

Good Sammy Open Employment trials_Interim Report_April 2025

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Publication details:

Commissioning Body: Paul Ramsay Foundation

Publication Date:

2025-04-30

DOI:

<https://doi.org/10.26190/unsworks/31041>

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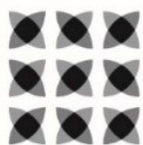
Good Sammy Open Employment Trials

Interim evaluation report

Prepared for: Paul Ramsay Foundation and Good Sammy Enterprises

April 2025

Gendera, S., Fisher, K.R., Lester, L., Flatau, P., Callis, Z., O'Shaughnessy, D.M., Giuntoli, G., Wilde, J., Hesketh, M.



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The Social Policy Research Centre is based in the Faculty of Arts, Design and Architecture at UNSW Sydney. This report is an output of the Good Sammy Enterprises Open Employment Evaluation project, funded by The Paul Ramsay Foundation and an anonymous doner.

Suggested citation:

Gendera, S., Fisher, K.R., Lester, L., Flatau, P., Callis, Z., O'Shaughnessy, D.M., Giuntoli, G., Wilde, J., Hesketh, M. 2025. *Good Sammy Enterprises Open Employment Trials Interim Evaluation Report*. Sydney: UNSW Social Policy Research Centre.

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Glossary

ADE	Australian Disability Enterprises
CSI	Centre for Social Impact, UWA
Closed employment	ADE, sheltered disability specific employment
Community partner	RTOs, schools, DES that deliver the training or identify the trainees (section 2.2)
DES	Disability Employment Services
GSE	Good Sammy Enterprises
Hybrid employment	Working in GSE and open employment
NDIS	National Disability Insurance Scheme
OE	Open employment in workplaces outside GSE, currently using a provision of service model
Provision of service	Businesses pay GSE to supply and employ staff who are paid a supported employment wage (below award wage)
SPRC	Social Policy Research Centre, UNSW
RTO	Registered Training Organisation
UWA	University of Western Australia
UNSW	University of New South Wales, Sydney

Short summary

Good Sammy Enterprises (GSE) is a not-for-profit social enterprise in Western Australia. GSE is trialling new models of employment support to people with intellectual disability to build their capacity and secure open employment outside GSE. This interim evaluation summarises the process and outcomes to the end of 2024.

The traineeship and licences trial is for 1.5 years (September 2023 to December 2025). The trial is aiming for 60 participants in selected GSE sites in Perth and across Western Australia, with a home base of Canning Vale. The hybrid open employment trial is for 3 years (September 2023 to September 2026). The trial is aiming for 100 participants and 10 employers across Western Australia.

Trial processes. The trials established new processes in GSE to engage with trial participants, employers and partners in community involved in training and employment support. Successful elements included coordinators to manage the relationships, payment to participants and inclusive adjustments in the training and workplaces. The participants were supported by mentors from GSE, workplace supervisors, corporate service roles, community partners and family. It is too early to assess the effectiveness of the processes to prepare participants and employers for mainstream employment relative to direct transitions to open employment.

Outcomes for participants. Most people in the traineeship and licences trial completed the training. They did not start open employment due to completing the traineeships first or they were school students. Hybrid trial participants worked in provision of service jobs, arranged and employed by GSE. Most participants in both trials liked the work experience. The participants' work experience in the trials were either participation as part of a registered training course or provision of service jobs. The arrangements responded to the person's preference to change placements, hours and training programs. They gained confidence to continue to work towards finding a paid job. At the time of this interim report, no one had yet transitioned out of GSE employment. Income increased for participants in both trials.

Impact on employers. The businesses that used the provision of service jobs adjusted work arrangements, such as tasks on different days, hours, speed, in new ways, with supports alongside. The presence of people with disability in the workplace gradually meant some employers were open to increasing work opportunities. This approach builds toward the goal of adjusting workplace inclusiveness. Offering part time or full time award wage employment was a future goal.

Impact on GSE business model. A goal of the trials is to transform GSE from a closed employment model to embedding the systems, relationships and pathways to support people with disability to gain and maintain open employment. GSE management is committed to similar principles to the evidence about 10 principles to achieve that change (Section 1.2).

Executive summary

Good Sammy Enterprises (GSE) is a for-purpose social enterprise with a mission to create employment opportunities for people with disability in Western Australia. GSE is trialling new models of employment support to assist people with disability to build their capacity for open employment, and to secure open employment in workplaces outside GSE.

The Social Policy Research Centre (UNSW) and Centre for Social Impact (CSI) UWA are evaluating the GSE open employment trials. The purpose of the report is to evaluate the impact, outcomes and effectiveness of the trials for open employment of people with disability.

The traineeship and licences trial runs for 1.5 years from September 2023 to December (originally April) 2025. The trial aims to include up to 60 participants with an intellectual disability over 18 months. It operates in selected GSE sites in Perth and across Western Australia, with a home base of Canning Vale, Greater Perth.¹

The hybrid open employment trial is for 3 years from September 2023 to September 2026. The trial aims to include up to 100 participants with disability across three years. It aims to work with 10 mainstream employers across Western Australia.

Trial processes and implications for evaluation

The design of the trials relies on establishing new processes in GSE and employer and employment-service partnerships in the community. These changes include engaging with trial participants to enrol and maintain training or work. They also include forming partnerships with employers and partners in the community involved in training, employment support and employment. Successful elements so far included establishing positions for coordinators to manage the trials and relationships, payment to participants and inclusive adjustments in the training and workplaces.

At this point of the trials, it is too early for the evaluation to draw conclusions about the effectiveness of the processes in the trials to prepare participants and employers for mainstream employment relative to direct transitions to open employment.

Implications of the interim findings to be evaluated in the remainder of the trials are about the extent of GSE and partners' inclusive practices to adapt the training and workplaces outside of GSE, the quality of the community partnerships and support to trial participants to find and maintain paid work of interest to them. The trials are

¹ <https://goodsammy.com.au/jobs-and-training/training-programs/>

expected to continue to develop the way participants are engaged with training and work opportunities and the support they receive; and the development of GSE systems to provide that support and the work outcomes the participants achieve.

New data in the remainder of the evaluation will contribute to evaluating the effectiveness of these changes. Quantitative data from GSE administrative systems and surveys are expected to become available to measure change for the participants, employers and GSE. Broader interview data about how GSE and participants engage with parts of the trials will also be collected. These data will generate evidence about the effectiveness of nationally accredited training and hybrid options and how the models contribute to successful open employment outcomes for people with intellectual disability and transitions into open employment.

