



Australian Government  
Department of Employment



Celebrating the NEIS Programme

Thirty years of Success Stories



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Thirty Years of Success Stories



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# INTRODUCTION

Since July 1985 the one constant in the government's employment services landscape has been the New Enterprise Incentive Scheme (NEIS).

NEIS was officially launched as a pilot scheme by the then Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations, the Hon Ralph Willis AO. At the 1985 launch, the then Minister said that the joint New Business Enterprise Scheme (now known as NEIS) was innovative in its provision of both start-up capital and income support, and that it will 'provide unemployed people with comprehensive support for their entrepreneurial schemes which would otherwise not be available.'

One factor in the Scheme's continued success has been the expertise and experience that contracted NEIS providers have provided over a sustained period. Many of the NEIS providers have also delivered other Australian, State or Territory government small business-related programmes and are long term Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) for the delivery of NEIS small business training.

The variety of businesses that have been established through NEIS over the years has been impressive, from nutrition education to a live music venue that has hosted a raft of international acts. This book showcases a range of amazingly successful businesses that have been started with the help of NEIS over the last 30 years.

We hope you enjoy

**NEIS Team 2015**



Australians are well known for their 'have a go' attitude. I commend those NEIS participants who, over the past 30 years that the programme has been running have 'had a go' at starting their own small business. Some of these businesses are outlined in this fantastic compilation of success stories.

The NEIS is a great way to ensure those who are out of work can transition into a situation whereby they not only gainfully employ themselves but are also creating jobs for fellow Australians. The NEIS provides up to 6,300 opportunities a year for Australian's to pursue self-employment as an alternative to paid employment.

Australians are famous for our ingenuity and we should support programmes that harness the innovative ideas of the future that without adequate support could remain unrealised.

The Coalition Government firmly believes that small business is the engine room of our economy and is vital to a strong and prosperous nation.

The NEIS has assisted over 150,000 people establish their own small businesses and has been integral in fostering enterprise.

I look forward to watching NEIS participants continue to thrive and embrace further opportunities over the coming years.

Yours sincerely,

**Senator the Hon Michaelia Cash**

**Minister for Employment**

Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for the Public Service

Minister for Women



**A MESSAGE FROM THE  
MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT**



'I am a strong supporter of the NEIS programme, with its long history of helping people who have had the courage to put fresh ideas into practice and to turn their dreams of establishing a small business into a reality.

I hope you enjoy reading their stories.'

**Renée Leon**

Secretary  
Department of Employment





# NEW ENTERPRISE INCENTIVE SCHEME SUCCESS STORIES



# UPSWITCH

MICHAEL HANLEY

MICHAEL HANLEY'S BUSINESS, UPSWITCH, CREATES UNIQUE HANDMADE LAMPS USING UPCYCLED MATERIALS. UPSWITCH RE-INVENTS OLD TREASURES INTO FUNCTIONAL ART PIECES THAT INSPIRE AND ILLUMINATE.



With an emphasis on industrial and retro design, Upswitch brings forgotten objects back to life with elegance and charm.

Michael uses old science equipment, cameras, salvaged copper or timber and anything in between.

'I was inspired, while traveling through Germany in 2014, by the many artists' markets. In particular I admired the artisans who'd perfected their craft—doing what they loved—creating re-purposed and bespoke objects,' Michael said.

'With a strong desire to get more hands-on and creative when I returned to Australia, I decided to combine my love of collecting junk and making things.

After years of practice rummaging through markets, op-shops, garage sales and hard rubbish, I developed a knack for sourcing just about any old thingamebob you can think of,' said Michael.

'In this modern throw-away society, I believe that people deserve better quality goods than what most mass production manufacturers are offering. My aim is to create sustainable solutions that will survive the test of time,' he added.

In 2015, Michael's friends recommended the NEIS programme to him and he decided to give it a try. 'I never could have imagined the amount of knowledge, support, and experience it would give me to help get my wild business idea off the ground. Not only have I gained essential business and marketing skills, but I have also been given so many great opportunities through my NEIS provider, mentor and the networks of friends made during the course,' he said.

**JOCLYN MCCAHERN FLIPPED AT THE NEWS SHE HAD WON THE 2007 NATIONAL NEIS ASSOCIATION'S AWARD FOR BEST NEW BUSINESS. ESTABLISHED IN 2006 FLIPP MANAGEMENT IS A REPRESENTATIVE AGENCY THAT PARTNERS WITH PHOTOGRAPHERS, MOTION CONTENT DIRECTORS AND STYLISTS IN THE GENRE OF LIFESTYLE ADVERTISING.**

It was born out of Joclyn's desire to utilise her strongest professional and personal skills with subject matter that was of great interest to her.

Joclyn had firm confidence in her business concept, her skill base and her reputation in the industry and NEIS provided guidance on how to structure a small business from the ground up while accommodating her specific business individuality.

'NEIS training gave me a balanced overview of all the issues I would face in a competitive market, rather than just allowing me to rely on what I knew and avoid the difficult or unexciting elements of a small business,' she said.

'It also gave me both physical and mental time and space to gather my business concepts, discuss them with family and colleagues and not feel pressured to rush the creative process in order to generate sales.

Plus I was forced to structure a 12 month plan, set goals and consider issues that I had not previously understood needed to be factored into my business structure,' she added.

After completing the training, Joclyn found that the greatest benefit she received from NEIS was the mentoring.

'I knew I lacked strength in finance and my mentors pushed me to perform and be accountable financially. This was the most fantastic and appropriate way for me to keep my standards high for a whole year. I was unable to ignore the 'hard' parts of business because I had to justify and be completely up-to-date with my figures. Now this has become a habit and my accountant and I will be eternally grateful for the advice, support, interest and pressure that was brought to bear on me to ensure that I kept track of my financial viability.'

Her niche market has been targeted with great success and Joclyn has been able to employ a number of staff and travel abroad through her business.

Once again Joclyn has a demanding career and can challenge herself personally and professionally—this time however, the business that benefits is hers!

A portrait of Joclyn McCahon, a woman with blonde hair, smiling. The image is partially obscured by a dark grey diagonal shape on the left and a white box containing text on the right. In the top right corner of the page, there are two black circles.

# FLIPP MANAGEMENT

JOCLYN MCCAHERN



# THE VOXEL AGENTS

SIMON JOSLIN AND MATT CLARK



## THE VOXEL AGENTS, A MOBILE DEVICE GAMES DEVELOPER, WAS ESTABLISHED IN 2009.

Within 18 months it had become an international success with more than three million downloads and revenue of up to six figures. The Voxel Agents also won several awards, including the Best New Business at the 2010 National NEIS Association's Business Awards.

Co-founders Simon Joslin and Matt Clark credit the NEIS programme as a crucial support in this success. With the support offered by the NEIS programme they were given the freedom to explore and learn from their mistakes, to forge their own path and make something truly innovative.

