locally**

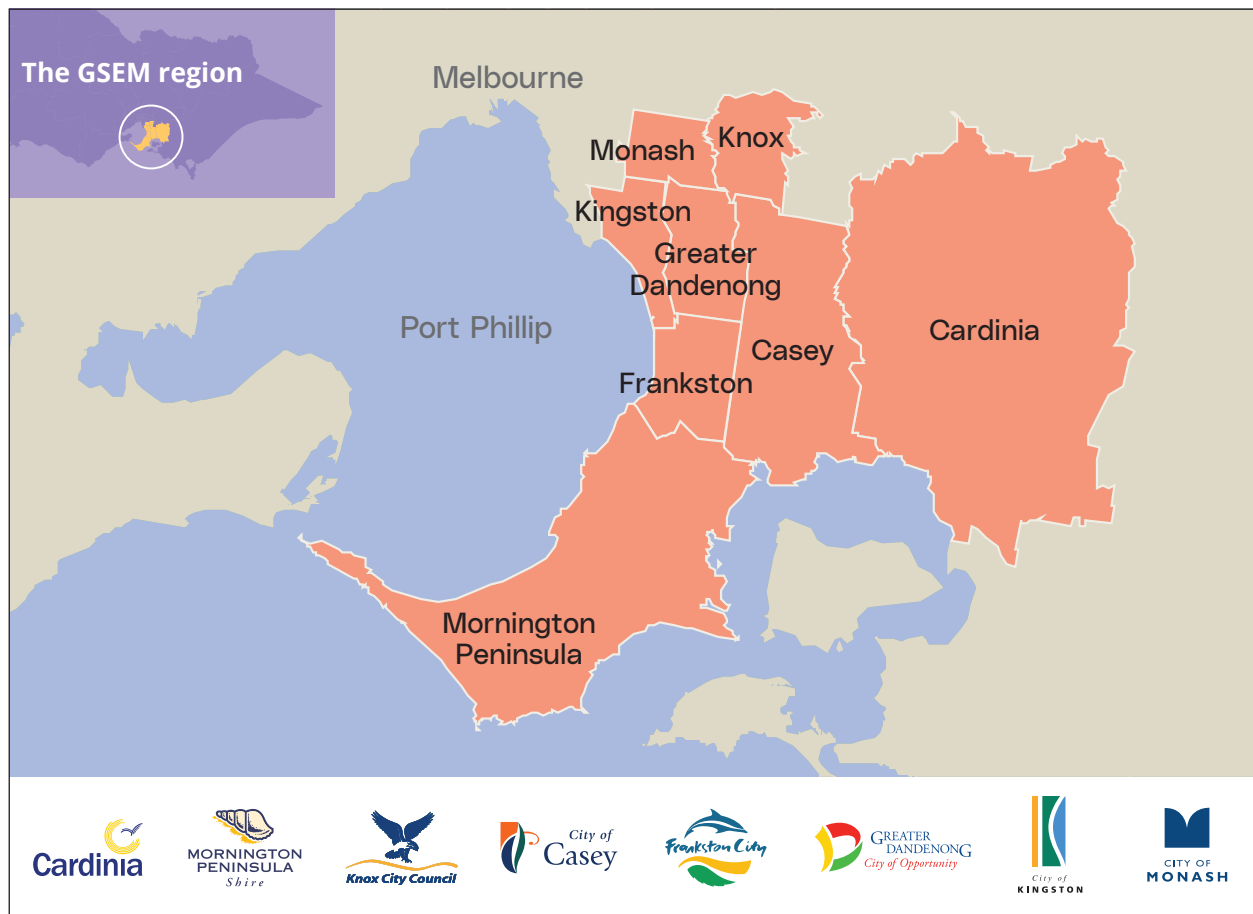
# Overview

**On Friday 3 May 2024 more than 200 industry, community, education, and government leaders from across the Greater South East Melbourne region came together. Their task was to share experiences and knowledge around jobs and skills to develop a roadmap for regional success.**

GSEM is a regional alliance of eight local governments – the shires of Cardinia and Mornington Peninsula, and the cities of Casey, Frankston, Greater Dandenong, Kingston, Knox and Monash, alongside independent Directors James Merlino, Margaret Fitzherbert and Simon McKeon (Chair).

Greater South East Melbourne (GSEM) advocates for jobs, infrastructure, investment, liveability, sustainability and wellbeing for the southeast and everyone who works and lives in the region.

## The Greater South East Melbourne region





Greater South East Melbourne (GSEM) is an important economic region that has seen significant expansion in recent years.



Exploring future opportunities: Simon McKeon, GSEM Chair; Emma Dawson, Executive Director, Per Capita; Honi Walker, CEO, South East Melbourne Manufacturing Alliance (SEMMA), and moderator Michael Rowland.

# Summit insights

The discussion at the Summit was wide-ranging and covered a variety of viewpoints.

The key takeaways were:



## Regional leadership is needed

The only way to secure investment for the region is to present a strong regional voice.