Outcomes for participants

Most people in the traineeship and licences trial completed their training but did not commence open employment. This is primarily due to the long duration of the traineeships, which take up to 18 months to complete, with the open employment engagement occurring towards the end and after traineeship completion. This is also because most trainees were school students, who were not seeking open employment until they completed school. Some people did not complete car licences due to health or other inclusion factors. School based participants could be expected to continue to plan for work in 2025. Hybrid trial participants worked in provision of service jobs, arranged by GSE. GSE uses the provision of service model to build participant experience and confidence within an open employment workplace, while maintaining GSE supports, with the long-term goal of open employment. No one transitioned out of GSE employment yet. Income increased for participants in both trials.

Most participants in both trials liked the work experience and content. Arrangements were flexible in response to the person starting in a position, for example, they could change placements, hours and training programs. This flexibility was a way to respond to the person's interest. The participants were supported by mentors from GSE, workplace supervisors, corporate service roles, community partners and family. Not all community partners (RTO, DES, schools) were sufficiently inclusive or made adjustments to meet the needs of the participants. Social connections were mainly isolated to the ADE context for both trials because of the reliance on the provision of service model, which did not encourage employers to make workplace adjustments for social connections.

The participants' work experience in the trials were either participation as part of a registered training course (licence or traineeship) or provision of service positions. These work experiences gave them confidence to continue to work towards finding a

paid job. The interim qualitative data samples were small for all stakeholder groups. Early emerging evidence was that the trials were contributing to participants' achievement of longer-term employment goals and positively affecting other outcomes, including confidence, personal growth and economic dignity.

The future longitudinal qualitative and quantitative data will answer whether the early positive outcomes can be sustained over time and whether the hybrid trial, as it matures (increase of staff capacity and connections to other community/government services), can progress participants' employment towards achieving participants' longer term employment goals.

Impact on employers

GSE focus while establishing the trials was to form relationships with large employers to offer jobs, mainly through provision of service arrangements. The businesses that used the provision of service adjusted arrangements to these positions and workers, such as tasks to occur at different days, hours, speed, in new ways, with supports alongside.

Interactions between GSE and employers then shifted to ensuring inclusive onboarding and safeguarding practices within the administrative processes for participants with disability in the workplace. The presence of participants in the workplace gradually meant some employers were open to increasing work opportunities. Some employers slowly increased demand for more provision of service workers, more shifts and diverse employment opportunities.

This approach builds from a small employer commitment to the goal of adjusting workplace inclusiveness. These employers offering part time or full time award wage employment remains a future goal. The process required extended time to achieve employment outcomes, especially for people with intellectual disability who have long connections and are accustomed to working in a supported wage environment.

At the time of this report, the evaluation had limited evidence about employers' experience and engagement in the trials. No firsthand data were available from the 9 mainstream employers involved in the trial programs (e.g. about changes to workplace practices, commitment to inclusive employment outcomes, or challenges employer faced). This gap will be prioritised for the final report.

Impact on GSE business model

One goal of the trials is to transform GSE from a closed employment model to supporting people with disability through training, work experience and mentor support to gain and maintain open employment. The evidence in the literature about the 10 principles to achieve that change is summarised in Section 1.2. GSE management

report the trials aim to achieve that business transformation through a commitment to similar principles.

It is too early in the trials and evaluation to know the extent to which GSE is transforming to a transition pathway for people with disability into open employment. Future evaluation will require data about the 10 principles to be able to address the evaluation questions about the relationship between the trials and a transformed business model.

Implications for the evaluation

The evaluation aims to assess the impact of the funding partnership with the Paul Ramsay Foundation and other funders on GSE. To date the evaluation has no data about the influence of the trials on the transformation of GSE. The evaluation will seek to collect this data through the longitudinal interviews. The future economic analysis in the evaluation will require data to analyse the impact of the trials on the GSE business model including on sustainability of the trials beyond the existing grants.

1 Introduction to Good Sammy open employment evaluation

1.1 Good Sammy Enterprises

Good Sammy Enterprises (GSE) is a for-purpose social enterprise and charity with a mission to create employment opportunities for people with disability in Western Australia. For over 60 years they have provided jobs for people with disability and intellectual disability within their social enterprises. The enterprises include retail, with 29 op shops and e-commerce, recycling, logistics, hospitality, property care, warehousing and office administration. GSE is an all-abilities employer, of the 840 employees approximately half have a disability. GSE is also a registered provider for the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), providing employment supports to people with disability.

In 2023, GSE was funded by two philanthropic grants to deliver two open employment and traineeship pilots. GSE is trialling the two models of employment support to assist people with disability to identify their strengths and interests, gain skills and accreditation and with the right support enable people with intellectual disability to secure open employment in the community. A second objective of the trials is to learn how specialist disability employers, like GSE, can play a role in the transition of people with disability in ADEs into award wage mainstream employment.

The vision of GSE is to transform workplaces and employer attitudes so more people with intellectual and other disability have access to employment aligned with their personal goals. To achieve this, GSE use a range of activities and processes to develop and build skills, confidence, employment pathways and work opportunities for people with disability.

GSE and funders commissioned the Social Policy Research Centre (SPRC) UNSW and the Centre for Social Impact (CSI) UWA to evaluate the two pilot open employment trials.

1.2 People with intellectual disability in employment

The rate of people with disability in paid work remains persistently low (AIHW, 2022). People with disability are twice as likely to be unemployed or work fewer hours compared to people without disability (AHRC, 2016; AIHW, 2022; Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2020). Most people with intellectual disability in Australia in paid work continue to work in disability specific employment settings (NDIA, 2020; Wilson, Crosbie, Qian-Khoo, & Campbell, 2022). Often people with intellectual disability who secure work in open employment do not have sustained work opportunities (Meltzer, Robinson, & Fisher, 2020; Ruhindwa, Randall, & Cartmel, 2016).

The primary barriers to open employment for people with intellectual disability are two types, structural and systemic, as well as attitudinal. Since the 1980s, policies and programs have directed people with higher support needs to work in ADEs, where they work mostly in segregated settings and receive less than the full national minimum wage (Disability Royal Commission, 2023). Once connected to an ADE, most people with disability remain in disability specific employment, with few people shifting to open employment (Kregel et al., 2020; NDIA, 2020; Wilson et al., 2022).

Social connection, feelings of belonging and being valued and respected at work, are central determinant for the sustainability of open employment (Meltzer et al., 2020; Robinson, Hill, Fisher, & Graham, 2020; Sharpe, Hutchinson, & Alexander, 2022).

International evidence about supporting people with intellectual disability and higher support needs to gain and sustain community employment, points to core good practices for inclusive employment (Alexander, Gendera, Robinson, Fisher, & Howe, 2023; Sharpe et al., 2022):

- Working with employers to raise awareness, build disability inclusion confidence and provide tailored support to employers and workplaces to adapt practices, policies and create inclusive workplace cultures.
- ‘Place and train’ models of employment support, where the emphasis is on job placement in a preferred workplace and second, providing tailored employment support to the person with disability and the employer.
- Ensuring people with disability in open employment have ongoing support (including practical workplace adjustment, transport, job development, coaching and

mentoring) so they continue to develop in their role, in confidence and feel socially included and belong in paid work.