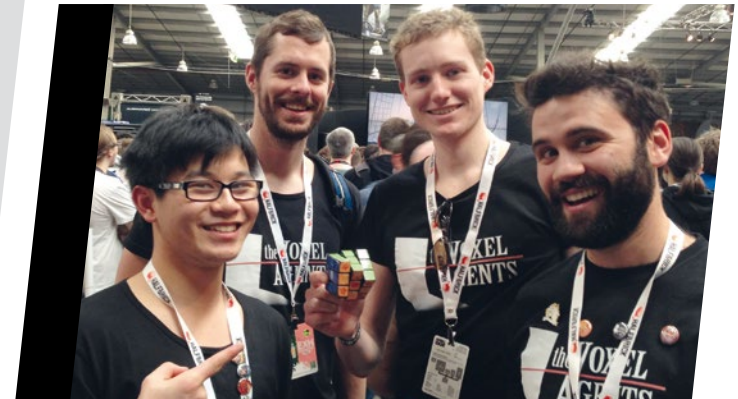
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*'We are forever grateful to NEIS for the opportunity that was provided to us.'*

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While the first title they developed was not successful, they acknowledge that it was an important learning experience. Simon and Matt believe that, had they not had the support of NEIS, they would have had to find part-time work to support their endeavour and may not have ever finished their second game.

Instead they doubled-down on their combined efforts, spent more time searching and prototyping to find the kind of game that could succeed, and they developed it to the highest possible standard. That game was Train Conductor which has since then gone on to have more than seven million players worldwide. The team are now working on the third title in the Train Conductor series, and have also released two more separate games.



**KIDS CAMERA ACTION! WAS ESTABLISHED IN DECEMBER 2010. IT COMBINES CHLOE GARDENER'S PASSION FOR PERFORMANCE AND FILM WITH HER LOVE OF TEACHING CHILDREN THE CREATIVE ARTS. KIDS CAMERA ACTION! WAS DEVELOPED AS A VALUABLE AND ENRICHING EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITY.**

The idea for the business came to Chloe in 2009 whilst living in Sydney. While she didn't have a huge amount of business knowledge, Chloe had worked in many businesses at the management level and enjoyed it. She has also been an Adelaide actress and an award winning filmmaker.

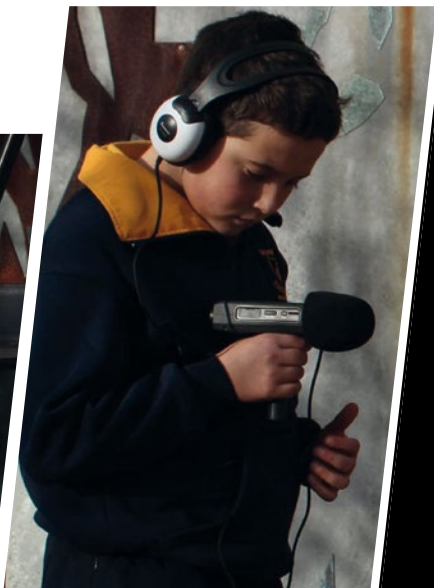
A friend and recent graduate from the Australian Film, Television and Radio School told her about the NEIS programme and how it could potentially help her achieve her business idea.

Chloe looked into NEIS and was quickly enrolled into the programme with her local NEIS provider, HETA, in Adelaide. Chloe was eight and a half months pregnant at the time and was given support to fast-track through the NEIS training component.

Chloe learnt a great deal from her NEIS training about what it takes to get a business up and running including financial management, legal matters and marketing.

'The tutors were extremely supportive,' said Chloe. 'I have recommended NEIS to at least a dozen people I know.'

Kids Camera Action! has six workshop streams and remains the only film school for kids in South Australia. It has also become the go to organisation for digital media enquiries regarding young people.



# KIDS CAMERA ACTION!

**CHLOE GARDENER**



# STONEY CREEK OIL PRODUCTS

CORAL AND FRED DAVIES

**FOUNDED IN 1992 BY CORAL AND FRED DAVIES, STONEY CREEK OIL PRODUCTS PRODUCES HIGH QUALITY SPECIALTY COLD-PRESSED OILS. IT IS BASED ON THE DAVIES FAMILY FARM NEAR TALBOT, CENTRAL VICTORIA.**

Extensive market research in the early 1990s revealed that 95 per cent of cold-pressed oils on the Australian market were imported, expensive and of unsuitable quality. This provided an environment favourable to the development of new products—particularly in the burgeoning flaxseed market. Stoney Creek started creating premium quality, certified organic flaxseed oil, meal and flour.

In response to ongoing demand, Stoney Creek has recently significantly expanded its production capacity and is now a major processor of specialty oilseeds for the Australian market.

The family company on the fourth-generation farming property is also adding value to the local community via employment opportunities and providing ongoing support for organic Australian farmers.

Stoney Creek was immensely proud to win the Best NEIS Business (National) and Best Regional Development Business Awards in 1997.



They were photographers by trade, and thought a café, where art would grace the walls, was something Brisvegas would embrace.

Joc and C were accepted into the NEIS programme and were allocated a NEIS provider case worker. The NEIS model, at that time, required them to find an industry mentor who was prepared to be their coach for the first year of business. They also had to produce a business plan and do an accounting course. After six attempts they produced a business plan and received a grant. This was the beginning of The Zoo journey.

On 11 December 1992, The Zoo doors opened, 'We were naïve, but the funny thing was we never doubted The Zoo was not going to work, we just had blind faith. The first few years were hard; 12 hour days, 6 days a week. We were able to pay ourselves \$140 a week — the same as the dole,' Joc said.

The Zoo's management like to take a nurturing role in the music and arts worlds, and so The Zoo has become home to a community of hundreds of developing musicians and visual performance artists, with over 18,000 bands having performed there.

'Some of my highlights would be Ben Harper, Nick Cave, The Dirty Three, and more recently The Pixies.

Artists and performers have become a family, working together to make The Zoo a vibrant place where ethics, creativity and community come first often holding benefits and fundraisers.

You are only as good as the people you surround yourself with, and I would not still be here were it not for the loyalty of my staff. We have a very low turnover and each 'Zooie', as they are affectionately called, lasts between 3–5 years, (about the time it takes them to finish a degree or short course). Over the years we have produced a doctor, a speech therapist, an architect, a marine biologist, teachers, home makers, and countless musicians,' said Joc.

Fast forward to 2015, The Zoo is in its 23rd year and still going strong. Many names and faces have changed but The Zoo ethos remains.

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*'We don't know what the future will bring but we hope there will always be a role The Zoo can play in the live music scene in Brisbane.'*

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# THE ZOO

JOC CURRAN

**ONE NIGHT OVER A GAME OF POOL, WAY BACK IN 1991, JOC AND HER BUSINESS PARTNER C, DECIDED THAT BRISBANE HAD A CONSIDERABLE LACK OF LAIDBACK, VIBRANT PLACES TO HANG OUT, AND THAT SOMETHING HAD TO BE DONE ABOUT IT!**



# STANDING STRONG TOTAL WELLNESS CLUB FOR GIRLS

**KIM SMITH**

**KIM SMITH IS THE FOUNDER OF STANDING STRONG TOTAL WELLNESS CLUB FOR GIRLS, A UNIQUE MEMBERSHIP PROGRAMME SPECIALLY DESIGNED TO SUPPORT, CONNECT AND EMPOWER TEEN GIRLS AGED 10–17 YEARS.**

Through their Strong Heart, Strong Mind, Strong Body classes, girls learn how to improve their confidence and self-esteem, build resilience and self-belief, grow friendships, improve their health and body-image, manage stress and gain the tools essential for living happy, healthy and inspired lives.

