



# **The Hon. Natalie Suleyman MP**

## Minister for Small and Family Business

**Public Accounts and Estimates Committee  
Inquiry into the 2026/27 Budget Estimates**

25 May 2026



Jobs, Skills,  
Industry  
and Regions

# State of the Portfolio

## Small and family businesses are the foundation of Victoria's strong economy

- Over **735,000** small businesses in Victoria, making up **98%** of all Victorian businesses
- Over **123,000** new small businesses created in **2024-25**
- Small businesses provide **39%** of private sector jobs
- Melton (**+9.8%**) and Wyndham (**+8.1%**) recorded the highest net growth in small businesses
- **22%** of Victoria's small businesses are in regional areas
- **56%** have one or more parents born overseas, **35%** are migrants





## Budget Initiatives

- **\$1.2 million** to deliver a **Small Business Activation Fund** with grants which back locally-led initiatives to increase economic activity across our precincts, suburbs, towns and mainstreets; and build the capability of Victoria's small businesses.
- **\$400,000** to increase **Dispute Resolution Officers** at the Victorian Small Business Commission, so that small businesses can continue to access high quality dispute resolution support – saving them money, effort and resources.

# Our Achievements

- ➔ **Small Business Toolkits Program** has supported over **32,300** current and prospective business owners, with **3,213** supported from 1 July 2025 to 31 March 2026.
- ➔ The **Small Business Bus** visited **62 locations state-wide** and supported **445** business owners from 1 July 2025 to 31 March 2026.
- ➔ Over **3.4 million** website visits and **132,486** subscribers to **Business Victoria** digital channels and online resources, with an open rate of **48.3%** for the Business Victoria Update.
- ➔ Through the **Supporting our Multicultural Traders and Precincts** commitment, we're backing associations and local councils to boost business growth and local revitalisation, alongside the release of a **Good Practice Guide** promoting precinct activation.
- ➔ Delivering the **Business Friendly Councils initiative** to 33 Victorian local councils by mid year, saving businesses time and money through streamlining local approvals.



# Our Achievements

- ➔ Hosting the **Victorian Small Business Awards 2026** this evening, which will honour exceptional small businesses.
- ➔ Supported several **Multicultural Business Chambers and Trader Groups** to deliver business awards in 2025, including:
  - Asian Business Association of Whitehorse Business Excellence Awards
  - Australia New Zealand Lebanon Chamber of Commerce & Industry Young Entrepreneurs Achiever Awards
  - Springvale Small Business Awards, hosted by the Springvale Asian Business Association



ABAW (Asian Business Association of Whitehorse) / 28 August 2025