- Supporting young people in their final years of school to have work placements that reflect their interests and employment goals.

The introduction of the NDIS shifted funding and policy directions away from segregated employment. The aim was to create new employment opportunities and redesign employment support. In addition to reasonable adjustment requirements on employers, the NDIS has the potential to facilitate high levels of support in all workplaces. These changes are potential pathways for open inclusive employment for all people with disability who want paid work (Wilson et al., 2022). To achieve inclusive employment for people with higher support needs the Disability Royal Commission (DRC) report (2023) also found that major support services and sectors needed to undergo reform. The DRC recommended major changes to Disability Employment Services (DES), increasing inclusive employment opportunities in the public sector and leveraging government influence to boost inclusive practices in the private sector.

Inclusive community employment of people with intellectual disability and people with higher support needs can be complex, requiring collaboration, vision and investment of government, private companies and employers, services and policy reforms. Lessons from the redevelopment and transformation of closed employment settings in other countries can inform the direction of ADEs' transformation in Australia.

A prolonged program of research and evaluation in USA is a consolidated source of evidence on the changes required. Lyons and colleagues (2022) examined the results of a technical transformation project on a sheltered workshop environment to change the organisational structure and services to people with intellectual and developmental disability. The project was informed by a Delphi study that identified 10 elements of successful transformation (Lyons, Timmons, Cohen-Hall, & LeBlois, 2018). The participating organisations joined a community of practice to implement the elements. The study found positive results where conditions were met included, preparing people for competitive integrated employment; facilitating an active, person-centred job placement process; engaging key stakeholders in job development; and focusing on individual job placement in the context of organisational transformation.

The **10 elements for successful transformation** of closed employment settings to employment support for open employment with full wages in the USA (Lyons et al 2018) were,

1. Explicit commitment to integrated employment, including measurable goals for the organisational change
2. Organisational culture change to value inclusion and no longer support closed work or less than full wages
3. Person centred job placement process, one person at a time
4. Internal and external communication plan about expectation, process and celebration
5. Reallocated resources towards a post-transformation model
6. Staff professional development
7. Customer engagement including self-advocates, families and business
8. Accountability measures for baseline, data and communicating change
9. Holistic approach to the person's needs and relationships; and
10. Diverse community partnerships to promote exchange and influence.

The implications are that to meet the right to work of people with intellectual disability, employment support must take a dual track of closing or transforming closed employment, while also directly addressing opportunities for open employment and tailored person-centred support for people to succeed and thrive in community employment. The goals of the GSE open employment trials are to contribute to these two tracks. These elements are applied in Section 5.2.

1.3 Evaluation approach and methods

The approach for this developmental evaluation is codesign of evaluation methods with program stakeholders and people with disability. The approach uses inclusive research practice, involving advisors with disability in the design and data analysis stages to deliver sound findings reflecting the lived experience and priorities of people with disability.

The evaluation of the trials is designed to assess the process, impact and outcomes from the two trials using a longitudinal mixed methods design. The core evaluation methods include program data review (documents and administrative data collected by GSE), stakeholder interviews (GSE staff and managers, employers, program partners, like RTOs, schools and family members), inclusive stories of most significant change and outcome surveys with all participants with intellectual disability in the traineeship/licences and the hybrid open employment trial.

The longitudinal mixed methods evaluation aims to find the impact, outcomes and processes that were effective in the trials to achieve the intended outcomes for participants with disability, with a particular focus on

1. Impact and outcomes for participants with disability and their families
2. Impact on mainstream employers
3. Impact on the GSE business model (replicability and scalability of OE models)
4. Impact and lessons for systemic change and advocacy
5. Lessons for the partnership between GSE and the two funders.

Table 2 is an overview of the key evaluation questions mapped against the evaluation data sources. Appendix A has a detailed list of evaluation questions guiding the 18-month and 3-year research.

Table 1. Core evaluation questions by evaluation data

	Program document review (policies, framework, reports)	Interviews - staff, managers, partners, employers, policy makers	Stories of change – people with disability from interviews and observations	Program data and economic analysis (Outcome, output trial data compared to GSE and govt datasets)
1. Impact on participants with disability. OE outcomes for people with disability after six, twelve and eighteen months?		✓	✓	✓
Impact of trials on other outcomes - PwD social, emotional and skills development		✓	✓	✓
2. Impact of trials on mainstream employers (changes to employer practices, inclusion confidence, retention)	✓	✓	✓	
3. Impact on the GSE business model	✓	✓	✓	✓
4. Generalising from the trials				
What is the potential of the employment models to be replicated and scaled up (other ADEs, social enterprises)?	✓	✓	✓	✓
Impact of trials on systemic change and advocacy		✓	✓	
5. Lessons for the partnership between GSE and the two funders		✓	✓	

See Appendix A Evaluation questions

2 Implementing the open employment trials

This section presents the findings about how the trials were designed and the experience of implementing the trials. The two trials are presented separately, with a descriptive overview of key activities, processes, systems and support mechanisms. Appendix C is a visual overview of GSE processes relevant to the trials in the Program logic and refer to the description of GSE activities and processes. The outcomes for participants from the trials are presented in Section 3.

Evaluation questions about trial processes

- i. What aspects of each model are contributing to successful open employment outcomes and for whom? In particular,
 - How do nationally accredited training programs (traineeships and licence programs) contribute to open employment outcomes?
 - How does providing hybrid employment across ADE and open settings prepare participants and employers for mainstream employment relative to direct transitions?

2.1 Summary of trial processes and implications for evaluation

The design of the trials relies on establishing new processes in GSE and employer and employment-service partnerships in the community. These changes include engaging with trial participants to enrol and maintain training or work. They also include forming partnerships with employers and partners in the community involved in training, employment support and employment. Successful elements so far included establishing positions for coordinators to manage the trials and relationships, payment to participants and inclusive adjustments in the training and workplaces.

The traineeship and licences trial runs for 2 years from September 2023 to December (originally April) 2025. The trial aims to include up to 60 participants with an intellectual disability over 18 months. It operates in selected GSE sites in Perth and across Western Australia, with a home base of Canning Vale, Greater Perth.²

² <https://goodsammy.com.au/jobs-and-training/training-programs/>

The hybrid open employment trial is for 3 years from September 2023 to September 2026. The trial aims to include up to 100 participants with disability across three years. It aims to work with 10 mainstream employers across Western Australia.

At this point of the trials, it is too early for the evaluation to draw conclusions about the effectiveness of the processes in the trials to prepare participants and employers for mainstream employment relative to direct transitions to open employment.

Implications of the interim findings to be evaluated in the remainder of the trials are about the extent of GSE and partners' inclusive practices to adapt the training and workplaces outside of GSE, the quality of the community partnerships and support to trial participants to find and maintain paid work of interest to them. The trials are expected to continue to develop the way participants are engaged with training and work opportunities and the support they receive and GSE systems to provide that support and the work outcomes the participants achieve.