Kim and her team take a proactive and preventative approach to many of the serious health issues affecting girls today. Their success comes from working in partnership with parents to help families learn new ways to communicate and connect. Standing Strong provides the missing link—qualified psychologists, counsellors, wellness professionals and positive mentors, along with

a very special teen club space where girls can relax and be themselves. Standing Strong's innovative club concept provides girls and parents with the ongoing support they need to make it through the challenges of adolescence, together. With an emphasis on long term relationships, Standing Strong's programme is realistic in terms of the time it takes to develop the foundations for a lifetime of happiness, confidence and inner strength.

The success of Standing Strong would not have been possible without the support of the NEIS programme. Kim states that they are 'forever grateful for being a part of this fantastic initiative for new businesses.'

**UPON COMPLETION OF HIS NEIS TRAINING IN 2006, PASCAL MENEZES OPENED HIS ROCK CANDY MAKING BUSINESS, THE RED BALLOON CANDY ARTISANS. THE MELBOURNE BUSINESS STARTED AS A SMALL RETAIL/MANUFACTURING KITCHEN IN HAMPTON ST.**

Pascal spent the first three years growing the business with his traditional rock candy recipe, specialising in targeted markets such as the wedding and corporate industries. Later he took an opportunity to license The Red Balloon Candy Artisans knowhow in Tokyo, Japan.

After a year abroad Pascal returned to Melbourne, moving into a more prosperous location in Chapel St, Prahran and consolidated his experiences and ideas from Japan and from his earlier travels to Barcelona and Amsterdam.

Pascal's line of six different products is receiving world attention through social media and the business' website.

The products range from vegan jellies, honeycomb, edible image lollipops and custom rock candy. A further consulting job in China in 2012, along with a range of collaborations with large music groups and artists, saw Pascal's innovative ideas creating opportunities.

Employing a small creative team of five, Pascal maintains The Red Balloon's boutique style in Melbourne. Keeping the business specialised and niche within Australia is a high priority, while he plans to further grow his business overseas.

Pascal proudly claims that 'Looking back to where the company started it is no doubt that the business would not have

succeeded without the direction, support and co-operation of NEIS back in 2006.'

'It was a great starting opportunity that gave me legs to begin my vision and dream to create a business that would not only eventually succeed, but be a creative outlet that doesn't feel like a job, but a way of life,' he said.

Pascal will be taking on some new and exciting consultancy work in South Korea in early 2016 and is in the process of opening his first franchise in the Middle East later in 2016.



# THE RED BALLOON CANDY ARTISANS

PASCAL MENEZES







**NATHAN JANCAUSKAS STARTED MEN'S BIZ WITH THE HELP OF NEIS IN 2006 AND HAS GROWN THE BUSINESS TO BECOME ONE OF AUSTRALIA'S LEADING RETAILERS OF MEN'S GROOMING PRODUCTS.**



# MEN'S BIZ

**NATHAN JANCAUSKAS**

Men's Biz has developed a strong presence in the Australian online marketplace. As a result, Men's Biz has become an online success story and has enjoyed extremely strong growth—in size, in sales and in reputation.

Going against the prevailing trend Men's Biz added bricks and mortar to its online platform in June 2014 and opened Australia's first dedicated grooming store for men in Melbourne's Royal Arcade. This dual-channel offering is unique in the Australian men's grooming market and overcomes one of the limitations of an online-only business—being able to sample the products.

GQ Magazine recently judged the Royal Arcade store as one of Australia's Best Men's Grooming Stores. The company's second store, in Sydney's Strand Arcade, opened in September 2015.

Nathan is regularly interviewed and quoted and has appeared on radio. He is not only regarded as a successful young entrepreneur but is seen as an authority in the men's grooming industry.



**AFTER GRADUATING FROM A PROP MAKING COURSE AT THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF DRAMATIC ART OLIVIA O'CONNOR SPENT A COUPLE OF YEARS WORKING AS A PROP MAKER AND SCENIC ARTIST IN SYDNEY AND LONDON.**

However Olivia soon realised that this was an ambitious task and signed up to the NEIS programme. With the assistance she received she was able to cut back her working hours enabling her to throw all of her energy and time into the task of establishing a niche business. Through NEIS training, Olivia realised what business skills she needed to gain and develop if her business was to be a success.

Now established, Olivia O'Connor Rocking Horses is her sole income and the business continues to grow. She balances her time between making bespoke rocking horses, wooden furniture, toys and custom pieces and is constantly booked out several months in advance.

Recently Olivia has developed an additional side to her business—rocking horse restoration, which is proving very profitable. Olivia is very excited for the future of her business.



# OLIVIA O'CONNOR ROCKING HORSES

OLIVIA O'CONNOR



# SNORKELWORKS KIDS

PAUL RUTTER



**AN EXPERIENCED ILLUSTRATOR AND SURFER, NEIS PARTICIPANT PAUL RUTTER DEVELOPED SNORKELWORKS KIDS, A PUBLISHING BUSINESS WHICH PRODUCES AUSTRALIAN, ENVIRONMENTAL, OCEAN THEMED BOOKS FOR CHILDREN.**

Disheartened by the degradation taking place on some of Australia's most pristine beaches, Paul spent time with the Surfrider Foundation—a coastal conservation group involved in beach clean ups and youth projects.

Inspired by the beauty of the Australian ocean and coastlines and motivated by his time with the Foundation Paul saw the need to produce a character book for kids. He developed a fictional character, Surf Rider Joe, a modern day conservationist crusader who helps ocean marine creatures resolve environmental issues. It is the first book published through Snorkelworks Kids.

'As a NEIS participant I have not only found financial support for my first year of my publishing business, I have found training in the field of marketing my product and keeping on track with my finances which is an important task to undergo in the first 3–6 months of running a small business,' said Paul.

Paul's business is taking off, with a major retailer stocking his products in South Australia.



# NUTRITION DARLING

CINZIA COZZOLINO

**CINZIA, A NUTRITIONIST AND LOVER OF WHOLE FOODS, STARTED HER BUSINESS BY ACCIDENT.**

As a favour to a café owner who was after some gluten free tasty options, she produced Bananarama, which was the first of her organic raw slice range. Once she saw how big the demand was and her passion grew, it was an obvious step to start a business.

Having completed NEIS in 2013, Cinzia has grown from strength to strength through her hard work and determination. Now she has eight raw cake flavours, supplies 30 cafés in Melbourne, has an organic breakfast cereal range, and has launched an original product called Smoothie Bombs. Cinzia hopes to distribute the Smoothie Bombs Australia-wide and possibly overseas in the future.



