Destination Unknown?

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Brotherhood of St Laurence
Working for an Australia free of poverty

Let's make change that lasts

Acknowledgment of Country

The Brotherhood of St. Laurence acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waterways on which our organisation operates. We pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders past and present.

Our vision

Working for an Australia free of poverty

Our approach

Research · Practice · Policy

About the Brotherhood of St. Laurence

Over 60 programs and services delivering support needed for people to thrive

Early childhood and family support · Getting an education · Getting a job · Disability services · Saving and managing money · Aged care services

A team working Australia-wide to be a strong voice for people experiencing disadvantage
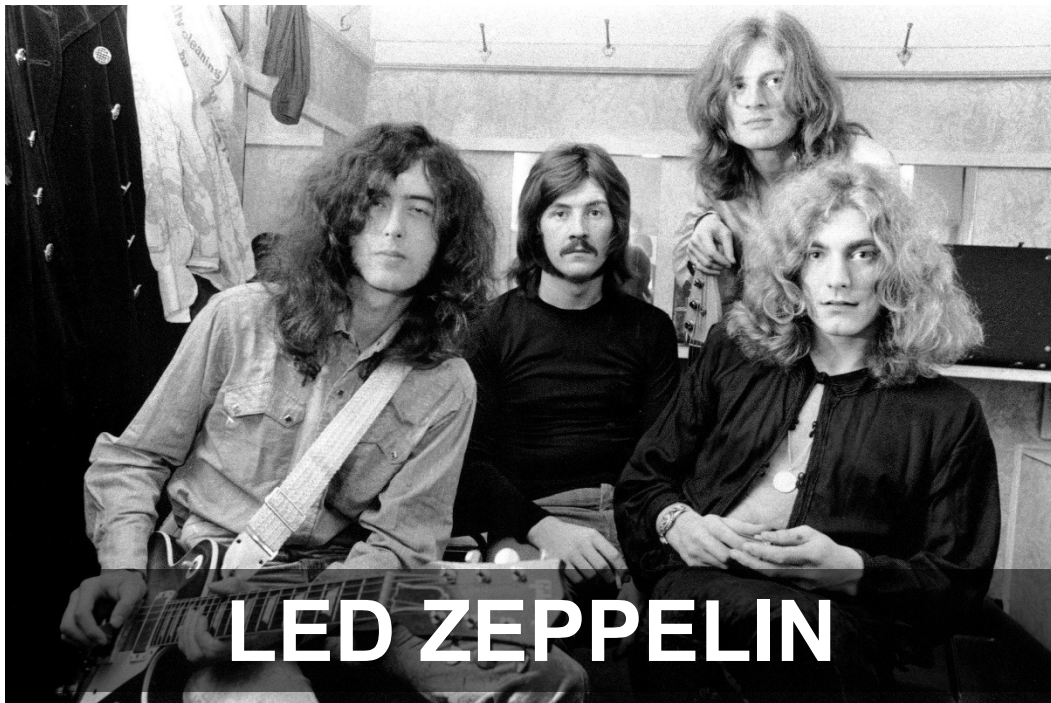
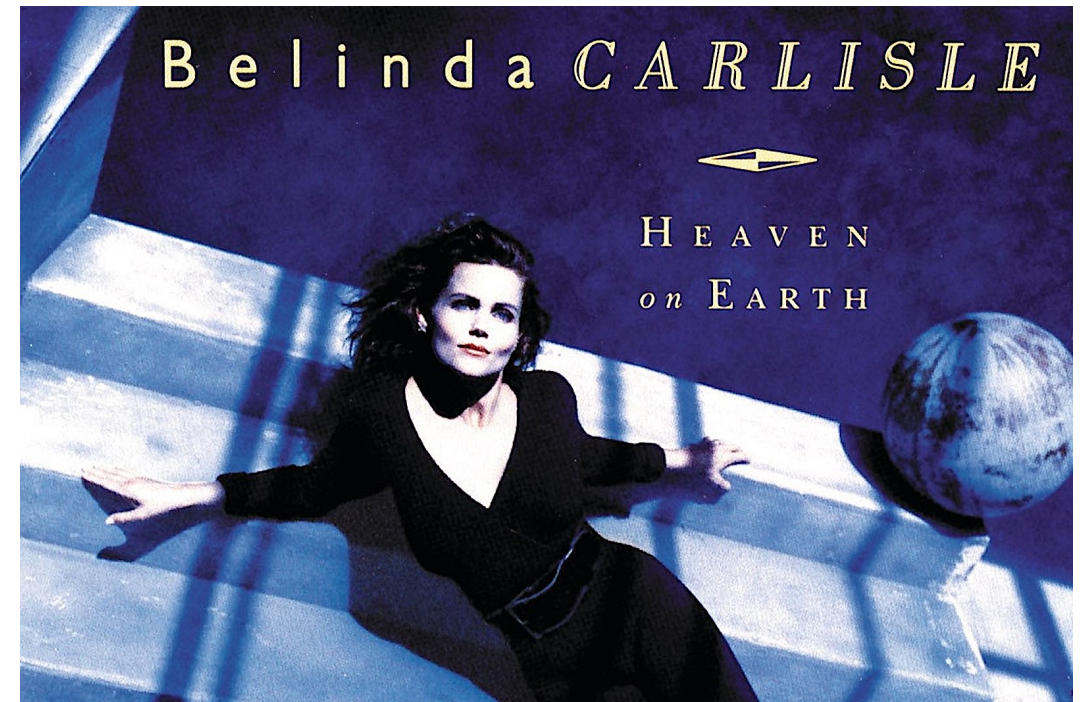1,500+ staff · 1,200+ volunteers · 89 locations · 163,000 people supported during FY19–22

