

THE UNDERGROUND COLLABORATIVE



ANNUAL UPDATE

20

22

KAYA WANJU

HELLO WELCOME

THE UNDERGROUND COLLABORATIVE
ACKNOWLEDGES ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT
ISLANDER PEOPLES AS THE FIRST INHABITANTS OF
THE NATION AND THE TRADITIONAL CUSTODIANS OF
THE LANDS WHERE WE LIVE, LEARN AND WORK..

WE PAY OUR RESPECTS TO ANCESTORS AND ELDERS
PAST AND PRESENT AND ARE COMMITTED TO A
POSITIVE FUTURE FOR THE ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY.

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WHY WE EXIST

“I raise up my voice - not so that I can shout, but so that those without a voice can be heard.”
-Malala

The Underground Collaborative (TUC) exists to provide employment to empower and educate women and young people experiencing or at-risk of homelessness in WA.

We aim to achieve our vision through:

EDUCATION

We aim to provide ongoing knowledge to our partners and create safe learning environments for our Team Members. We seek to educate our community through sharing stories and generating meaningful conversations to positively influence attitudes, behaviours and beliefs whilst overcoming common misconceptions and stigmas surrounding homelessness and its underlying causes.

EMPLOYMENT

Our first employment initiative Ground+Co cafe provides employment and training to empower women and young people experiencing or at-risk of homelessness, and supportive pathways for transition into permanent employment.

Work Integration Social Enterprises support the development of, and create sustainable employment for the most disadvantaged people, groups and communities. The Underground Collaborative is on a mission to create paid pathways to employment to break the cycles of homelessness.

EMPOWERMENT

When you empower another person, you invest in yourself and take a risk that has the potential to change another person's life and providing the agency for them to choose. Additionally, you are simultaneously enriching yourself with their story, their culture and their purpose. For our community, we want to empower you to disrupt homelessness in a sustainable and meaningful way.

WHO WE ARE

THE BOARD



KATIE LIEW
FOUNDER | CEO



BROOKE DRAPER
CHAIRPERSON



AMANDA GRAY
TREASURER



ASHLEY MOORES
BOARD MEMBER



CHANDRA SUNDARESWARAN
BOARD MEMBER



JEFF HEALY
BOARD MEMBER



MATT DELMENICO
BOARD MEMBER



TAMARA COOK
BOARD MEMBER



TANIA CECCONI
BOARD MEMBER

To The Underground Collaborative Community.

It feels like a lifetime ago that the rampant COVID case was reported just before Christmas 2021 and Ground+Co saw a marked decrease in customers when returning in the new year. It wasn't until October 2022 that the cafe saw similar figures to 2021 before the borders opened.

Needless to say, it has been challenging not only for the organisation but for our employees, who have worked so incredibly hard while trying to protect their own mental health and wellbeing amongst all the other pressures that seem to sit above us like a foggy haze. I couldn't be more proud of how they have worked together as a team - looking after them is a top priority because I know without our people, we simply couldn't operate and consequently deliver on our impact.

In Australia, the demand for work among vulnerable groups is growing and disproportionate to the general population. As a Work Integration Social Enterprise (WISE), we focus on providing employment, training and mentorship for vulnerable women and young people to address these barriers to employment – beyond that, one that is meaningful and sustainable.

This year, with the assistance of funding from Lotterywest, we have been working hard to refine our Employment Program which seeks to deliver employment more effectively through greater collaborative partnerships and reimagining how current employment systems can be improved.

2022 signifies The Underground Collaborative's fifth year since the organisation became official - how time flies! There is much to be done but for now, I will be reflecting on the past five years, our wonderful achievements, lives we have touched and hope to continue impacting over the next five years and beyond.

Thank you so much to everyone who has continued along and supported our journey - we are who we are because of you.

I would also like to make particular mention to my very hard working team, all of our partners, volunteers, magnificent Board and to the State Library of WA who continues to provide an incredibly special home for Ground+Co and our team.

With a very full and grateful heart,

Katie Liew | Founder, CEO

OUR SUPPORTERS



THANK YOU FOR CHANGING YOUR WORLD, TO CHANGE THEIRS.

