

# Map for Impact

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## BACKGROUND

Social enterprises are organisations led by an economic, social, cultural, or environmental mission consistent with a public or community benefit. In Victoria, such organisations play an important role in delivering services, fostering economic participation, and contributing to social innovation. Despite growing public and policy interest, little is known about the characteristics and impacts of social enterprises in Victoria. *Map for Impact* presents the first comprehensive attempt to map the scope and contributions of Victorian social enterprises. This project was commissioned as part of the Social Enterprise Strategy implemented by the Victorian Government in 2017. Its aims were firstly to identify, locate, and characterise the population of social enterprises and key intermediaries in Victoria; and, secondly, to value the social and economic impacts of these enterprises, and identify their scope for raising employment participation and job creation. Through a process of desktop research and online data mining, the project identified 3,500 Victorian social enterprises, which were plotted on an interactive online map hosted at: [www.mapforimpact.com.au](http://www.mapforimpact.com.au).

## KEY FINDINGS

**Breadth and Diversity** – Victoria's 3,500 social enterprises are diverse in social mission, location, size, and age. Victorian social enterprises operate across all industrial sectors, with **69%** providing services for a fee. Most Victorian enterprises operate as not-for-profit, and **73%** are small businesses. Almost half of Victorian social enterprises are younger than **10 years**, though social enterprise is a mature field overall.

**Contributing to a Diverse and Inclusive Economy** – Victorian social enterprises contribute **\$5.2 billion** to the Victorian economy, with **82%** of trade taking place within Victoria. Many Victorian social enterprises aim to address employment barriers, with over **30%** of workers coming from marginalised groups. Victorian enterprises have created **60,000** employment opportunities and **42,000** volunteer positions in Victoria.

**Delivering Social Impact** – Social enterprises are diverse in their social missions, and impact has shown to differ by location. However, **84%** of social enterprises aim to make local impacts in Victoria through employment, community engagement, provision of goods and services, and the reinvestment of income. Impact is measured by **62%** of social enterprises.

**Opportunities for Growth** – Social procurement was commonly identified as a way for social enterprises to grow and create impact, with **41%** of enterprises bidding for a government contract. In contrast, undercapitalisation and lack of resources for marketing and capacity building limit growth and **24%** of enterprises report being financially unsustainable.

## IMPLICATIONS

*Map for Impact* highlights social enterprise as a mechanism for more inclusive and diverse economic development. Victorian social enterprises would benefit from stage-relevant interventions such as policy support and government funding, philanthropic support, and impact measurement tools and training.



**Figure 1:** Map of Victoria's identified social enterprises by location. Yellow dots represent a single location, whereas orange and red dots represent overlapping locations.

This brief summarises the work done in *Map for Impact: The Victorian Social Enterprise Mapping Project 2017*, which is available at: <http://apo.org.au/node/119606>. The CSI Swinburne Research Brief series is a publication of Swinburne University of Technology's Centre for Social Impact Swinburne. These publications are free for public reproduction with proper attribution.