One of Australia's largest social policy and research centres outside of government

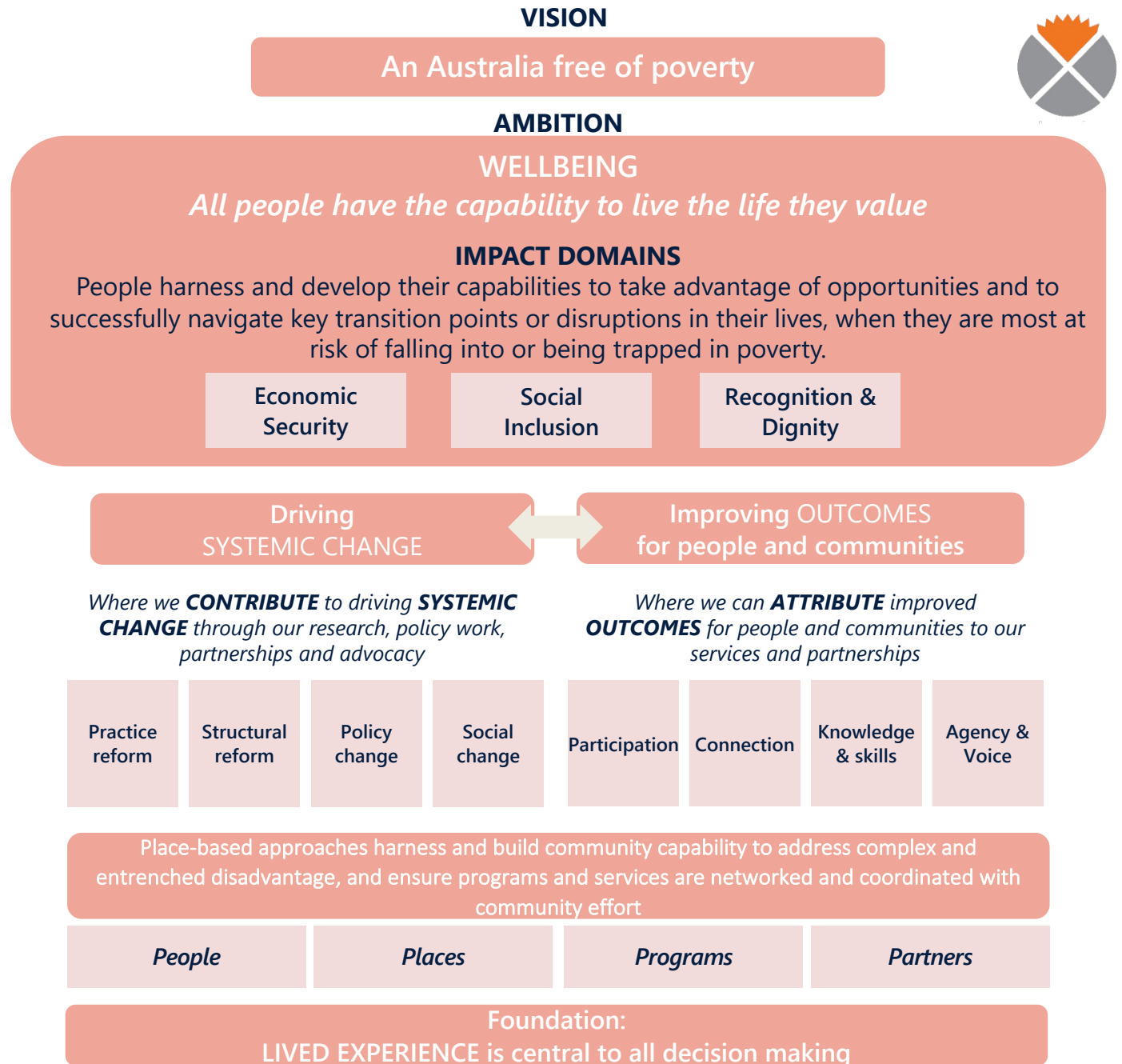# Destination Unknown?