New data in the remainder of the evaluation will contribute to evaluating the effectiveness of these changes. Quantitative data from GSE administrative systems and surveys are expected to become available to measure change for the participants, employers and GSE. Broader interview data about how GSE and participants engage with parts of the trials will also be collected. These data will generate evidence about the effectiveness of nationally accredited training and hybrid options and how the models contribute to successful open employment outcomes for people with intellectual disability and transitions into open employment.

2.2 Implementing the traineeship and licences trial

Design of the traineeship and licences trial

The traineeship and licences trial aims to build participants' skills, confidence and work experience. The trial supports people with intellectual disability to undertake and complete a nationally recognised certification (Cert 2 and Cert 3) or a licence (car or forklift) to prepare for future employment. Traineeship candidates choose from a range of supported environments: retail (GSE op shops), warehousing, hospitality and office administration. The goal of the trial is for participants to complete the certification or licence and seek paid employment with GSE support for open employment or hybrid.

Trainees and licensees receive support and skills from various professionals, depending on their pathway and support needs: education assistants through their school, RTO staff, licence training providers, GSE staff (mentor, managers, staff and managers in op shops) and their family.

Most trainees are school students in their final years of high school (years 11-13). The licensees are school students and existing GSE employees and other people with disability. Participants in traineeships are paid for their hours worked during the traineeship pay rates ranged from \$10.49 to \$21.31 per hour. Pay rates were determined by the person's current year at school or their final year of education when they had completed school. The licensees received a free program that covers the cost of obtaining the licence (hours for learning, practice and licence). Table 2 summarises the participants in the trial to January 2025.

Table 2. Traineeship and licences trial participants by recruitment and qualification and employment outcomes

	Qualification by recruitment source				
	Traineeship		Car licence		Forklift licence
	School	Adults*	School	Adults*	Adults*
Qualification outcome					
Total started	21	12	2	17	19
1. Withdrew	7	4	0	1	0
2. Completed, achieved qualification	1	1	0	2	18
3. Completed course, did not achieve qualification	-	-	2	0	1
4. Yet to complete, still studying	13	7	0	14	0
Employment status at time completed course					
5. Not employed	1	1	1	16	11
6. Employed at GSE	0	0	0	2	4**
7. Employed hybrid GSE and open job	0	0	1	0	4**
8. Employed open job	0	0	0	0	0

Source: GSE administrative data, January 2025

Notes: *Forklift and car licence participants included current GSE employees and other people with disability. ** GSE employees before qualification

The positions and partnerships for the traineeship and licences trial are:

Traineeship Coordinator. The Traineeship Coordinator oversees the trial. The position is central for coordination, troubleshooting and relationship building with other

stakeholders and partners involved in the program (schools, RTOs, trainees and their families).

Schools. The traineeship trial established connections with schools through principals and VET, Workplace Learning and Careers Coordinators. Schools refer trainees who wish to complete a Cert 2 and Cert 3 accreditation and work alongside the RTO provider supporting students in their learning and course achievement.

Registered Training Organisations. RTOs document and certify when the trainees attain their nationally recognised qualifications. The RTO role is to check in with trainees regularly (3-4 weeks) and make inclusive adjustments to support their learning and communicate progress with schools and families.

Accreditation training providers for licences. GSE partnered with mainstream registered licence providers who have expertise working inclusively to train people for car and forklift licences.

Experience of implementing the traineeship and licences trial

Key elements of the trial to date

A central process in the GSE traineeship and licence trial was the **traineeship coordinator role**. The position was key to recruiting and enrolling participants, managing and building partnerships with schools and VET counsellors, selecting inclusive RTOs, liaising between parents, RTOs, school and the traineeship participants. This role was vacated during this phase of the trial and took some months to replace. The absence of one informed central point of contact affected delivery of the trial due to communication, administrative workload and little background in VET to make decisions to progress the trial.

Another factor contributing to success in the traineeship program was the **financial component**. Participants completed accredited training, while receiving an income for their time working in the traineeship. Participants, family, teachers and program stakeholder commented that the 'offer was too good' to be true. Earning a decent wage was an incentive for young people to try something they might have otherwise not considered. Similarly, the traineeship program covering the cost of licence practice hours and accreditation reduced barriers to access.

An approach that contributed to success in the traineeship and licences trial was **inclusive adaptations** and **adjustments** to the learning needs of the participants. RTOs and licence accreditors worked within an inclusive practice framework (e.g. in the forklift licence program) to achieve completion of training and certification of most

registered participants. In other areas, like the car licence or retail traineeships, the inclusion adaptations varied and participants with fewer adaptation requirements were more likely to remain engaged in the trial. A small number of participants in retail traineeships exited the program (Table 2). The traineeships required school leavers to complete a minimum Certificate 2 or 3, which probably meant that schools and teachers were less likely to select students with complex or higher support needs to participate in the trial, according to GSE staff.

In this **first stage of the trial**, some participants had more options than others, depending on their location, the types of training placements available in GSE at the time of enrolment and GSE connections with community partners, including RTOs, schools or DES, with commitment to quality inclusive practices. Participants with limited access to public or other transport options had restricted options for placement. GSE provided transport regularly for the benefit of participants and employers. Some participants said they were placed in work positions they had little interest in, but they were restricted to what was on offer at the time in a suitable location, until they could change to a different option. Some trainees seemed to be in positions they had little interest in, but they were restricted to what was on offer, until they could change to a different option, according to trainees and GSE staff.

These early experiences are informing how GSE is refining the onboarding, school and family liaison, employer engagement and traineeship processes at GSE.

Implications for evaluating the trial

Implications of the interim findings for the remainder of the trial are about the extent of these inclusive practices, the quality of the community partnerships and support for paid employment.

The first general implication is about how GSE is **addressing adjustments for inclusivity** in training, certification and licences through direct support and engagement with partners who are committed to inclusive practice. This question has implications for which participants are selected into the trials, how they are encouraged to participate, how their support needs are met, how their confidence is built that adjustments will be made and which choices they can make about training and licences.

The second implication for the remainder of the evaluation is about the quality of the **community partnerships**. The partnerships with schools and RTOs (and potentially with DES and employers) affect the level of participant engagement, choice of traineeship and licence options and degree of inclusive practice (above). Establishing

and managing quality partnerships will therefore be critical to the success of the trials. It will also inform the broader question of the new complementary role of GSE in the employment support system, after ADE functions change (Section 5).

The third implication is how GSE and the partners facilitate participants’ **transition to paid employment outside of GSE**. As open employment is a new service model for GSE, the trial was not sufficiently established to have data about this goal.

