# Supported Employment Inquiry

## **Read in Standard English:**

**Next Steps in Supported Employment Inquiry**

**Background**

In September 2023, the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability (the Royal Commission) handed down its final report, which included several recommendations related to employment for people with disability. In examining the recommendations, the Australian government has set up an Inquiry to find out more about Australian Disability Enterprises (ADEs) or supported employment for people with disabilities, and to explore ideas about what should happen with this sector.

There are many views regarding supported employment for people with disabilities. While some people believe supported employment should be phased out and more employment opportunities be available within open employment settings, others disagree, believing that such settings offer opportunities for people with high support needs to participate in the economy while receiving individualised assistance. The Royal Commission drew significant attention to supported employment settings, and the wages, conditions and risks prevailing for workers in these settings. The Commission’s finding noted that workers in supported employment are paid below the minimum wage of employees in open employment, and that workers are also isolated from the rest of the community.

The Australian government has produced a discussion paper describing current services for people with disability with high support needs in relation to employment, and issues they are considering in their Inquiry into the future of supported employment. The discussion paper is available in word and pdf, easy read and Auslan from the submission website:

[Next Steps in Supported Employment: Consultation on the way forward](https://engage.dss.gov.au/next-steps-in-supported-employment-consultation-on-the-way-forward/)

Women with Disabilities Victoria (WDV) will be making a submission to this Inquiry, specifically on issues affecting women and gender diverse people with high support needs in supported employment, and how their employment outcomes can be improved.

**How You Can Help**

We would love to hear your experiences of supported employment, or your thoughts and ideas about how employment for women and gender diverse people with high support needs can be improved. You can do this in two ways:

1 Participate in an online focus group by registering at:

Details

Date: Wednesday 7 May 2025

Time: 11:30 AM to 12:30 PM

Location: Online via zoom

2 Complete an online survey at:

Please complete your responses to this survey by Friday 9 May 2025.

You are invited to respond to questions you feel most comfortable answering, providing as much detail as you feel comfortable sharing.

**Support and Assistance**

We recognise that thinking and writing about experiences of supported employment may be difficult and uncomfortable, and want to make this process as easy as possible. Participation in the focus group or survey is optional, and you do not have to answer any questions you do not want to. If responding to the below questions raises feelings of distress for you, you may wish to seek support from Life-Line (131114), or 1800 Respect (1800 737 732) if your situation involves current or past experiences of violence or abuse.

If you need help with a question or you would like assistance to complete the survey, please contact **Helen Freris, WDV Advocacy Lead** on 03 9286 7821 or helen.freris@wdv.org.au.

**What Happens Next?**

Your responses to the survey or focus group questions are anonymous. They will be stored on WDV’s secure electronic filing system and will only be accessed and reviewed by WDV staff. All survey and focus group responses will be collated and a summary prepared, thematically outlining what participants have shared. All material used in the submission will be de-identified to maintain confidentiality. WDV’s submission will be made available on our website and provided to the Inquiry. If you have concerns about how your survey or focus group responses will be used, please contact Helen Freris via the telephone number or email address given above.

Thank you again for your participation.

(Insert link to survey)