## Greater collaboration

Greater collaboration needs to be fostered within the region and between the region and governments.



## Supporting our people is the key to regional success

We need to build on what and who is already in the region by listening to those with lived experience. There should be a focus on migrants who are being blocked from fully contributing, women who have lower participation and young people who are under-engaged in study and in work.



### **The connection and links**

The connection and links between industry, education and community need to be strengthened and supported.



### **Start earlier and plan for the future**

Addressing skills gaps and overcoming barriers should start at primary school. We need to better understand and plan for our future workforce need.



### **We need to be strategic**

Emerging digital industries, innovation, high value manufacturing, the care sector and the clean economy are key future opportunities the region should be preparing for now.

# Our Roadmap

**For GSEM to grow and to be a place where people from all backgrounds can succeed, we need to have a roadmap that addresses the challenges now and plans for the opportunities of the future.**

## Underlying Principles

Our approach to Jobs and Skills and the development and implementation of this roadmap are built on three key underlying principles.



### Lived Experience and Participatory Design

The experience of the people who live and work in the region should be a core element of the work this roadmap does. We commit to a participatory approach that utilises co-design, and human-centered design to ensure that initiatives are responsive to the needs of all community members. Listening to and incorporating lived experiences and acknowledging diversity are crucial for creating effective and inclusive solutions.



### Equity and Fairness

Equity and fairness must be at the heart of our skills development initiatives. GSEM acknowledges that residents and workers have different backgrounds and perspectives, many facing unique obstacles requiring targeted support.

Inclusivity and equal opportunity are essential for regional prosperity. At its core the roadmap will actively work to remove barriers and create pathways for full participation in education, learning, and employment, focusing on those facing multiple barriers to work and well-being.



### Partnerships for Outcomes

Achieving this roadmap vision requires strong partnerships with government, education, industry and community partners to ensure resources, opportunities and support are allocated to address disparities and promote a level playing field.



Achieving this vision requires strong partnerships with government, education, industry and community partners.







# The GSEM Jobs and Skills Summit



**The Greater South East Melbourne (GSEM) Jobs and Skills Summit was held on 3 May 2024.**

More than 200 attendees were Welcomed to Country by the Bunurong Land Council, before discussing a range of topics and solutions outlined in this document.

Speakers included industry, community, manufacturing, and political leaders, along with people with lived experience.







# Our Vision for Change

## Short Term



### Foster Regional Leadership and Collaboration

Through targeted support, partnerships can be built and existing links strengthened to create a mutually beneficial environment for sustainable growth for industry and employment pathways for people across the region.

#### We are calling for:

- Funding GSEM to continue the Jobs and Skills Working Group to implement this roadmap and be a collaborative voice for the region on this key issue. The group would be responsible for:
  - Supporting the creation of a formal collaboration framework between local, state, and federal governments, industry, education providers, lived experience representatives, and community organisations.
  - Development of an implementation plan for this roadmap and facilitating regular meetings and workshops to maintain momentum, track progress and report back to GSEM and the region.

Right: Nathan Carolus, Youth Adviser, Brotherhood of St Laurence; Nikita Rodgers, Holmesglen student with lived experience of Autism; Mel Godinho Flores, Foundation Coordinator, MEGT Australia; and Rebecca Packer, Bachelor of Social Work student who lives with a disability.



### Strengthen Workforce Planning and Knowledge Sharing

With more than 500,000 jobs and 83,500 businesses, Greater South East Melbourne is a key economic region for Australia. Until now the approach to industry growth and jobs and skills in the region has been piecemeal.

There is a need to improve our understanding of the evolving landscape and identify current and future workforce and skills needs for the region. By developing a strategic regional approach to skills development, we ensure that our community is prepared for the opportunities of tomorrow.

#### We are calling for:

- Funding to complete a regional jobs and skills strategy that fully evaluates the skills in the region, and understands the gaps, the challenges, and the opportunities.







## Address Immediate Barriers to Employment

More needs to be done to support people to achieve their potential.

Many people coming to our region as refugees or migrants are unable to use their skills because the current system doesn't work. There are already existing programs that should be continued and expanded.

### We are calling for:

- Immediate funding for education providers in the region to provide targeted foundation education programs for migrants and other disadvantaged groups.
- Work with GSEM and other representatives to simplify and expedite the process for recognising overseas qualifications.
- The formation of a regional task force with representation from lived experience representatives, local education institutions, community organisations and key providers to develop a strategy to reform English competency testing to better accommodate migrants and refugees.
- An expansion of the programs that support students to earn while learning, removing barriers to providing hands-on experience. Extend the current payment for the placement scheme to a broader range of courses and career pathways and increase the payment to a liveable wage.



## Support Regional Initiatives

There are many initiatives and ideas in the region that need resourcing to continue contributing to growth.

We urge an approach that ensures that initiatives with a record of success have the financial support they need to make a lasting impact.