2.3 Implementing the open employment hybrid trial

Design of the hybrid trial

The open employment hybrid trial is designed to support the permanent transition of people supported by GSE to open employment. The goal could include full time or part time work or hybrid work where the person continues part time work in GSE. Open employment in the trial is where GSE supports people with intellectual and other disability to identify their own strengths, employment goals and opportunities that meet their preferences for work and with support, transition to employment within an open job market with sufficient support to maintain the job. Table 2 summarises the participants in the trial to 2024.

Table 3. Hybrid open employment trial participants

		Recruitment source		
	Wage type	GSE	School	Other
Expressed interest in open employment		75+		10+
Open employment goal planning		~50		
GSE only	Supported	340		
Hybrid GSE and open employment	Provision of service	25	2	2
Hybrid GSE and open employment	Award	0		
Open employment part time only	Supported	25		
Open employment part time only	Award	0		
Open employment full time	Supported	0		
Open employment full time	Award	0		

Source: GSE administrative data, December 2024

The intended processes and partnerships in the hybrid trial are:

Open employment goals. Open employment goals are to be identified for all people with disability in GSE, at entry to the service, or for existing clients in retrospect. Interest to work outside GSE is an individual choice and not all GSE employees have identified an OE goal. Participants with OE goals are recorded in a central client data management system.

Employment goal planning. As part of the GSE service delivery, staff (community engagement leads, or Employment Pathways Coordinator - EPC) are to meet with people with disability and their trusted supporters to develop a personalised employment support plan. The plan is to outline the person's employment goals, strengths, interests, strategies and indicators to measure achievement. Goals are to be relative to their NDIS funding. The employment plan is to be reviewed regularly by an EPC (as part of the GSE management system), at least annually.

Relationships with employers. The open employment team is the link between people with disability and employers, engaging and supporting employers and establishing new relationships to potential future employers. The focus is on understanding employers' workforce needs and encouraging the creation of inclusive employment opportunities for people with disability.

Open employment provision of service. Employers can purchase provision of service jobs from GSE that is performed by one or more employees with disability. In this provision of service arrangement, the GSE Employment Development Coordinator is responsible for transitions, support, contracts and communication. For example, they manage the employee support and adjustment they need at work and organise a GSE mentor as required. This role is also responsible for administrative and contractual aspects of the model. They oversee the execution of the service agreement with the employer, execution of the assignment letter to the participant with disability. This provision of service arrangement is mostly applied to facilitate open employment opportunities for long-term GSE employees on supported wages. GSE pays the person a flat rate of \$15 per hour for employees on supported wages for hours worked in open employment. This rate is higher than work in GSE but less than award wages.

Customised employment. GSE is planning to use customised employment processes in the future for employment transitions for trainees, people not yet employed at GSE and people planning to stay in hybrid employment. Customised employment is a person-centred approach to employment supports, with the goal to tailor a job that fits the skills, interests, strengths and support needs of a person with disability. During the discovery stage, in-depth information is gathered about a person's motivation and

interest in work. This knowledge is later used to tailor an open employment job that suits the person.

Experience of implementing the hybrid trial

Factors driving progress in the hybrid trial establishment phase included building a diverse and qualified open employment team and designing procedures to align the organisation with open employment pathways. In the first year of the hybrid trial, GSE developed a suite of procedures, human resource and payroll systems to align with the trials.

As a result, GSE said all participants (people on supported wages) were asked, many for the first time, about their **open employment goals and interest** to work outside GSE. During the implementation stage the leadership teams were also working to develop a database for seamless integration, identification, transfer of people in and out of work in GSE supported employment and hybrid options. As part of the **organisational redirection** some resources were added to key roles, for example the EPC (Employment Pathway Coordinators) in charge of supporting existing GSE employees into employment pathways. The coordinators have an active case load of on average 60 people.

GSE started using **peer influence and storytelling** to communicate and share the early experiences of people working in GSE and hybrid open employment with other employees to increase awareness and motivation for people who have worked in GSE for a long time and may be hesitant to try unfamiliar options outside of GSE.

Questions arising from the interim evaluation for GSE

These initial process findings raise questions for the remainder of the evaluation. The first question is how will the hybrid trial create and diversify open employment options? These changes would address people's individual employment goals and broaden employment opportunities beyond provision of service jobs to part-time and full-time award wage employment transitions for people currently employed on supported wages. GSE is aware the need to address the risks of the provision of service approach, such as when employees are not interested in the job content and context and when employers are not required to be engaged in workplace change to build inclusion confidence, workplace adjustments, invest in inclusion organisational changes and workforce inclusion awareness and capacity building. The ways GSE is addressing the risks include participants moving through different roles; employers engaging in workplace change discussions; and beginning to implement job carving and job customisation practices.

Second, the question arises for the evaluation about how the hybrid trial intends to navigate the diversity of employment participants' goals and interests. Some participants in provision of service hybrid employment have showed interest in "trying more workplaces" (diversification of skills, working in different workplaces with diverse people) after they overcame initial uncertainty about participating. Others had not expressed an interest in the type of job they were placed in.

Customised employment and support based on an employment first approach are evidence-based practices (Kamau & Timmons, 2018; Moore, Friedman, Sevak, Stapleton, & O'Neill, 2017; B. Taylor, 2015). These practices have tested ways to address people's work interests and to build sustainable positions and inclusive workplaces. They include supporting a person to develop aspirations outside the closed employment setting, and developing customised employment for that person in response to their aspiration (J. P. Taylor, Avellone, Wehman, & Brooke, 2023; Wehman et al., 2018)(Hemphill & Kulik, 2017). The processes prioritise identifying the persons' core values and strengths, start with a work placement in open employment or relevant industry where on the job training and other tailored support can be offered. These models commonly focus on placing one person at a time or working with small number of people who have a shared employment goal and interest.

3 Outcomes of participants with disability

The section presents the findings about the evaluation questions about participant outcomes (Appendix A) for both trials. The discussion refers to participants' stories of change in Appendix B. It draws implications for gaps in knowledge about the projects to be addressed in the longitudinal evaluation and concludes with a discussion of processes in the two trials. The section discusses the factors that contributed to or hindered employment outcomes for trial participants, changes to non-employment and other outcomes

- Job satisfaction
- Choice and flexibility about open employment
- Customisation, employment meeting work interests and goals
- Support and mentorship
- Social connection and belonging at work
- Employer inclusion practices and workplace changes
- Vision, expectations and planning for future employment
- Economic dignity
- Independence and personal growth.

3.1 Summary of outcomes of participants

Most people in the traineeship and licences trial are still completing their training (Table 2) and are not yet ready to commence open employment. This is primarily due to the long duration of the traineeships, which take up to 18 months to complete, with the open employment engagement occurring towards the end and after traineeship completion. This is also because most trainees were school students, who were not seeking open employment until they completed school. Some people were continuing to work towards completing car licences due to health and other factors. School based participants could be expected to continue to plan for work in 2025. Hybrid trial participants worked in provision of service jobs, arranged by GSE. GSE uses the provision of service model to build participant experience and confidence within an open employment workplace, while maintaining GSE supports, with the long-term goal of open employment. No one transitioned out of GSE employment yet. Income increased for participants in both trials.