# WHOLE NEW WORLD

## SONYA KARRAS



**FOR NEARLY FIFTEEN YEARS SONYA KARRAS HAS DELIVERED EDUCATIONAL SEMINARS ON SAFE PARTYING, DRUGS AND ALCOHOL FOR YOUNG PEOPLE THROUGH HER BUSINESS WHOLE NEW WORLD.**

**HER SEMINARS COVER A RANGE OF TOPICS SUCH AS INTOXICATION, VIOLENCE, DRUGS, DRINK SPIKING, ANTI-AGGRESSION TACTICS, DRINK-DRIVING AND GETTING HOME SAFELY.**

Having worked in the hospitality industry, Sonya saw firsthand the problems and dangers that often befall young adults. With assistance from her NEIS provider Sonya undertook small business training at Kangan Batman TAFE and started Whole New World. In 2001, Whole New World received the Australian Drug Foundation's Excellence in School Based Responses award.

It took four years for her business idea to fully blossom into reality, after Sonya researched the prevalence of drugs and alcohol abuse among young adults. Now Whole New World delivers more than 200 seminars per year Australia-wide.

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*'It seems like a lifetime ago I did the course, but I still put to use the skills I gained—especially in Business Plan Writing.'*

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Over the years, Sonya has been asked by several media organisations including Channel Ten's The Project for her expert opinion on youth issues. She is also one of the official ambassadors for the Women's Entrepreneurship Day founded in New York and hosted at the United Nations.

Sonya has also co-founded the Australian Teenage Expo—Australia's largest youth expo which includes a variety of exhibitors from education, wellbeing services and youth organisations. Attracting approximately 9000 participants in Victoria each year, Sonya and her team are now working to take the Australian Teenage Expo to every state and territory around Australia.

# SUSIE-LOTTA DESIGNS

## SUZANNE PHILLIPS

**SINCE STARTING NEIS IN 2012, SUZANNE HAS SOLD HER HAND SCREEN-PRINTED TEXTILE DESIGNS IN SHOPS AND MARKETS BOTH IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA, INTERSTATE AND INTERNATIONALLY. SHE HAS EVEN CREATED DESIGNS FOR THE ART GALLERY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA'S EXHIBITIONS AND SOLD HER WORK IN THE GALLERY SHOP.**

There have been some great publicity opportunities for the business, such as being interviewed locally and internationally on radio, in a Swedish magazine and on several Australian blogs.

Suzanne says that she has learnt over time that she needs to keep adapting her business to a changing world. She has expanded her business into graphic design and has also started Susie-Lotta Photography. 'I am grateful for having the opportunity to start up my own

business with the assistance of NEIS. It's wonderful to be able to work with the things I love doing and earn money from what I am passionate about at the same time.'

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*'Success in having your own business means sticking things out and seeing opportunities that may appear. Actually starting your own business is a real achievement in itself. Maintaining the business after this and developing it over time is a major achievement.'*

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# BUSINESS MAPS AUSTRALIA

STEVEN RANDALL

**AFTER BECOMING RETRENCHED AT THE AGE OF 60, STEVEN RANDALL DECIDED HE WANTED TO START HIS OWN CUSTOMISED MAPS BUSINESS. A FEW MONTHS LATER, HE REALISED THAT HE LACKED FORMAL TRAINING IN THE STRUCTURAL AND FINANCIAL ISSUES OF RUNNING A SMALL BUSINESS AND DECIDED TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT.**

Steven approached Centrelink and was referred to NEIS provider, Harlequin Business Consultants. While finding it hard to return to study at age 60, supported by his NEIS provider, Steven started a Certificate IV in Small Business Management.

He learnt about financial planning, creating a specific business plan, cost estimations and marketing programme creation. Not only did Steven gain the certificate, but his confidence grew enabling him to start his own business, Business Maps Australia.

Business Maps Australia creates specialised or non-standard maps for clients such as Exxon Mobil, George Weston Foods, ATCO Logistics, Elders Group, Royal Caribbean Cruises International, several government agencies and numerous private clients.

Business Maps Australia tenders for custom mapping contracts with clients in Australia, South Africa and South East Asia. It is currently involved in a long term commission with a Perth based Australian publisher to produce a significant map for the resources sector that will have major relevance to the Asia West Pacific region for the next 2–3 years.

The company has also developed a process to provide a Bulk Map service for companies wanting to promote their services via maps. Product research and development has provided Business Maps Australia with a new format to produce highly detailed road maps not previously available to the public.

Starting a business from a very low capital base was a challenge for Steven. The training and mentoring from his NEIS provider has given him the confidence that Business Maps Australia will continue to grow and become a successful business.

**LINDY CHEN ARRIVED IN AUSTRALIA IN 2002 AND FOUND IT CHALLENGING TO FIND A JOB. LINDY TOOK ON VARIOUS VOLUNTEER ROLES INCLUDING RAISING AWARENESS OF CHINA BY ORGANISING A COMMUNITY EVENT FOR HER LOCAL COUNCIL, PROMOTING THE USE OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT, AND RUNNING AN EVENT SHOWCASING THE TALENTS OF MULTI-CULTURAL YOUTH.**

During this time Lindy took a job selling movie tickets door to door. She wore out two pairs of shoes, learnt how to read a map and gained the confidence to speak 'to people in English'.

Lindy then spent seven months studying English and moved on to teach Business Administration at The Australian Business College in Adelaide. She then took up a position lecturing in International Trade at TAFE in South Australia.

During this time, friends began asking Lindy to source products for them from China. Lindy found she had an extraordinary talent for this, and there was high demand for this service, so she turned it into a business.

In 2005, with help from the NEIS programme and Sarina Russo Job Access, Lindy formed ChinaDirect Sourcing Services, with a starting capital of only \$2000.

Lindy is passionate about building bridges between China and Australia, and has given her time freely to speak for organisations such as the Australian Institute of Management, ANZ Bank, The Triton Foundation, Queensland Police and numerous women's and civic organisations.

The company has experienced exponential growth, guided by a mission of 'making clients prosperous and globally competitive.'

Lindy is now considered one of Australia's foremost experts on doing business with China and she has won numerous awards for her work both in Australia and internationally.



# CHINADIRECT SOURCING SERVICES

LINDY CHEN

# BUSAROUND TOURS



## KATHRYN FRITZ

**BY COMBINING HER INTEREST IN TOURISM AND KNOWLEDGE OF UNIQUE LOCATIONS THAT WERE NOT BEING UTILISED BY OTHER TOUR OPERATORS, KATHRYN FRITZ KNEW THAT SHE HAD FOUND A NICHE MARKET, AND WITH THE HELP OF NEIS, BUSAROUND TOURS WAS LAUNCHED.**

Kathryn first came across NEIS while working as a professional accountant, where she had clients who had participated in the programme. She had seen how their businesses had progressed, even after they had finished participating in NEIS. She felt the time had come to combine her past skills as a tour guide and her business skills. She was ready for the challenge.

NEIS provided a great foundation and start for her business. The accredited small business training and access to professional and experienced mentors over the first 12 months provided great support and guidance.

Kathryn credits her NEIS provider Business Foundations and their support as a key part of her experience. 'They were very active in introducing myself and other NEIS participants to business networking, helping us to make our own way in the business world.

