

# VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCES FUNDING TO HELP TRANS WOMEN OVERCOME EMPLOYMENT BARRIERS

Fitted for Work's Transgender Women Program will provide services including mentoring, outfitting services, work readiness workshops, resume support and networkin

LAURENCE BARBER — [MARCH 28, 2019](#)



Minister for Equality Martin Foley, Transgender Liaison Officer Michelle Sheppard, and Fitted for Work CEO Donna de Zwart. Image: supplied.

The Victorian government has announced \$227,000 in funding for a pilot program to help transgender women and gender diverse jobseekers overcome barriers to employment.

Fitted for Work, a non-profit organisation which helps women with presentation, resumes and interview skills, will use the funding to establish its pilot Transgender Women Program.

The program will provide 200 trans women and gender diverse people seeking employment with tailored support in seeking work or transitioning while at work.

Trans people face multiple barriers to participation in employment and can also face difficulties gaining recognition for past employment or qualifications as a result of changing their name or gender.

The pilot program is designed to help participants improve or maintain their economic security while seeking work, or during or following transition.

The Andrews government will fund the program through the Jobs Victoria Innovation Fund.

Fitted for Work has helped more than 35,000 women to secure and hold employment over the past decade and a half.

The Transgender Women Program was developed in consultation with the Commissioner for Gender and Sexuality, Ro Allen, and will provide services including mentoring, outfitting services, work readiness workshops, resume support and networking.

It will also connect participants to health, legal and financial support, and seek to strengthen relationships between trans service providers and employers.

Fitted for Work's Transgender Liaison Officer is Michelle Sheppard, who herself went through the Fitted for Work program before finding employment with the organisation itself.

In 2017, [Star Observer highlighted Sheppard's work seeking to improve employment opportunities for LGBTI people as one of our Entrepreneurs to Watch.](#)

"It takes courage to live openly and authentically and Fitted for Work's pilot Transgender Women Program is another step to a better, more inclusive Victoria," said Minister for Equality Martin Foley.

"This funding will help overcome barriers to employment for transgender women and gender diverse jobseekers and assist them to find good, stable employment."

**Further reading:** ['How to respect trans people in the workplace'](#)

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