

EVALUATION OF THE FINANCIAL WELLBEING PROGRAM FOR JOBS-FOCUSED SOCIAL ENTERPRISES

Year 1 report summary (Feb 2023 – Feb 2024)



Original report produced by CSI Swinburne



ecstra 

In 2023, White Box Enterprises launched a co-designed financial wellbeing program in collaboration with selected social enterprises to enhance the vital wrap-around support these businesses provide.

The three-year program, funded by Ecstra Foundation, aims to equip jobs-focused social enterprises to embed financial wellbeing education practices; and help their employees increase their confidence, skills, attitudes and behaviours when it comes to money matters.


The program is initially being delivered to the social enterprises that are participating in the White Box Payment By Outcomes Trial, with plans to expand this offering to other jobs-focused social enterprises across Australia before the project concludes. CSI Swinburne has been engaged to evaluate the program.

Below are some of the key takeaways from Year 1.



What White Box delivered in Year 1

3 co-design workshop sessions that included preplanning, design, and synthesis for Fruit2Work involving staff with lived experience.

Training to staff in a 'train the trainer' model for Fruit2Work. 

3 co-design workshop sessions that included preplanning, design, and synthesis with staff for ReBuild and included lived experience contributions.

2 training workshops to people with lived experience for ReBuild (18 total) – six staff also attended the workshops in a 'shadowing the trainer' model.

What was achieved

All of the desired effects for social enterprises – integration with existing support, personalisation, and capability and skills – were delivered in Year 1.

It was effective in **delivering programs** that are tailored and well-suited to the needs of each enterprise.

SE staff declared clarity, readiness and **confidence** to deliver the program to their employees.

83% of employees said they could understand the content well and found examples relevant for their situations.



There was also an unexpected positive effect of the program:

It was immediately helpful for social enterprises in supporting employees faced with challenging situations.

“So we had one person in particular when we were doing the training and we spoke about fines and finance plans, payment plans, etc. And he had a lot of fines that he’d just been ignoring because he had too much anxiety, and after the training, he got some support from myself to phone the fines agency, and ... we actually managed to get [thousands of dollars] worth of fines wiped, as a result of doing the training.”*

– Program participant

*The total amount of fines wiped was verified at \$9,000.

For the employees:

83% said their **knowledge** and understanding of multiple money matters had **improved**.

83% said their **confidence** they could manage their money well **“got a lot better”**.

Interviews and focus groups identified immediate changes in attitudes to money and in taking **positive financial decisions** following training participation.



The keys to success

Co-design

Four key success factors were identified for the co-design stage:

Excellent foundational base content provided at the start of the co-design process

Including diverse views and **incorporating** lived experience to tailor the design

The **quality** of facilitation of the co-design process

Adequate **time frame** provided for the co-design.

"[The facilitator] worked really hard to understand the company, because all the different social enterprise businesses are different in who the work with. One company she was working with was very much young people and they're very digital savvy and it's just a total opposite, but she found this way of, understanding us at the absolute core of who we are and what we do and what our purpose is and who are the people that we are going to be working [with for] this program, our staff, and she seemed almost like she worked here."

– Program participant

Delivery

The program was delivered in two ways: a train the trainer mode at Fruit2Work; and directly to employees at ReBuild, with staff observing. There were four key success factors:

Agility and flexibility

Delivering with the right pace, language, reflection and application

Maintaining engagement

Providing the right support

"So, the fact that people are using smartphones [...] The [interest in] this was quite key as well, especially for young people, not just for their prime mode of communication but their motivation to [...] learn. The more we were able to use smartphones to access tools and calculators, the more they were engaged."