I will always be very thankful to the people at Business Foundations for their support at that crucial time. I am also thankful that the Government provides the NEIS programme which helps so many people get on their feet and live their dream,' Kathryn said.



# APLUS CARE4ALL

## RAESHEL PHELPS

**IN NOVEMBER 2014, RAESHEL PHELPS WAS IN RECEIPT OF A DISABILITY PENSION, CARING FOR HER FOUR CHILDREN, TWO OF WHICH HAVE DISABILITIES. SHE WAS DETERMINED TO CREATE A BUSINESS TO SUPPORT HERSELF AND HER FAMILY BUT EQUALLY DETERMINED TO PROVIDE AN EXCELLENT SERVICE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY.**

Raeshel initially identified an opportunity to provide care for people with disability due to the introduction of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) in her local region. She knew that this was her chance to start the business she had been determined to create and so, with the help of NEIS, Aplus Care4All Pty Ltd was born.

Aplus Care4All provides support in the home and the community, to families with members with physical and/or intellectual disability. Aplus Care4All advises these families and helps them to explore choices and alternatives available to them, empowering clients and assisting in their own personal growth.

Raeshel provides an exceptional service for her clients and, as a result, her business has grown much more quickly than anticipated. Raeshel has managed this growth

intelligently, through sheer hard work and by surrounding herself with a strong support team. All of this work culminated in Raeshel winning the 2015 National NEIS Association's New Business of the Year award at the annual Small Business Development Conference.

Aplus Care4All now provides employment for one full time staff member and 21 casual employees and continues to grow from strength to strength. One of the employees is also an ex-NEIS participant that participated in the same NEIS training course as Raeshel and now provides invaluable contract bookkeeping and financial services for the business. Raeshel has recently negotiated to purchase a large house that will enable her to also provide overnight respite for her clients, commencing in late 2015.



It is very obvious that Raeshel has successfully achieved her goal of creating a business to support her family and providing an excellent service to people with disability with help from the NEIS programme.

**HOME GROWN INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY HAS SUPPORTED THIS AUSTRALIAN COMPANY TO GROW FROM HUMBLE BEGINNINGS IN THE NINETIES AS A LOCAL MANUFACTURER IN BEERWAH, QUEENSLAND TO BECOME A NATIONAL TRAILER MANUFACTURER.**

Stuart Daniels, co-founder and CEO, started Trailers 2000 with his wife Jenny with little money but a big vision. It was August 1992, while both unemployed and with four children to feed that they had an idea for a business. With an aim to expanding his business skills to ensure the business would help in providing for his family, Stuart signed up to participate in the NEIS programme.

'Our idea was to manufacture box trailers which we would distribute and sell. However, unlike other box trailer manufacturers we focused on superior quality, consistency of product, and great service—at a price that would make us competitive,' said Stuart.

'Jenny thought of the name Trailers 2000 and in April 1993 our dream became a reality when we opened for business with some assistance from the Government NEIS scheme,' he added.

Trailers 2000 has continued to grow its Australia-wide retailing distribution network through hardware retailers including Bunnings Warehouse and CRT Ruralco giving retailers the opportunity to support Australian manufacturers.

Stuart and Jenny have developed innovative design ideas into the manufacturing process of their products ensuring they are good quality and affordable for the market. The first trailer they designed was able to change to

suit their customers changing needs—which is a world first.

Their business strategy is based on the Australian climate. 'To survive you have to be tough, strong and dependable—everything you want in your trailer. Our trailers are bred in Australia and made to stand up to the harsh Australian conditions,' Stuart said.



**TRAILERS 2000**  
**STUART DANIELS**





# LA PALETA

AMI MCDONALD

**LA PALETA, NOW AN ESTABLISHED PART OF THE PERTH AND FREMANTLE STREET FOOD SCENE, BEGAN IN 2012. LA PALETA MAKES SMALL BATCH, ARTISAN ICE CREAMS AND ICY POLES FULL OF FRESH FRUIT AND PERSONALITY.**

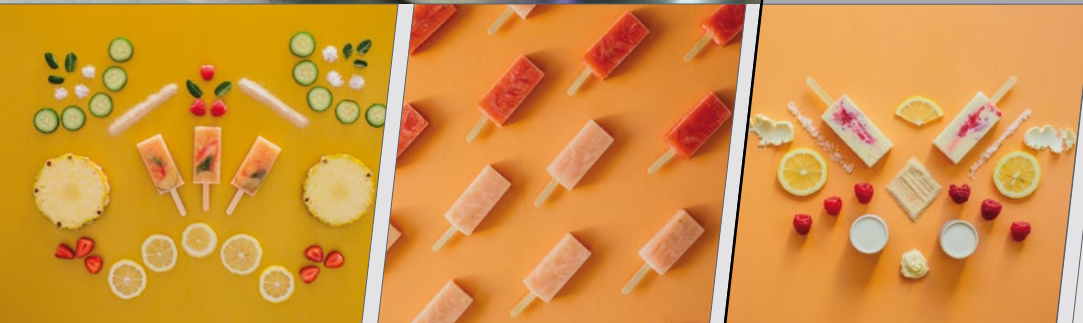
The business grew from humble beginnings at the local farmers market, where Ami McDonald envisaged a casual weekend job selling a few dozen ice creams to supplement her work as a theatre designer. Within a matter of weeks, however, it became apparent that this idea had huge potential for success.

Ami made the choice to dedicate herself full-time to developing the business. She took her idea to local NEIS provider, Business Foundations Small Business Centre in Fremantle, where she was able to create a business plan for La Paleta. From there she set about growing the business into the success it has become today.

Three years on, La Paleta is a thriving small business with a commercial kitchen facility, multiple food trucks operating across Perth and over a dozen stockists carrying its products.

The flavours change with the seasons and are exciting, indulgent and often out of the ordinary, leading to a dedicated and rapidly growing fan base across Western Australia.

In 2014, Ami's hard work and La Paleta's success was recognised when she won the National NEIS Association's Best New Business Award.



Despite his language barrier, Marciano was able to attain a part time job at the Melbourne Hilton and Sheraton Hotels. During this time Marciano met NEIS provider Arie Moses. Marciano was a qualified pastry cook in his home country, Chile, and after learning about NEIS became determined to start his own cake shop. Arie advised that he should participate in the Adult Migrant English Scheme that would support him to learn the English language.

Both he and his wife enrolled and obtained a Level 4 in English. Marciano also enrolled in a pastry course so he could be recognised as a qualified Pastry Cook in Australia.

Once Marciano completed his Pastry course he approached Arie with his business idea and was accepted into the NEIS programme. NEIS supported him to develop a clear business plan which in turn attracted investors. In 1996 Marciano and Rosa found a small shop in Centre Road, Clayton, Victoria. He put a payment down for three months' rent and bought second hand machinery to bake their sweets.

In 1999, after years of hard work and determination, Marciano and Rosa won the NEIS Small Business Award acknowledging what they had achieved in such a small period of time.

Over the next few years their business expanded and they bought the vacant shops next to their original store. This allowed them to expand their kitchen and increased their manufacturing capacity.

