

New app to help refugees, migrants get job-ready

ADAM ZUCHETTI
22 March 2019



With the help of government funding, a business advisory firm has unveiled a new service designed to help refugees and migrants to Australia find work with local businesses.

Our HR Company launched a trial of the new service, called The Australian Way Project, at an event in Melbourne on Thursday (21 March), which was attended by Victorian senator Jane Hume (pictured, right).

The service incorporates an app that assists users with the jobseeking process, including preparing resumes, completing job applications and linking to other jobseeking support services and English languages courses.

Information will be presented in English with translations available into four key languages: Arabic, Assyrian neo Aramaic, Dari and Chin Hakha.

In a press statement, Senator Hume said that the service initially aims to assist 500 new arrivals to NSW and Victoria secure employment, running through to July 2020.

“The Australian Way Project will help a cohort of 500 new arrivals and refugees feel even more welcome in this great country of ours through access to an innovative, engaging digital platform to accelerate their potential employment success,” she said.

“Based on a storytelling methodology, a group of four animated stories within the app will provide a better way to understand the Australian workplace dynamics and provide the all-important tools needed to get a job.”

Ms Hume added: “We hope this new project will support new arrivals and refugees to gain a good working understanding of our unique workplace cultures, expectations, and how to go about the task of looking for work.”

Margaret Harrison (pictured, left), managing director of Our HR Company who founded the business in 2003 after a corporate career with PwC, RACV and Adidas, said that she hoped the “groundbreaking initiative” would help newcomers “secure their all-important first job in Australia”.

“Many new arrivals and refugees, in both a historical and current context, come to Australia ready to find work, earn money and make a better life for themselves. This is how it has always been since the early migration in the 40, 50, 60 and ’70s,” Ms Harrison said.

“Winding the clock forward to 2019, the interactive app and the stories will provide the necessary tools to those people who are ambitious and motivated to work through accessing the content at their own pace, which will help to accelerate their employment prospects. It even has great potential to assist many more new arrivals and refugees into the future.”

The Australian Way Project was developed with the help of \$1.2 million in funding from the federal government, through the Department of Social Services’ \$96.1 million Try, Test and Learn Fund — a grants scheme that supports the development of strategies to address long-term welfare dependency.

Last year, The University of Sydney Business School said that many Australian [employers are “enthusiastic” about hiring refugees](#), but are uncertain how best to integrate them into their business.

“Research shows that refugee employees are extremely motivated to perform because they see employment as a path to rebuild their life in the new home country. Initial findings from countries such as Sweden show that those employers who have hired refugees are eager to do so again,” the school’s Dr Betina Szkudlarek said.

“[But] refugees have been forced to flee their country with no time to strategise about their workplace opportunities. They don’t have networks, they don’t have local experience, they don’t know anything about the job market and their qualifications might not be recognised.”

<https://www.mybusiness.com.au/human-resources/5579-new-app-to-help-refugees-migrants-get-job-ready>