Most participants in both trials liked the work experience and content. The arrangements were flexible in response to the person starting in a position, for example, they could change placements, hours and training programs. This flexibility was a way to respond to the person's interest. The participants were supported by mentors from

GSE, workplace supervisors, corporate service roles, community partners and family. Not all community partners (RTO, DES, schools) were sufficiently inclusive or made adjustments to meet the needs of the participants. Social connections were mainly isolated to the ADE context for both trials because of the reliance on the provision of service model, which did not require employers to make workplace adjustments for social connections.

The participants' work experience in the trials were either participation as part of a registered training course (licence or traineeship) or provision of service positions. The trainees in these work experiences were based at GSE in positions relevant to the certificate courses. For example, trainees studying retail were placed at GSE op shops, trainees studying logistics were placed the GSE warehouse in Canning Vale and hospitality trainees were placed at GSE hospitality locations. Provision of service positions included GSE's property care and gardening business and other social enterprises, as well as mainstream provision of service contracts. These work experience opportunities gave them confidence to continue to work towards finding a mainstream paid job.

The interim qualitative data samples were small for all stakeholder groups. Early emerging evidence was that the trials were contributing to participants' achievement of longer-term employment goals and positively affecting other outcomes, including confidence, personal growth and economic dignity.

The future longitudinal qualitative and quantitative data will answer whether the early positive outcomes can be sustained over time and whether the hybrid trial, as it matures (increase of staff capacity and connections to other community/government services), can progress participants' employment towards achieving participants' longer term employment goals.

3.2 Impact on work

Evaluation questions on participant outcomes

- a. To what extent are GSE's traineeship and hybrid trial models effective at achieving open employment outcomes for people with intellectual disability after six, twelve and eighteen months - and relative to the baseline at GSE and to other ADE and to DES providers? How do effects vary between different cohorts and demographic groups?
- b. To what extent have the traineeship and hybrid trials achieved the employment goals of the participants and relative to the baseline of direct transitions?
- c. To what extent have the trials resulted in increases in the weekly incomes of participants after six, twelve and eighteen months?

Traineeship trial. The priority was for participants to commence and complete traineeships and licence accreditation. One trainee was offered part time open employment. Most other trainees and licensees have not engaged in open employment opportunities or started workplace customisation outside GSE (Table 2). Some participants completed parts of open employment planning, some together with family members, identifying future open employment aspirations aligned and outside of their current employment skills development. The main outcomes from the traineeship trial to date are building confidence, employment skills and social skills. Most participants in the forklift licence component completed their accreditation, people in the car licence program were either still taking practice lessons or resitting the tests.

Hybrid open employment trial. Approximately 20 participants are in hybrid employment as part of the provision of service model (Table 3). On average participants worked 4 to 12 hours weekly in paid jobs outside GSE. None of the participants were fully in open employment; one person was offered a full time open employment position, which they declined. No other participant was offered transition by the mainstream employer from provision of service (where the person remains employed through GSE) to be employed by the mainstream employer.

Income increased for participants in both trials, who previously had no income or lower supported wages. Trainees in the traineeship trial received an hourly wage depending on their current school year, for example Year 11 students received \$10.49/ hour while Year 12 students received \$11.55 / hour. One adult trainee was engaged in the program and was paid \$21.31/hour. Participants in the hybrid OE provision of service model were paid a flat rate of \$15/hour, above the supported disability wage but below award wages. Because average hours worked in the hybrid trial, on average, ranged from a few hours weekly (3-4) to a couple of days per week, the impact of wage growth was modest.

The trials were still in their establishment phase. There was no longitudinal data for analysis about the longer term trajectory or sustainability of open employment outcomes across either trial. Neither was evidence available to report on the employment outcomes relative to the baseline at GSE, to other ADE and to DES providers.

Implications for the evaluation are that the quantitative data will be critical to answering questions about the effectiveness of the two employment pathway models, including about their impact on longitudinal and sustained employment outcomes, achieving changes in participants' OE pathways (moving from provision of service model to part or full time OE award wage employment) and questions about variations between different cohorts.

3.3 Impact of factors on work outcomes

d. What factors have contributed to or hindered the durability of employment outcomes for participants?

- ***Job satisfaction***

Young people in the traineeships reported they were mostly satisfied with the program. Factors contributing to participants' satisfaction included enjoyment at work, acquiring new skills, working in a welcoming environment, tasks being adapted to learning needs and diversified, having choice about activities also the selection of their placement (e.g. changing from a retail to a hospitality traineeship).

The participants' roles in hybrid provision of service jobs were often aligned with their work tasks and responsibilities at GSE, for example, several people sorting recycling in GSE worked in recycling of resources in open employment. Other participants in hybrid provision of service jobs had the opportunity to learn and perform new skills as part of their hybrid job (e.g. painting and maintenance skills). Staff, mentors and participants themselves reported they enjoyed the diverse work tasks, acquiring new skills and working in different locations and sites (outdoors vs indoors work settings). Only limited qualitative and no quantitative data were available about job satisfaction or how newly created hybrid OE was meeting participants' longer term employment goals and overall job satisfaction.

- ***Choice and flexibility about open employment***

Flexibility in program delivery was a positive aspect for sustaining employment outcomes for people in both trials. The trials were managed flexibly enough to accommodate the expected and unexpected changes and make the program "work around people's needs as much as possible". Examples included trainees and employees in hybrid work shortening a workday or splitting one day into two shifts (over two days) to better suit the person in their situation and circumstances.

Participants in both trials were supported to make decisions and have some choice and say about their open employment. Traineeship programs were limited to the types of work available at GSE (Retail, Hospitality, Supply Chain and Business Administration). Several trainees changed their mind after commencing a traineeship. Participants in traineeships and licences were supported to transfer into a different option that better met their interests, such as a different licence (e.g. truck to car or forklift licence).

Similarly, participants in hybrid trial had some choice and were supported to change their mind. For example, one person who was offered full time open employment rejected the offer as they preferred to continue with hybrid. GSE staff said several other people in the hybrid trial reportedly ‘frequently changed their mind’ about attending a particular shift, a couple of participants decided to stop working in OE jobs entirely.

Some of the early hybrid placements may have been rushed, with insufficient social and other support in the new workplace (**Kenny, Story 1**). The longitudinal evaluation data will help clarify causes underlying why some participants in hybrid employment changed their mind. Early data suggest such changes could indicate that support was not available to make the workplace socially welcoming, or that people may be working in jobs that do not or only partly met their interests, skills and goals, or that participants with long-term established relationships at GSE needed more supported to adapt to changes to their new work and social environment.