ACCESS CARDIOLOGY

LOTTERYWEST

ASSOCIATION OF FINANCIAL
ADVISORS

PWC

CITY OF PERTH

SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL

COMMONWEALTH BANK STAFF
COMMUNITY FUND

STANLEE HOSPITALITY

CT GROUP

STATE LIBRARY OF WA

CUSTOM PEOPLE SOLUTIONS

ST VINCENT DE PAUL

FIVE SENSES

ZONTA HOUSE REFUGE
ASSOCIATION

HOUSE DIGITAL

VIVACITY MARKETING

KNOWN ASSOCIATES EVENTS

WESTPAC FOUNDATION

+ THANK YOU TO ALL OUR INDIVIDUAL AND ANONYMOUS DONORS

WINS & LEARNINGS

The year saw many exciting things happen while equally a number of learnings that will allow The Underground Collaborative to operate more effectively and sustainably for those we exist to serve.

LOTTERYWEST GRANT

The Underground Collaborative received a significant grant from Lotterywest to support the enhancement, development, trial and evaluation of our broader service model and Employment Program. This is currently being tested at Ground+Co, with the intention to expand to future employment initiatives and through our partners.

STAFFING

In July, The Underground Collaborative and Ground+Co employed an Engagement & Training Officer and Program Cafe Manager respectively to assist with the delivery of the Lotterywest grant. While these are funded positions, this is a milestone in that this is the first time the organisation has been in a position to employ staff beyond the Ground+Co team.

However, like many other businesses, stable staffing has proven to be challenging and we had to learn to be adaptable enough to ensure our existing staff were front of mind without losing sight of our Employment Program and support for our Team Members.

BRAND REFRESH

The organisation underwent a brand refresh, with a big thank you to the Known Associates Events team who assisted in redeveloping our brand guidelines. This formed part of the work undertaken in developing our new website.



*nobody makes
a greater
mistake than
he who did
nothing because
he could only
do little.*

-edmund burke

WEBSITE REFRESH

The Underground Collaborative launched a new website in December which we are so proud and excited about.

A massive thank you to the incredible House Digital team who assisted with this pro bono!

Early next year, our Ground+Co website will also be getting a facelift with thanks to the City of Perth Bounceback grant.

ONBOARDING

This year, Ground+Co onboarded three new Team Members. While numbers can be a good measure of impact, so too can the learnings; including the understanding that not all who come through our doors will be ready or suitable for our Program.

This was true for one of our Team Members who while trying to escape her domestic violence situation was also caring for her child who had special needs. We were also presented with systemic barriers which further highlights the importance of our work.

OUR IMPACT

The Underground Collaborative engaged with Social Scaffolding who worked with us to refine and gain greater clarity on our Theory of Change and Business Model Canvas. This important piece of work was crucial in our path forward in ensuring we remain values-aligned in continuing our work to break the cycles of homelessness.

More importantly, these feed into our Outcomes Framework which provides the basis for identifying the necessary work required to achieve our desired outcomes, helps us stay on track and leads to better evaluation of our Employment Program.

OUR THEORY OF CHANGE

IF WE... (activities)

- Provide a structured Employment Program including a supported employment environment
- Partner with service agencies who provide the necessary wraparound support for our Team Members
- Cultivate a community and movement of people and organisations that want to make a difference

FOR

- Vulnerable young people aged between 17-25
- Women who have experienced family and domestic violence

WITH

- Service agencies
- Employment partners
- The community and 'Friends of The Underground Collaborative

THROUGH... (our approach)

- Pre-employment preparation
- On-the-job mentoring, training and employment
- Support post-Employment Program, including with regards to stable housing
- Educating the community through networking, consulting and advocacy

OUR TEAM MEMBERS WILL... (outcomes)

- Have greater self-awareness and career navigation
- Gain meaningful and supported employment
- Experience a positive turning point in their life through routine, structure and support
- Have access to mentoring support
- Be motivated to acquire new skills
- Gain pride and self-confidence

+

- Have a greater understanding about themselves, their unique skills, interests and abilities
- Gain the confidence to transition to long-term employment beyond The Underground Collaborative
- Our Team Members will no longer be at risk of homelessness as they move into their new life
- Assured employment is provided with our employment partners

+ OUR COMMUNITY AND BUSINESS (PARTNERS) WILL...

