

ANNUAL UPDATE



20
24



the
UNDERGROUND
collaborative

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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“The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly.

–Theodore Roosevelt

Building a Legacy Shaping the future

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

our people



Marius van der Merwe
CHAIRPERSON



Pat Ryan
BOARD MEMBER



Sarah Macaulay
BOARD MEMBER



Katie Liew
FOUNDER | CEO

To The Underground Collaborative Community.

It is with great pride and gratitude that I share The Underground Collaborative's annual update for 2024. As I reflect on the progress, challenges, and successes, I want to acknowledge the collective efforts that have driven our mission forward—empowering women and young people experiencing or at risk of homelessness through mentoring, training, employment and meaningful opportunities.

We are so grateful to sign on another 3 years with the State Library of WA where our flagship employment cafe Ground+Co resides.

Their unwavering support has allowed us to provide 13 employment opportunities for individuals who face barriers to employment since opening the cafe; providing not just a job, but dignity, confidence, and a path towards independence.

We are particularly excited for the growth of a new initiative we will be launching next year - a Builders and Sparkle Cleaning service for the construction industry which will allow us to broaden our reach and deepen our impact.

None of this would be possible without the incredible support of our community—our superstar team at Ground+Co, board, partners, customers, and generous funders. Together, we have achieved steady revenue growth in the cafe year on year since 2021, increased community impact and the number of participants supported, proving that collaboration is at the heart of meaningful change.

As we look ahead, our focus remains on achieving financial sustainability, scaling employment initiatives and expanding our services. We are committed to fuelling innovation to educate, employ and empower those most in need and build a future where everyone has access to equity and opportunity.

Thank you so much for standing with us on this journey. Your belief in our mission inspires us to do more, dream bigger, and create lasting impact. Together, we are changing lives.

With a forever full and grateful heart,

Katie Liew | Founder, CEO



our supporters

At the heart of everything we do is an incredible network of people who make our mission possible.

To our dedicated staff and volunteers—you are the backbone of The Underground Collaborative. Your commitment, compassion, and hard work have changed lives and empowered individuals to believe in themselves and their future.

To our partners, funders, and donors—thank you for your generosity and belief in our vision. Your support has allowed us to grow, innovate, and provide opportunities to those who need them most. Whether through financial contributions, partnerships, or in-kind support, you are an integral part of the impact we have achieved.

To our customers and community—thank you for choosing to support us. Every coffee purchased at Ground+Co, every cleaning contract we hope to secure, and every kind word shared helps us create meaningful and sustainable change.

It truly takes a village to build opportunities for those experiencing or at risk of homelessness, and we are incredibly grateful to have you with us. Your belief in our work reminds us to keep going when times are tough, and of what is possible when we come together to make a difference.

We look forward to achieving even greater impact together in the years ahead.

funders

STAN PERRON CHARITABLE FOUNDATION
STANLEE HOSPITALITY
STREETSMART
THE HONIG FOUNDATION
THE WHITE FAMILY
WESTPAC FOUNDATION

+ our individual and anonymous donors

in-kind

CITY OF PERTH
CT GROUP
CUSTOM PEOPLE SOLUTIONS
HOUSE DIGITAL
FIVE SENSES
K&L GATES
MACQUARIE BANK
SOCIAL IMPACT HUB
STATE LIBRARY OF WA



Highlights - a little snapshot



February

One of our long-standing supporters Shammas from Stanlee Hospitality conquered Mount Kilimanjaro, raising \$4k for TUC.

Ground+Co launched drop-off catering services

April



May

The State Library of WA and TUC extended the wonderful partnership for another 3 years

Ground+Co featured on Channel 9 as part of Circle Green Community Legal's Expect Respect Campaign

November





this year...

**\$341K
SALES**

**586 HOURS &
\$18K OF PAID
TRAINING &
EMPLOYMENT**

our impact

“You guys have really given me so much more than just a job. I feel a lot more positive than even 4 months ago.”

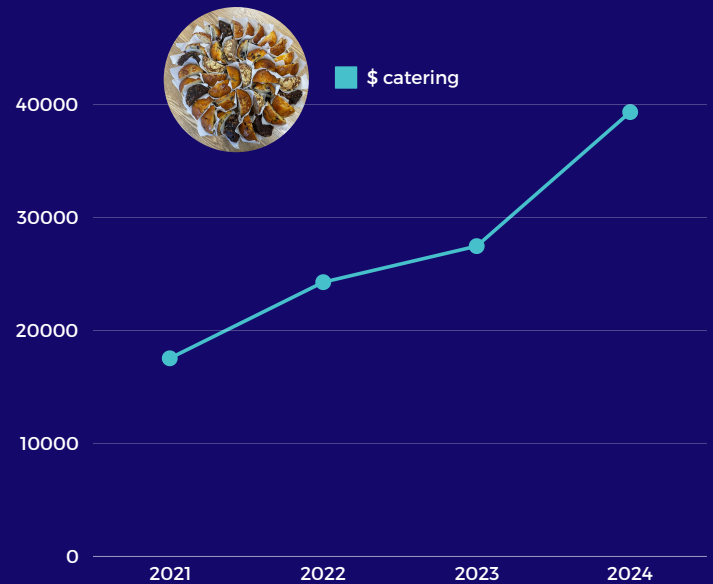
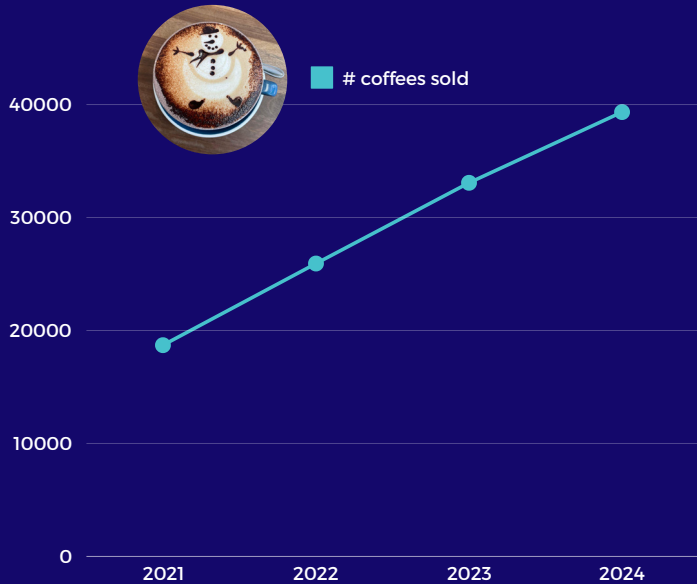
Having my job, a sense of purpose, a routine – that’s what makes me happy. 🌟



Employment fosters a sense of belonging by connecting individuals to a larger community where their skills and contributions are valued. It provides opportunities for meaningful interactions, collaboration, and shared purpose, helping people feel included and respected.



let's break it down



because of this...



6 out of 7 Team Members that have completed the Employment Program have transitioned to the private rental market and/or living independently



- Increase in confidence levels and skills more than doubled by 183%
- Self-esteem rose from a rating of 1 to 9
- Conversational skills increased by 75%

— “

After working at Ground+Co, I feel much more confident to start a new job and look out for more opportunities as now I understand how important it is to have a good job.

— ”

— “

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.

— ”

— “

Since working at Ground+Co I feel very ready to find a new job on my own and feel good about working.

— ”

— “

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

— ”



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 | ORDER CATERING

By enjoying our hospitality at Ground+Co, you can make a very real, and very tangible difference. Every coffee you buy or catering ordered 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.