Stairway to Heaven...

...or Heaven is a Place on Earth?

LED ZEPPELIN

The BSL Impact Framework: A wellbeing approach

The BSL Impact Framework articulates our **organisation-wide impact narrative** and our approach to monitoring and understanding progress towards our vision

It draws on the **Capabilities Approach** to understand poverty as the deprivation of **real opportunities** to do and be what **one values**, rather than solely focusing on the resources people can mobilise

VISION

An Australia free of poverty

AMBITION

WELLBEING
All people have the capability to live the life they value

IMPACT DOMAINS
People harness and develop their capabilities to take advantage of opportunities and to successfully navigate key transition points or disruptions in their lives, when they are most at risk of falling into or being trapped in poverty.

Economic Security	Social Inclusion	Recognition & Dignity

Driving SYSTEMIC CHANGE	Improving OUTCOMES for people and communities

Where we CONTRIBUTE to driving SYSTEMIC CHANGE through our research, policy work, partnerships and advocacy

Where we can ATTRIBUTE improved OUTCOMES for people and communities to our services and partnerships

Practice reform	Structural reform	Policy change	Social change	Participation	Connection	Knowledge & skills	Agency & Voice

Place-based approaches harness and build community capability to address complex and entrenched disadvantage, and ensure programs and services are networked and coordinated with community effort

People	Places	Programs	Partners

Foundation:
LIVED EXPERIENCE is central to all decision making

Our Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Guiding Principles challenge us to promote and apply ethical monitoring and evaluation practices that expand the capability of our service participants and staff

1. **Measure what matters.**
   There is a clear rationale for all data that is collected. Measures focus on what people have reason to value, as well as service effectiveness.

2. **Account for diversity.**
   Our measures are sensitive to the unique attributes, abilities, and aspirations of individuals.

3. **Put it in context.**
   The circumstances individuals are situated within contextualise our findings and reveal the factors that enable or inhibit individual outcomes.

4. **Understand how change occurs.**
   Our monitoring is accompanied by an effort to understand how and why change has / has not occurred, in what circumstances, and for whom?'.