- Feel more engaged and educated through increased awareness, conversations and intermingling at our training space, Ground+Co cafe
- Be part of systems change that will have a multiplier effect
- Help create an inclusive community where everyone is seen as one

THE RESULT OF THE UNDERGROUND COLLABORATIVE BUSINESS MODEL

Vulnerable women and young people will no longer be experiencing or at-risk of homelessness

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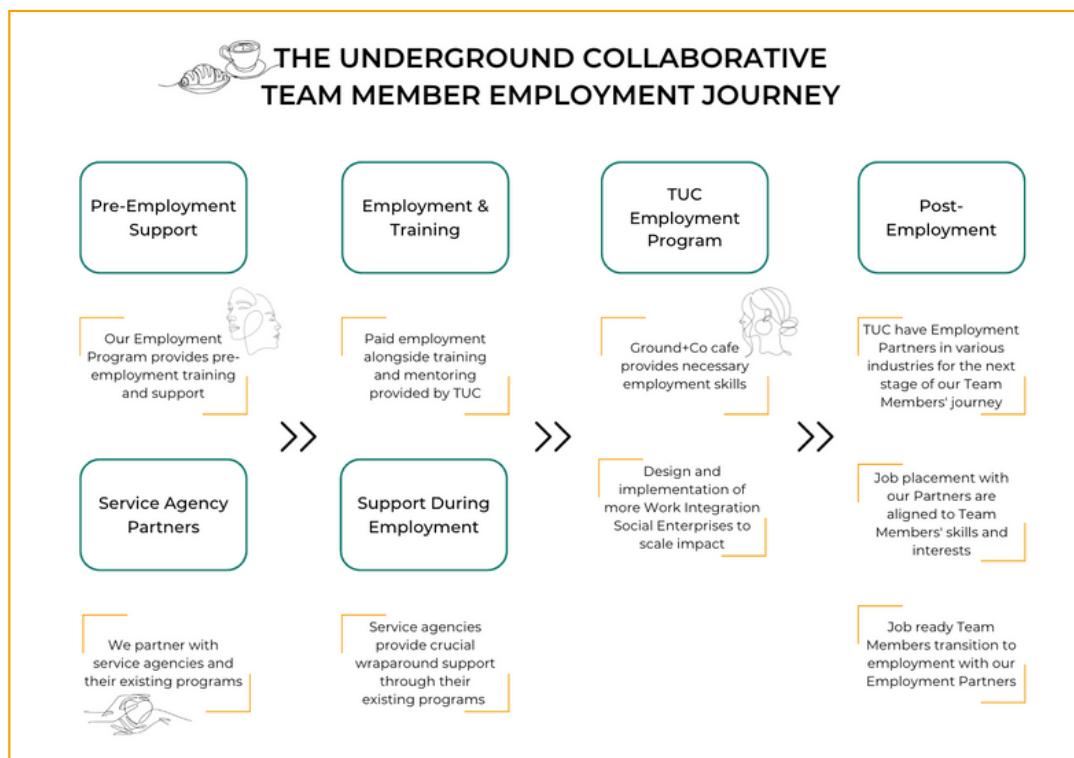
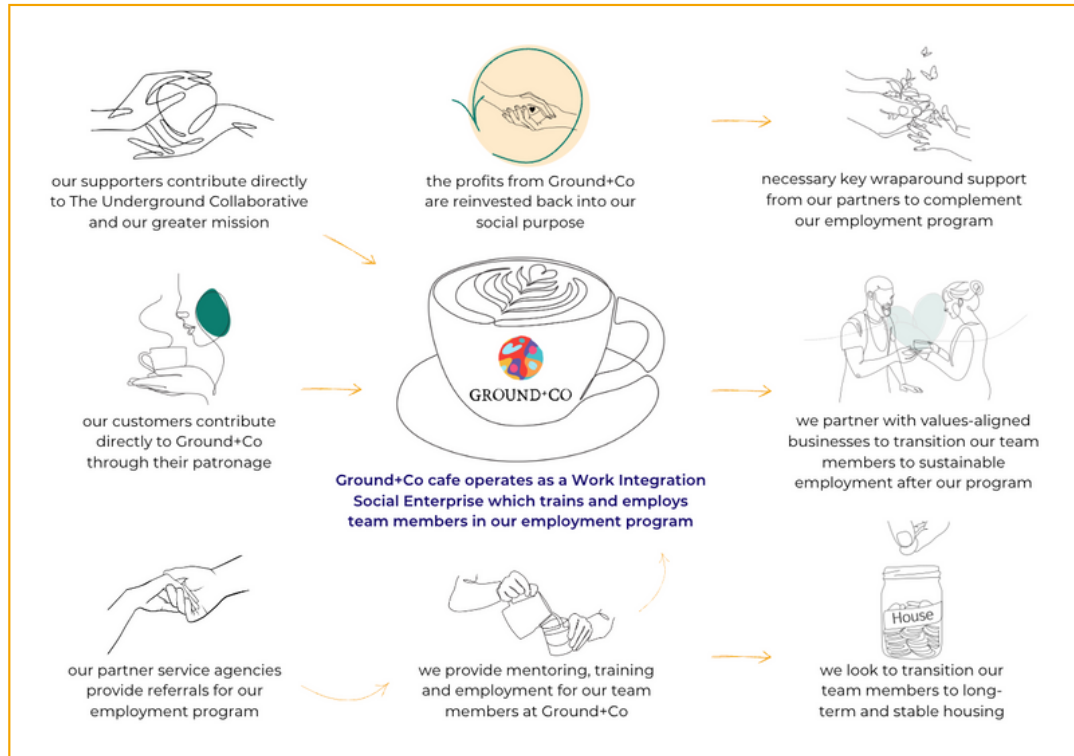
Various sectors are all involved in creating systems change