In 2007, with the business running so well, they opened another manufacturing/retail facility in Maidstone, West Melbourne.

Marciano and Rosa now have two stores and employ around 30 people. After years of hard work Marciano is now semi-retired. His children now work in the business and have become Pastry Chefs themselves.

As migrants with limited English, and with determination and the assistance of NEIS, Marciano and Rosa have been able to start, grow and now help their children continue to run a successful business.

Marciano's Cakes is a truly successful family business.

## MARCIANO'S CAKES

ROSA AND MARCIANO ALVAREZ

**AFTER MIGRATING TO AUSTRALIA WITH HIS FAMILY IN 1992 MARCIANO ALVAREZ EXPERIENCED DIFFICULTIES FINDING EMPLOYMENT. IN PARTICULAR MARCIANO FOUND HIS LANGUAGE WAS A BARRIER TO EMPLOYMENT.**

# THE BUTTERFLY EXPERIENCE

## DEBORAH MORANDIN



**AFTER A LIFE-CHANGING ACCIDENT IN 2003 THAT LEFT HER UNABLE TO WALK, DEBORAH MORANDIN WAS LEFT WITH CLOSE TO NOTHING BUT HER YEARS OF EXPERIENCE IN TRAINING. DEBORAH HAD ALWAYS WANTED TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN TRAINING AND FOUND THAT THE ACCIDENT ENDED UP BEING A BLESSING IN DISGUISE. WHILE UNDERGOING SIX MONTHS OF REHABILITATION, DEBORAH WROTE HER BOOK THE BUTTERFLY EXPERIENCE.**

Her personal circumstances inspired Deborah to draw on her experience, and become a life and business trainer. She saw an article about NEIS, researched the programme and began with Sarina Russo in Brisbane as her NEIS provider in November 2003.

Deborah originally branded her company Squiggly Training, which focussed on training, life and business coaching as she wanted to help her clients turn over the rocks and deal with all the squiggly bits in their lives.

However while rehabilitating, Deborah met more and more people (primarily women) who were struggling with self-esteem and trying to get into the workforce. So she decided to develop her book into a programme and re-named her business The Butterfly Experience.

When asked how NEIS helped her to set up her business, Deborah explains; 'My mentor was fantastic, putting up with my disability at the time so I could complete the programme, and the full year of mentoring was very comforting for me,

as I had no family or industry support while setting up my business. My mentor was always there to brainstorm with, encourage me and congratulate me on my successes.'

The Butterfly Experience now trains and inspires small business owners to scale their businesses skills to entrepreneur level in her programme Metamorphosis to Entrepreneur. Deborah also has four other training streams including The Butterfly Experience – Squiggly Skills for Life, a ten-week programme for struggling unemployed women.

Since commencing the business, Deborah has worked with over 5000 women through her different programmes, and has a great success rate. She has 10 contractors who work with her, and her business is going from strength to strength with a number of accolades being awarded to her.

'I wouldn't hesitate to recommend the NEIS programme for people at all levels of life,' says Deborah. 'It was a great support during a very difficult time in my life.'

# RAINEY WOOD WORKS

## LORRAINE HULL

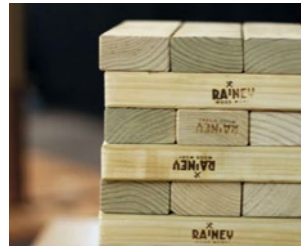
**LORRAINE HULL'S LOVE OF ALL THINGS TIMBER AND A SENSE OF BOREDOM WITH GENERAL CONSTRUCTION -STYLE CARPENTRY PUSHED HER TO START RAINEY WOOD WORKS. THE BUSINESS APPEALS TO OTHER PEOPLE WHO HAVE A LOVE AFFAIR WITH TIMBER, OR WHO ARE JUST STRUGGLING TO FIND A UNIQUE ITEM IN A MASS PRODUCED, QUICK PRODUCT TURN-OVER WORLD.**

Lorraine has a broad range of skills and knowledge collected over the years of working as a carpenter for various companies around Perth. She offers a commission system of works, where she can design and tailor-make items to meet a customer's needs and requirements, allowing the customer to design their own bespoke item.

Rainey Wood Works has an important second element to the business—running workshops for women to encourage them to

complete their own wood crafted projects or learn valuable home maintenance requirements. Lorraine wanted to enable other women to feel empowered, fulfilling their own home maintenance needs without feeling the need to call a 'Hire a Hubby' service or to have the confidence with using power tools to try to make or fix something for themselves.

Coming up to its first birthday, Rainey Wood Works has settled into a communal workshop space in Fremantle WA.



# TERRITORY LASER CLINIC

HOLLY COPPING

**IN 2012, HOLLY COPPING OPENED THE DOORS TO THE TERRITORY LASER CLINIC AND HASN'T LOOKED BACK SINCE. ESTABLISHED WHILE PARTICIPATING IN THE NEIS PROGRAMME, THE TERRITORY LASER CLINIC OFFERS A RANGE OF TREATMENTS RELATING TO ACNE, AGING, LASER HAIR REMOVAL, CHEMICAL PEELS, ACNE SCARRING AND TATTOO REMOVAL.**

Having experienced acne from the age of 12, Holly wanted to ensure no one struggled with the same issues she did and became the Northern Territory's first and only qualified Dermal Therapist. Holly enjoys using her knowledge and expertise to change people's lives and hopes to continue this commitment for the rest of her life. While participating in NEIS, Holly was nominated for two regional awards and was awarded the National NEIS Association's award for Best New Business in 2013, becoming the first Northern Territory business to win the award. Holly was presented with the award by the Deputy Chief Minister of the Northern Territory which was a very special moment.

'I can honestly say that the NEIS programme is 100 per cent worth the effort. The advice and coaching I received was invaluable. Monthly mentoring and quarterly visits ensured that I monitored the growth of my business, and the financial support was amazing to say the least. I can highly recommend this programme to anyone who has a new business idea.'



# CHEESEWORLD

MARGARET AND GERRY GAGEL

**WHEN ASKED TO SAY 'CHEESE' HUGE GRINS APPEAR ON THE FACES OF MARGARET AND GERRY GAGEL, THE OWNERS OF CHEESEWORLD, LAUNCHED IN LATE 2003, IN GOOMERI, QUEENSLAND.**

'The NEIS training had a powerful effect on us,' said Margaret.

'We had never done a business plan before and the training we received, in particular on business plans, reassured us that we were on the right track.'

The training forced us to look at what our markets were, evaluate what we would need to sell to cover costs and proposed incomes. It also gave us ideas on advertising methods and how to develop a theme, in our case the 'Motza Mouse' logo, for the business.

The training and mentoring made us aware of the dangers of starting a new business and warned of the pitfalls that could occur,' added Gerry.

To the Gagels the most important factor in running their own business is independence and the desire to see the business grow.

The Gagels pride themselves on CheeseWorld's service. At its peak, CheeseWorld offered customers a choice of over 50 varieties of cheese from both local and Australian suppliers and related products including cheese platters and

gourmet accompaniments. CheeseWorld also employed two full-time and one casual staff member.