5. **Be transparent.**
   We measure to evidence and improve our services, not legitimise them. We know what can be inferred from our data and ensure they're not distorted.
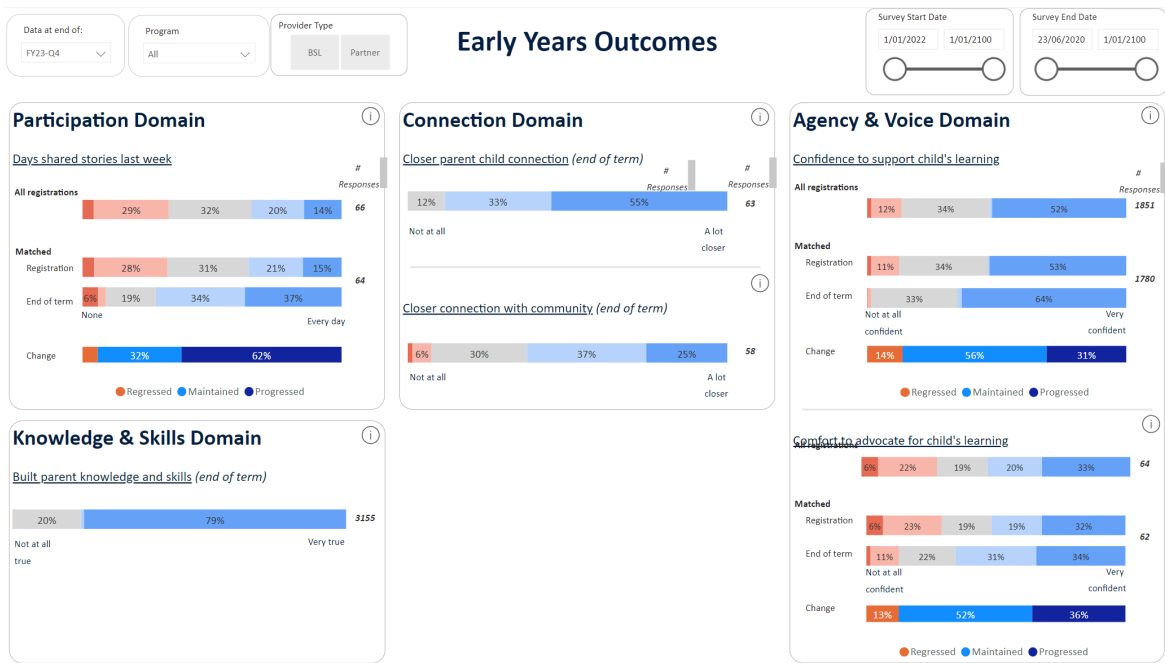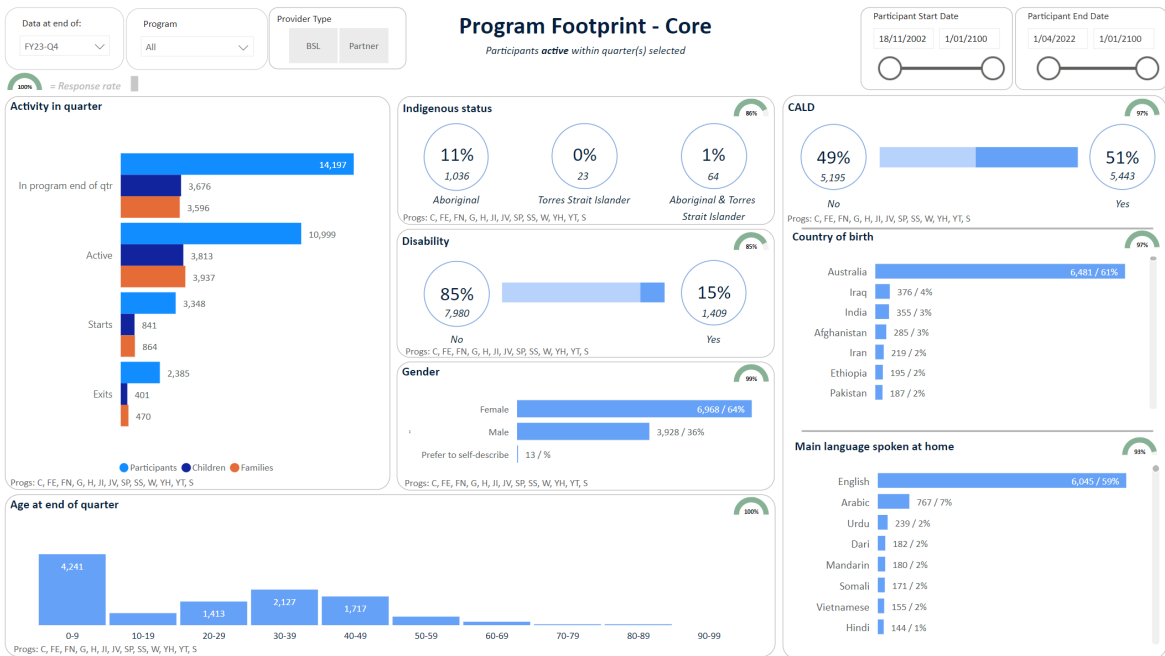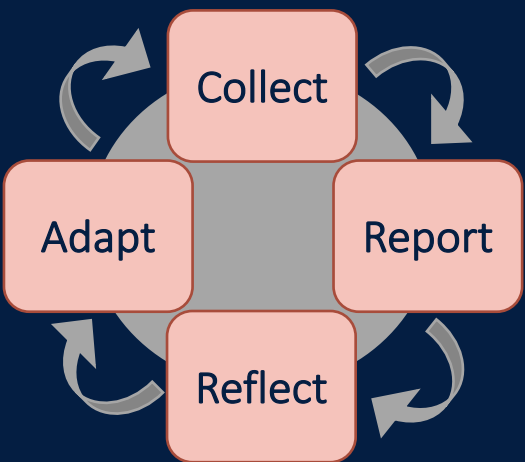
6. **Include and empower.**
   We seek the views and expertise of service users and relevant stakeholders to inform what we measure and how and guide our interpretation of findings.