- ***Customisation, employment meeting work interests and goals***

Outcomes from customising hybrid work were mixed. For some participants the customisation was around work safety and implementing the right level of support. A successful example of customisation was a participant who worked 4-8 hours a week without peers in a maintenance role. GSE staff reported that the person left GSE because they did not enjoy working there, later they sought the hybrid teams’ expertise and employer connections to find open employment. The person was an active member of other community recycling activities. The hybrid work role required walking around the parameters of the workplace collecting discarded items and rubbish, which aligned with the persons’ interests.

An example where OE customisation was less well executed was at [large government service]. **Benjamin (Story 4)** has an employment goal of running a café or becoming a barista. At the hybrid provision of service job, Ben manages restocking of coffee and tea items including large orders of milk and sorting of milks by due dates. His work involves managing and sorting mail which does not align with Ben’s interests or skill, so this part of the job is done by the GSE support worker. Another aspect about Ben’s work is that he did not have contact or integration with other workers, making him feel isolated, “I don’t get to meet many other people who work here” (Benjamin, Story 4).

- ***Support and mentorship***

Participants in both trials had access to a diverse range of formal and some informal support. The right level and type of support was critical for sustaining trainees and licensees’ participation in the traineeships and people’s outcomes in hybrid employment.

Support to trainees included GSE mentors, teacher assistants from school, RTOs, store managers, also family members providing support, such as transport training or drop off/pick up from the traineeship location. The licence training was mostly successful when the accreditation and learning program was tailored and adapted to meet the access and support needs of people with intellectual disability. For example, most participants in the forklift licence gained a certificate. The RTO training provider was described as ‘inclusive and understanding’. In other parts of the program (car licence and traineeships) some problems arose when the providers did not make sufficient adjustments in their practices and the support to meet the trainees’ needs (e.g. insufficient funding for practice hours in the car licence).

Similar, the stories of change with participants in hybrid employment and interviews with staff indicated participants mostly had sufficient support and mentorship. Support involved transportation to attend work and to perform work responsibilities safely, through supervisors, mentors. Some people also had other peers at work, which provided social connection and peer support.

- ***Social connection and belonging at work***

Evidence about social connection and belonging in the workplace was mixed for participants across both trials. Participants in the traineeship trial and their families said the participants felt included at work and part of a work community.

[Thomas] he enjoys the relationship, they are very understanding [at the store] and give him the opportunity to try every task available in the shop. He feels included and accepted at work. (Mother, participant in traineeship)

[Mike] says he enjoys it there. He never says they were unfriendly [the staff] or abrupt with him. [The staff] know how to work with people with special needs, they seem to really understand people with disability. They know how to get the best out of him. (Mother, participant in traineeship)

The evidence about social belonging and being part of the workplace community was weak for participants in hybrid employment. Some participants enjoyed working with peers at the same workplace, during similar hours. Other participants, who wanted to build social connections at work, worked alone and had no social or job integration with others, other than the paid GSE support/mentor (Kenny, Story 1 and Benjamin Story 4). Some participants in the hybrid trial chose to leave the program or were unhappy with their current work arrangements due to the lack of interpersonal interactions with colleagues. A person’s role not being clearly linked to other work and activities and establishing formal and informal workplace connections (communal morning tea,

buddy systems, collaboration with others on work tasks) affected the sustainability of employment outcomes and participants satisfaction with their work.

- ***Employer inclusion practices and workplace changes***

Data were limited about mainstream employers engaging proactively with the trials and the stated intention to create long term sustainable employment transitions and employment outcomes for people with intellectual disability. Most employers were only involved through provision of service arrangements. Employers were mostly involved in the transactional aspects of work, such as accounting, management of payment systems and hours worked/delivered by GSE in the hybrid provision of service model. Evidence was limited about employers proactively making changes to improve participant outcomes (social and work integration) or undertaking changes within that sustain employment outcomes (diversification of work opportunities, inclusion awareness training).

In summary, there was some evidence about factors that positively contributed to sustaining and creating positive employment outcomes for participants (right level of support, flexibility, choice, being supported to have a say about OE journey, being motivated at work). There were also mixed findings (e.g. regular changes about attending a hybrid work shifts, insufficient inclusion awareness and support for some traineeships) and limited evidence from employers' changes to confidently answer the question about the durability of OE outcomes in the two trials.

Evaluation implications. The longitudinal evaluation design, including quantitative analysis of surveys with participants in both trials, interviews with mainstream employers, staff and stakeholders in the program will help answer this question.

3.4 Impact on confidence to work

e. To what extent have the programs increased participants' confidence and preparedness for work?

Trainees and licensees reported they gained in confidence and work related skills in areas they enjoyed or imagined their future employment/careers. Participants experienced an increase in personal growth and confidence when they were motivated by their work and training, they had 'something interesting and meaningful to do'. It appears that learning skills meaningful to young people's interests and employment was a key to their engagement and satisfaction. For example, **Tameca (Story 2)**, who enjoyed cooking and wanted to work in a bakery once completing high school, gained skills and confidence in hospitality. Starting with 'simple tasks like cleaning' the

kitchen, Tameca soon tried out sensory tasks, kneading dough. After a couple of months of working with the GSE kitchen hospitality team, Tameca was proficient at following a recipe and baking a cake with little supervision.

The school students in the traineeship program (Table 2) gained a boost to their self worth from engaging in useful work and understanding possibilities for their lives after leaving school. GSE staff said many of the school students did not previously have a sense of directions for their lives after school.

There was some evidence about participants in hybrid employment **gaining confidence and preparedness** for open employment. Staff and mentors reported that participants felt a sense of achievement working outside GSE, trying new things and learning skills. Ben (Story 4) explained how working in an open workplace he had new responsibilities and was acquiring skills, which made him feel more confident and better prepared for work and achieving future work goals,

Since starting my new job [large government service] I feel a little more confident about myself and one day running my own café. I am learning new skills like planning, placing orders, restocking ... I didn't think I'd ever be able to do a job like that. I feel more confident to be able to do things if I put my mind to them now and I can ask for support when I get stuck. (Benjamin, Story 4).

Some **positive outcomes are documented** for most participants in the story of change data (Appendix B). The evidence about increases to preparedness for open employment are limited to a small qualitative sample. The longitudinal quantitative program and survey data will provide evidence about whether the early changes to participants skills and confidence translate into securing and sustaining OE in mainstream workplaces.

A question for the evaluation and GSE will be how the trial activities integrate with other inclusive training programs, such as at school, TAFE and other individualised or group NDIS funded supports; and whether this integration supports young people to achieve employment outcomes for young people in their final years of high school who are seeking to build vocational skills and experiences aligned with their future work goals.

3.5 Impact on wellbeing

- f. What other outcomes (e.g., wellbeing, confidence in addition to employment outcomes) did participants and their families experience as a result of the trials and open employment?
- g. How effective were the programs in addressing participants non-vocational needs?
- h. To what extent and how have the trials contributed to improved economic dignity and independence for participants?