### We are calling for:

- The continuation and expansions of the successful GameChange program and the Dandenong Employment Hub pilot to be expanded across the region with the establishment of employment hubs in each sub-region.
- Increased resources to expand the Wellsprings for Women 'Beyond the Basics' program – which provides advanced literacy program for migrant and refugee women – to support women facing multiple disadvantages.
- Ongoing funding for the Young Mothers Transition Program, the only program of its type in Australia, which supports young mothers with case management to overcome barriers and access education, training, and employment. This program should be replicated and expanded rather than wound up.
- Support for the Expanding Horizons program, which currently supports Monash based businesses to employ people with disabilities.



# Our Vision for Change

## Medium Term



### Enhance Educational Pathways and Early Promotion

Our commitment to education and skills pathways is unwavering. By forging strategic partnerships, we need to facilitate accessible and tailored education opportunities, ensuring that individuals can develop the skills required for the jobs of today and tomorrow.

#### We are calling for:

- Government to work with the region to identify existing resources and consolidate them into a regional platform for job opportunities, training programs and educational resources.
- Initiatives to highlight the workforce opportunities in primary and secondary skills. These resources will be tailored to the region, working with industry and community to ensure they address the needs of the region.
- Explore opportunities to expand local TAFE and University offerings to accommodate population and employment growth in the Casey and Cardinia municipalities.



### Support Emerging Industries and Innovation

Cultivating innovation is also a priority for the region. Support for emerging industries, providing the resources necessary for their growth, especially ensuring there is a well-trained local workforce to draw from. By cultivating new sectors, we contribute to a diverse range of job opportunities for the region and secure the economic future of the South East.

Work needs to be done to identify and prioritise key industry sectors for growth in the GSEM region in the workforce strategy, particularly digital technology, innovation, and the green economy.

#### We are calling for:

- The development of a regional industry policy, developed by a GSEM industry advisory group representing all education providers, key industries, digital, care sector, manufacturing, green economy.
- Innovation and start-up activities in the region to drive regional economic growth. Provide specific funding to establish an innovation hub in the region.



Manufacturing Skill Demands and Trends: Todd Hartley (Managing Director, Hilton Manufacturing), Hacia Atherton (Founder & CEO, Empowered Women in Trades, EWIT), Couteney Munn (Project Officer – Women in Manufacturing, AMWU Victorian Branch); and Daniel Prins (Chisholm, Project Manager – Jobs Victoria Engineering Project).



## Promote Industry-Education-Community Connections

By extending our efforts across the entire region and helping to establish strong connections we will be able to bridge gaps and think regionally to ensure that the benefits of all the initiatives are accessible at a local level.

Work with regional education providers and industry to develop targeted training programs aligned with these emerging sectors.

### We are calling for:

- Funding to expand the success of Skills and Jobs Networks already in operating in Dandenong, Casey-Cardinia, and Frankston Mornington Peninsula. These groups should be expanded across the GSEM region and include more employer and industry representation to work on regional projects and enhance collaboration on specific employment issues.
- Support for education providers to have the resources they need to ensure the sector has the capacity to deliver.

# Our Vision for Change

## Long Term



### Sustain and Scale Regional Growth

A comprehensive regional industry policy that sets the framework for sustainable growth, jobs and skill pathways is needed. By developing an industry policy that specifically aligns and responds to regional needs, we will create an environment for businesses to thrive and communities to prosper.

#### We are calling for:

- Long-term investment and funding to support sustained regional development. An integrated plan to attract investment in projects that have regional benefit.
- Support for key regional priorities such as the development of a future South East airport and the extension of Thompsons road.



### Promote Inclusive Growth and Reduce Disadvantage

We believe that at the heart of our region's success is our incredibly diverse population. The GSEM region has people from a wide variety of backgrounds and abilities. We need to do more to empower the people in our community so they can access the opportunities we are seeking to foster.

In particular, we acknowledge that not everyone has the same starting point in life. Programs, initiatives and pathways should acknowledge this and be created and implemented in a way that promotes access and incorporates the views of people with lived experience.

#### We are calling for:

- Governments to advocate for and implement policies that ensure growth is inclusive, particularly for immigrants and disadvantaged groups.
- The application of an intersectional gender lens to all skills and workforce development policies.
- Support for equitable education pathways to ensure that all individuals, regardless of socio-economic status, have access to quality higher education and training opportunities.





Conor Mullan from Chisholm Institute presents on education and industry.



## Strengthening Local and Global Competitiveness

Manufacturing is a key pillar of the region's economic success. The south east produces \$85 billion in Gross Regional Product and is one of Australia's largest manufacturing regions, with more manufacturing jobs than greater Adelaide and Western Sydney.

The GSEM region has an important part to play in securing manufacturing sovereignty.

Melbourne's southeast is one of Australia's largest manufacturing regions, with more manufacturing jobs than greater Adelaide and Western Sydney.

### We are calling for:

- Support for existing industries to ensure that established sectors receive the assistance needed to adapt, innovate, and remain at the forefront of the evolving market.



**For more information**

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The GSEM Jobs and Skills Roadmap  
was developed by The Agenda Group.  
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