7. **Act through shared reflection.**
   We engage in shared reflective practices to make sense of data, refine our understanding and drive concerted action.

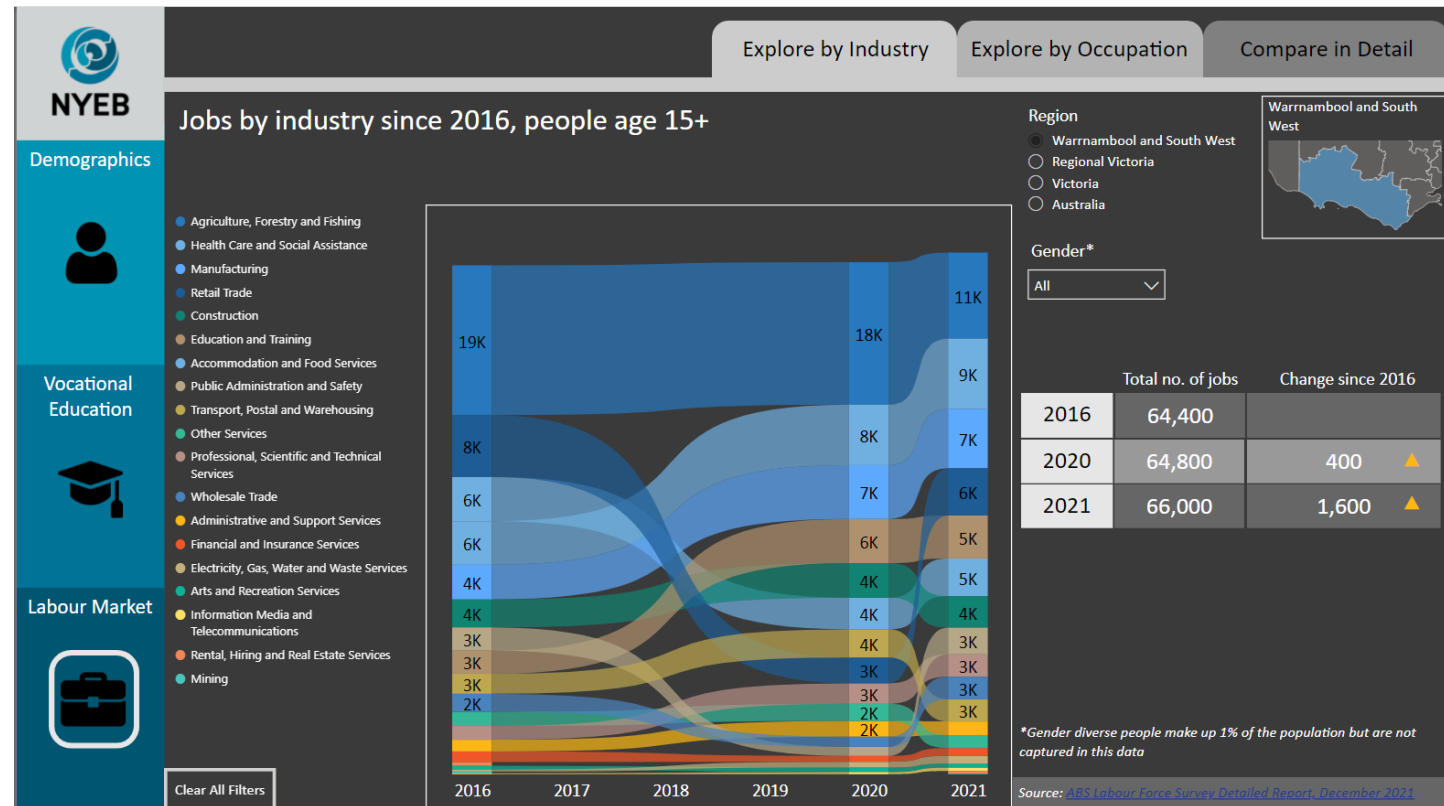# Regular participant outcomes monitoring to learn, reflect and adapt

Longitudinal research studies to understand patterns over time

e.g. Life Chances study

Place and cohort-specific **data tools** to enable and drive strategic action and innovation

e.g. Youth Opportunity Compass

The ask: legislated measures for poverty reduction

"The Committee recommends Australia legislate measures on economic inclusion and poverty reduction and establish a multidimensional poverty index.

This should be done after the release of the Measuring What Matters statement and specify the process to agree targets and track progress, supported by a data, evidence and consultation strategy."

Interim Economic Inclusion Advisory Committee, May 2023

Lessons from NZ: Child Poverty Reduction Act (2018)

Measures

- Low income before housing costs (below 50% of median income, moving line)

- Low income after housing costs (below 50% of median income, fixed line)

- A measure of material hardship

- A measure of poverty persistence (currently being developed)

+ 6 supplementary measures to allow further international comparison and monitor trends

Targets

- 3-year & 10-year targets

- Overarching goal to halve child poverty and reduce it to 10% of children over 10 years (by 2028)

Data

- Annual Household Economic Survey (Stats NZ)

Progress

- On track.

The blue sky destination

- **We measure what matters:**

  - Legislated measures for poverty reduction to define a clear national goal, and the data to support this (HILDA 2.0?)

  - A Capabilities Approach to measuring outcomes, including measures for agency and wellbeing

- **A culture of learning and engaging with data:**

  - Feedback loops use data to inform both practice and policy

  - People with lived experience contribute to sense-making

  - Genuine pursuit of data sovereignty

Measuring What Matters

for all Australians

Inclusion, fairness and equity

Healthy
A society in which people feel well and are in good physical and mental health, can access services when they need, and have the information they require to take action to improve their health.

Secure
A society where people live peacefully, feel safe, have financial security and access to housing.

Sustainable
A society that sustainably uses natural and financial resources, protects and repairs the environment and builds resilience to combat challenges.

Cohesive
A society that supports connections with family, friends and the community, values diversity, promotes belonging and culture.

Prosperous
A society that has a dynamic, strong economy, invests in people's skills and education, and provides broad opportunities for employment and well-paid, secure jobs.