+

Homelessness is reduced

OUR IMPACT

OUR BUSINESS MODEL



OUR IMPACT

this year...

**\$202K
SALES**

**466 HOURS &
\$12.5K OF PAID
TRAINING &
EMPLOYMENT**



“[The Employment Program] really helped me financially and by giving me a chance to come out of that hard time and see the world with a different perspective.

You won't see a lot of statistics and numbers in our annual updates. That's because we feel that impact is more than a number - without the background and context behind it, numbers start to lose its meaning.

What's important to us is seeing the visible change in people - their personalities starting to shine, emotional barriers breaking down, life-changing conversations over time, building trust that can never truly be captured by figures. These are the deep and lasting impacts that will change their world.

-Katie Liew, CEO

OUR IMPACT

“

Thank you for helping me find my peace. The person I was trying to be wasn't me, and you helped me so much to see that.

By not having a dad, by being pushed away by so many people, by not knowing who I really was inside myself. I thought hurting people and selling drugs was my life.

I thought that's all I was gonna be and you started this by showing me I can be so much more.

I'm finally growing up.

OUR IMPACT

What else did we get up to...



We collaborated with 100 Families, uneARThed and Self Made Indigenous Corporation as part of their Sonder exhibition, which shared the art and stories of artists with lived experience of disadvantage. You can find the beautiful pieces for sale on our cafe wall.

We started a little book club with a focus on financial literacy.

“I developed a good sense of managing money and now I understand that it is very crucial to have a source of income on my own. I’ll always look for better opportunities to have a good living.”



Research shows that identity and belonging help us create purposeful lives where we feel connected to others around us; employment can be a powerful tool in helping to provide a sense of belonging and purpose.

We try to spend time together outside of work to build those friendships and relationships which in turn helps build stronger teams.

“After working at Ground+Co my confidence level has increased, I have learned communication skills, developed a sense of problem solving, become more patient and optimistic, learnt etiquettes and teamwork.”

BE PART OF THE CHANGE



PARTNER WITH US

The Underground Collaborative welcomes the support of our partners through sponsorship or philanthropy who share similar values and we are always keen to explore opportunities to work with organisations that align with our vision and mission to help break the cycles of homelessness through education, empowerment and employment.



BECOME AN EMPLOYMENT PARTNER

Our Employment Partners are incredibly important for the success of our Employment Program. If your company is passionate about providing a safe and welcoming workplace for our Team Members to transition to after completing our Program, being an Employment Partner will help provide stable and diverse employment options for our Team Members.



VISIT GROUND+CO

By enjoying our hospitality at Ground+Co, you can make a very real, and very tangible difference. Every coffee you buy provides employment for people experiencing, or at-risk of homelessness.

The human interactions, routine, stability, team environment, conversations - these are all positive impacts you will create for our Team Members' mental health and journey out of homelessness.

THANK
YOU. 🐾