'As we age employment options decline making the personal satisfaction from succeeding even sweeter,' said Gerry.

In April 2014, after 10 years in business, Gerry and Margaret grew tired of running the shop seven days a week. So they hitched up the caravan, bought a ute, put a refrigerated display on the back and hit the road. 'To have a customer leave satisfied is wonderful, when they later return we must be on the right track and when they recommend us to their friends —it's success!'

CheeseWorld Goomeri has now become CheeseWorld on the Move and visits markets, events, shows and even the homes of their Goomeri customers. The knowledge gained and customer base from Goomeri has remained with them as well as their love of cheese.



# EVADOR JEWELLERY

DANA ANDREWS

DESIGNER AND JEWELLER DANA ANDREWS HAD ALWAYS DREAMED OF ONE DAY STARTING HER OWN BUSINESS. AFTER EIGHT YEARS WORKING IN THE JEWELLERY INDUSTRY THE TIME HAD FINALLY COME.



Dana began her business, Evador, in Western Australia in 2012. She mainly created custom pieces for her private clients while putting together the beginnings of her first Evador jewellery collection.

Dana's 2012 collection was chosen to be displayed in the prestigious Aspects of Kings Park gallery, Western Australia.

'It was a daunting prospect going out on my own and putting myself

on the line, but going through the NEIS programme helped me gain the confidence to get started and gave me the direction I needed.

The training and skills I learnt were invaluable and I honestly wouldn't be where I am today if I didn't have such an amazing start,' Dana said.

In 2014, Dana relocated to London where she continues to grow her business and vision for Evador Jewellery.



**NIC GOWANS HAS TURNED A FLOOD PRONE BLOCK OF LAND IN THE MIDDLE OF SKIPTON, VICTORIA, INTO A PRODUCTIVE HORTICULTURAL AREA. THE AREA NOW PRODUCES LOCAL AND SEASONAL FRUIT AND VEGETABLES THAT ARE SOLD AT REGIONAL MARKETS AROUND SKIPTON.**

'I was fortunate to be accepted into the NEIS programme in 2013, after choosing to take a change of scenery from the Horticultural Division, Victorian State Government. I have been able to apply my practical skills and work directly in a field where I have over 20 years of composted knowledge,' he said.

After taking up a commercial lease on a vacant block of land in 2014, Nic has turned what was once a stranded asset into a community and commercial asset.

Nic says the market garden, affectionately known as The Shamba, is his heritage market garden where he has planted heritage seeds from vegetables.

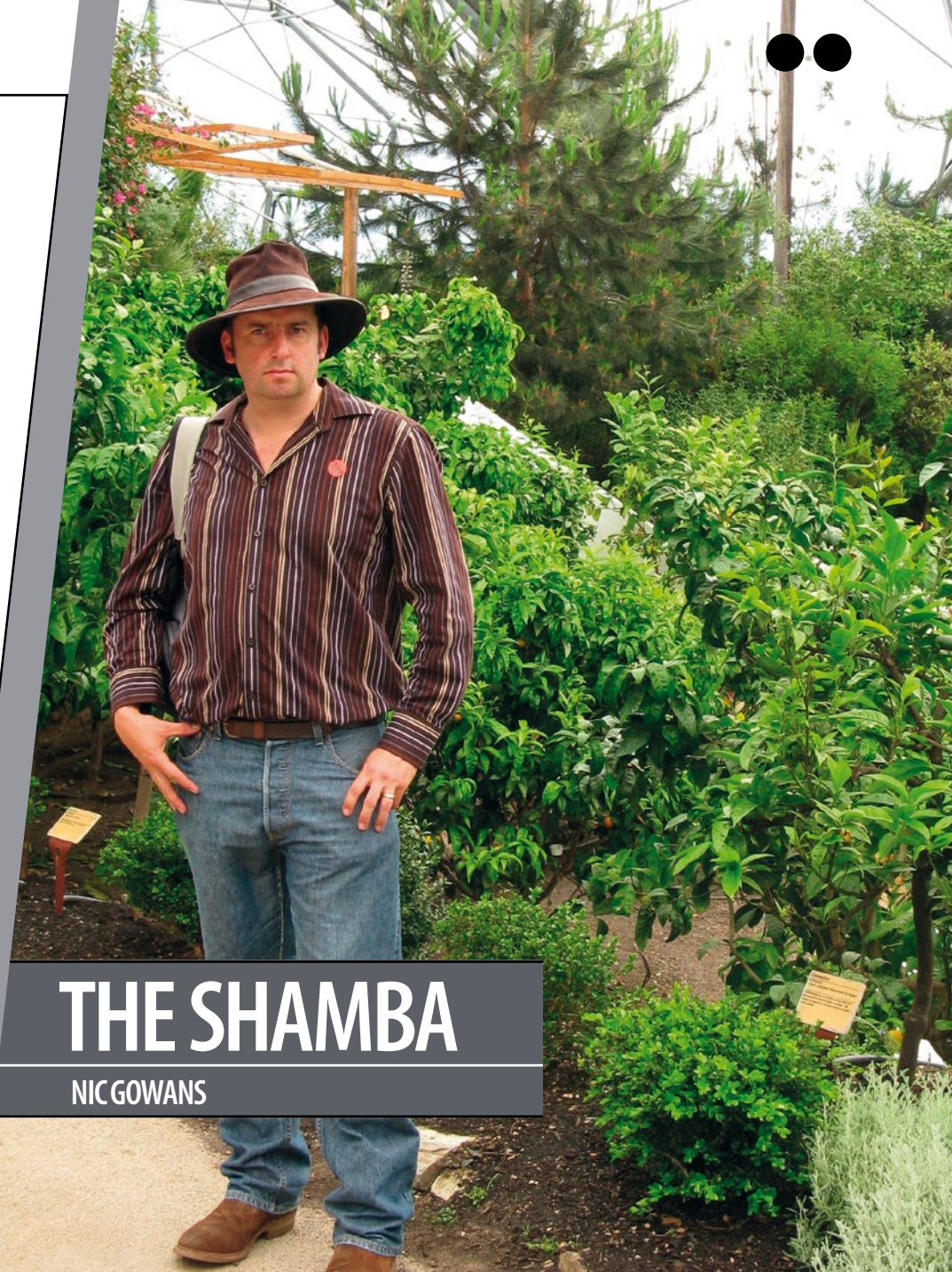
His muddy boots (business) mentor Peter Hay has brought a healthy dose of realism and experience to what became the slow path to The Shamba. Peter still keeps a weathered eye and a friendly ear to how things are going (growing) on his frequent travels through regional Victoria.

Not only does Nic grow the crops found at The Shamba, but he also encourages the local primary school and preschool to use the garden as an extension of the school garden programme.

This connection with the school allows the students to get their hands dirty planting and also collecting seeds that they can take home for their own gardens.

'To me, the secret to happiness is not a high paying job, but to work locally with the people I enjoy, whilst focusing upon family, friends and community,' said Nic.

With the help of NEIS, Nic has definitely found his happiness.