The Youth Opportunity Compass

THE PROBLEM	TESTING A SOLUTION	LESSONS & OPPORTUNITIES

A need for evidence driven responses to youth unemployment, under-employment, insecurity and immobility in the labour market

Government data sources in their current form are not sufficient for robust, place based decision making
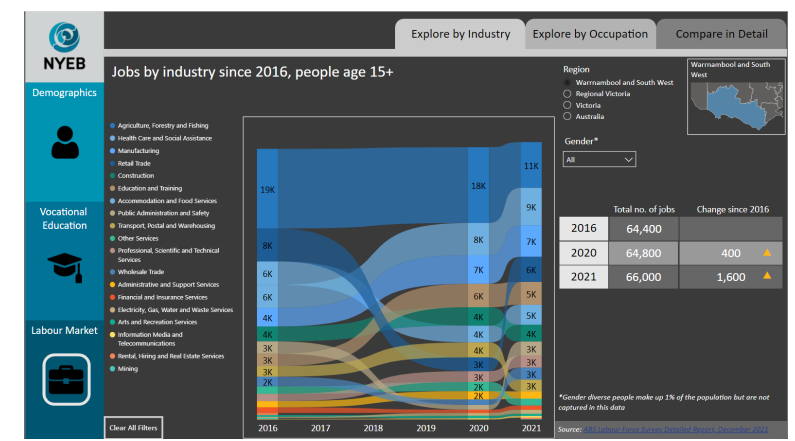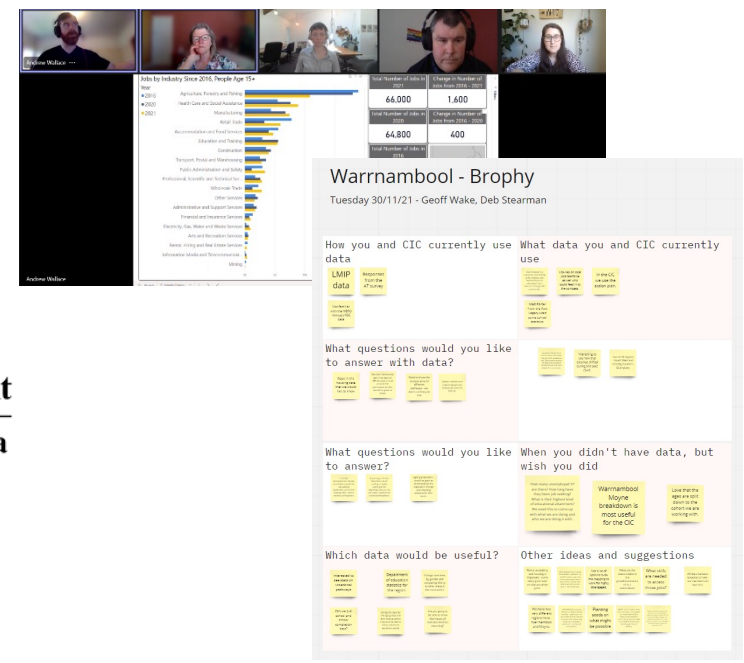
A transformable, place and cohort specific data-tool in an accessible and easy use to dashboard format

Co-design with local experts is a core component of our adaptive approach to building the Compass

Expertise held by community members can restore context to systemic data
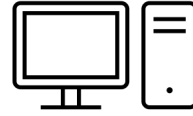
Expert data facilitation is needed to build data capability, literacy and ownership

Place and cohort specific data can enable and drive strategic action and innovation in youth employment

Complex **evaluations** combining a variety of data sources

e.g. Developmental and outcomes evaluations of the Inclusive Pathways to Employment program
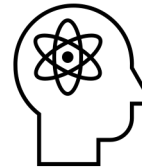
Program operational and activity data

Demographics and objective outcomes (e.g. employment status) → Comparison with published aggregate figures

Subjective and personal development outcomes

Qualitative interviews and focus groups

Sense-making workshops