# THE SHAMBA

NIC GOWANS



# FOOLSANDTROLLS

DAVE COURT

**IN 2013, WHILE PARTICIPATING IN THE NEIS PROGRAMME, DAVE COURT BEGAN HIS BUSINESS FOOLSANDTROLLS—AN ADELAIDE BASED CLOTHING LABEL WITH A FOCUS ON ART AND DESIGN.**

Working with the NEIS provider BRACE in South Australia, Dave achieved a Certificate IV in Small Business Management to complement his Bachelor with Honours in Visual Arts.

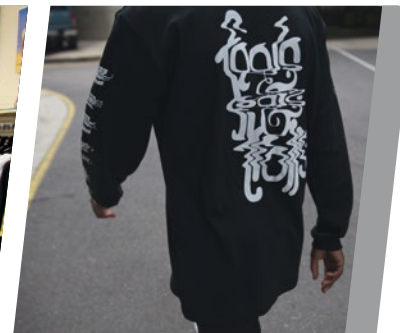
foolsandtroll's main business is tees that are a custom fit and are ethically manufactured in Adelaide using fabric woven

in Australia. Dave also uses environmentally friendly water-based inks and has been certified by Ethical Clothing Australia.

Dave received the Best Social Innovation and Cultural Initiative Award at the 2014 Renew Adelaide Awards and was selected to exhibit in the Helpmann Academy Graduate exhibition that year.

Dave's award-winning business also assists other people to realise their dreams in clothing design.

He recently started Created Range, a clothing store to showcase other local and independent clothing brands and emerging artists.



Drew and his staff passionately sell, alter, re-store, fix and service bikes at their shop in Fremantle, Western Australia. They get a real kick out of altering bikes to match the personality of the rider.

NEIS gave Drew the support he needed to step into the business world and go for broke. With the help of NEIS, his business has grown from a workshop in a shed, to a workshop in an ex-paint factory, to a respectable retail shop.

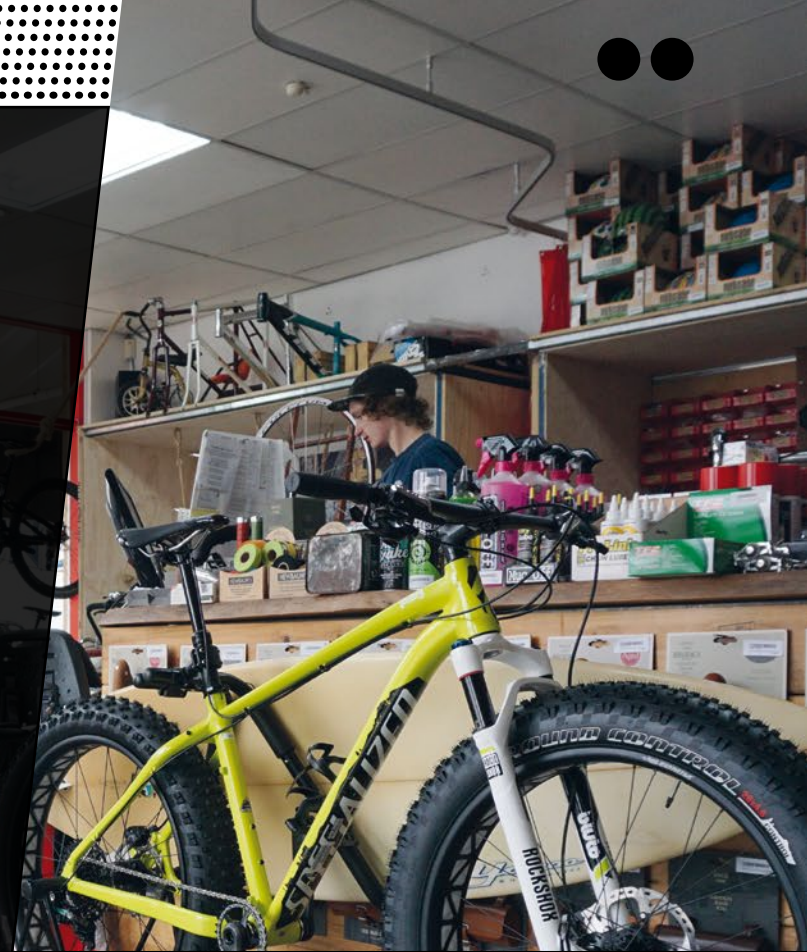
'There is an endless array of challenges that we face every day. The business world has opened my eyes when it comes to asking for help and seeking valuable advice from mentors.

I look forward to the future, the people I will meet along the way and gaining knowledge as I continue on my journey.

There is nothing more satisfying then realising you have turned an idea into something real,' said Drew.

At Captain Walker's, we pride ourselves on perfection and attention to detail. Our passionate and friendly staff get a kick out of altering bikes to match the personality of the rider. From custom paint jobs and wooden rims to kooky helmets and leather grips, we offer a wide range of options and advice to ensure you ride home with a huge smile.

Whether you're carving curves down a mountain, riding to work every day, racing, or simply cruising down the footpath to your nearest cafe, no job is beyond our scope of expertise.



# CAPTAIN WALKER'S BICYCLES

**DREW WALKER**

**STARTING HIS BUSINESS IN 2011 HAS BEEN THE BEST THING DREW WALKER EVER DID.**





# SOCIAL CIRCUS TASMANIA

STAJA AND CHRISTIAN FLORENCE



## STAJA AND CHRISTIAN FLORENCE LOVE CIRCUS!

In 2012 they established Social Circus Tasmania to share their more than 20 years of circus experience with the local community.

The Social Circus Tasmania team are passionate about using circus workshops as a vehicle for positive change in individuals, groups, families and communities and to build teamwork, trust, determination, concentration and playfulness. The smile on someone's face (or shriek of joy) when they achieve the seemingly impossible is better than any financial gain that Christian and Staja could hope for.

Participating in the NEIS programme provided the Florence's with the training they needed to put together a solid business plan, and to learn a thing or two about business management. They gained a clear insight into the mammoth effort that the first years would require and also gained the confidence to invest financial resources to get Social Circus Tasmania up on the tightwire.

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*'The moments between someone saying 'I can't' and seeing them do it, is what Social Circus Tasmania is all about.'*

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With much planning behind them, a realistic expectation of what was needed, the practical and financial support of being a part of the NEIS programme and two business managers bursting with enthusiasm, Social Circus Tasmania was well equipped.

They say life's a circus for a reason!

LEADERSHIP  
BOSS  
SUSTAINABLE  
CREATIVITY  
INDEPENDENCE  
ACTIVITY  
SUCCESS ACCREDITED  
LIFE 1985  
TRAINING  
OPPORTUNITY  
EFFICIENT  
PRACTICAL  
BE YOUR OWN BOSS  
MENTORING  
PROGRAMME  
NEW ENTERPRISE INCENTIVES  
FLEXIBILITY ORIGINAL  
GET UP AND GO  
EFFICIENT OPPORTUNITY  
AUSTRALIA PRACTICAL  
ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE  
MOTIVATION  
CREDITED  
PROBACT