- ***Vision, expectations and planning for future employment***

Several trainees formed goals about their employment future – from bus driver, community leader/politician, baker, gardener, inclusion support teacher, computer games designer, zookeeper. Several young people were also clear about how they wanted to achieve their goals by attending university or TAFE. Others were less clear or confident about their interests and future employment.

Family members said they attended open employment planning meetings at GSE, together with the person with disability, discussing trainees' interests, goals and identifying strategies to find community employment. These were documented in an individualised plan.

It was too early to see the impact of OE goal setting and planning on changes to young people's employment trajectories, expectations or choices about education pathways. A central outcome for families of young people in the traineeship trial was greater clarity, optimism and higher expectations for their family members' future and employment.

For us as a family, connecting with Good Sammy felt like winning, knowing someone is there to support us in helping Conrad with his transition to becoming a young adult ... I feared Conrad would end up pushing trolleys at a supermarket, now he is working in a retail store, that's better. I am more hopeful about his future. (Family member, traineeship)

Tony is happy, so we his family are happy! His younger sister, who also has a disability, she's inspired that her brother goes to work now, he is her role model. People with disability can have and deserve good jobs! (Mother, traineeship trial)

I am happy Eduardo found a job that's paying well that he likes, it is giving him a head start for his future. (Father, traineeship)

It has been a great learning experience for Sam and that's translated to us as a family. Now, we are more confident and happier about Sam leaving school and making his transition into the workforce. (Mother, traineeship)

Most trainees were still going through the traineeship program or completing licences and accreditation. Several trainees and family members expressed the expectation that GSE would assist with finding 'the right job' in the community once the person had graduated from the traineeship or completed the accreditation. Others were hopeful that if no 'other job come up' the participant could at least find work at GSE in closed employment, although the trials did not include an ongoing commitment to a job at GSE.

Most supported employees in GSE completed planning to identify and document their work goals as part of the hybrid trial processes. Kenny (Story 1), who had started in a recycling business, then moved to yard work for a logistics company, said he was 'really good at gardening' and content working in an 'outdoors environment', as this was closer to his 'dream job, gardening'. Kenny and Ben (Story 4) are two participants in hybrid work, who perceived the jobs a novel opportunity to earn more income, but the work was not yet aligned with their work goals. **Rich (Story 6)**, for example, discussed how the yard work for a logistics company was good because it added to the diversity of tasks 'breaking up' the week, but the work could be physically demanding. Rich's preference was to have 'even greater diversity at work', the option to continue in the hybrid program but do different jobs in diverse locations, with new people,

I like my work in the warehouse [GSE], it's also good that I get out one day a week and work outside [logistics company], I don't get as bored with my work and get to learn new things. [...] If there are options to do more work outside [provision of service job], to work at different sites and business every week that would be my preference. It's more interesting to go to different places, have different tasks to do and meet new people. (Rich, Story 6).

Insufficient evidence was available about how the trials addressed and met participants' non-vocational needs. The GSE academy delivered additional supports, like interview preparation, resume writing, social and communication skills developing. Data from GSE about the impact or relevance of these activities may be available for the final report.

- ***Economic dignity***

Across both trials, participants and other stakeholders (family members, program staff) reported strong evidence about people with disability feeling valued and motivated to earn an income and/or higher wages.

Young people in traineeships said the financial aspect of the traineeship was an incentive to 'get involved, in the first place', helping some young people hesitant about change and the uncertainty of the 'new' to decide to start the program. For participants in the licence component, the fact that the training hours and accreditation (drivers and forklift licence) were paid for by the trial removed barriers to participation and gave people opportunity to try out something 'outside the box'. Family members commented that because the traineeships were paid, it gave them confidence that the GSE program was well-intended, it is 'a genuine opportunity for young people to take the first steps into the world of employment, to learn skills in a supported environment and become more independent and prepared for work.' (Mother, traineeship).

We are satisfied with Good Sammy program because they give the person with disability real work opportunities like in the op shops, it's a supported and friendly environment, to gain certified training and skills. These work opportunities give people with disability opportunity to feel useful, become more independent and earn an income that's acceptable for a young person, it's a great program. (Father, traineeship program)

The trainees and other stakeholders in the program (staff, teachers, GSE managers) commented that young people in the traineeship program 'love making their own money', 'being paid' and 'feeling valued and appreciated' for their contributions at work. Earning an income was a central aspect of the design contributing to participants' engagement and satisfaction at work, as well as contributing to participants' growth in self-worth and independence.

Participants in hybrid employment were also motivated to earn higher wages and felt valued for being paid higher wages and incomes. However, less data were available from this participant group about the impact of wages on recognition and financial dignity.

- ***Independence and personal growth***

Evidence was emerging about participants in the traineeship trial increasing in personal growth and independence. Participants said they were motivated to learn to travel independently to work/training, practising different public transport routes (**Freddy,**

Story 7), showing an interest in money and how to manage it, examples included budgeting, saving for larger expenses, opening bank accounts, use of finance apps.

[Freddy's] enthusiasm is what we noticed! He wants to be more independent; he is better with money and more careful in planning his spending. That's something we have noticed. (Mother, traineeship program)

Family members observed how trainees, when excited about their traineeship, carefully planned for the day at work ahead of time. Some young people gained 'a heightened sense of self-esteem and achievement', which influenced other parts of their life and their openness to engage in new experiences – try new things at home, visit unfamiliar places or engage in social interactions.

4 Impact on employers

4.1 Summary impact on employers

GSE focus while establishing the trials was to form relationships with large employers to offer jobs, mainly through provision of service arrangements. The businesses that used the provision of service adjusted arrangements to these positions and workers, such as tasks to occur at different days, hours, speed, in new ways, with supports alongside.

Interactions between GSE and employers then shifted to ensuring suitable onboarding and safeguarding practices within the administrative processes for participants with disability in the workplace. The presence of participants in the workplace gradually meant some employers were open to increasing work opportunities. Some employers slowly increased demand for more provision of service workers, more shifts and diverse employment opportunities.

This approach builds from a small employer commitment to the goal of adjusting workplace inclusiveness. These employers offering part time or full time award wage employment remains a future goal. The process takes time to achieve employment outcomes, especially for people with intellectual disability who have long connections and are accustomed to working in a supported wage environment.

The evaluation had limited evidence about employers' experience and engagement in the trials to the end of 2024. No firsthand data were available from the 9 mainstream employers involved in the trial programs (e.g. about changes to workplace practices, commitment to inclusive employment outcomes, or challenges employer faced).

Evaluation question 2. Impact on employers

a. To what extent have inclusive employment practices become part of the practices of mainstream employers involved in the trials?

- How and to what extent did the trials contribute to changes in employers' practices of attracting, recruiting and retaining people with disability?
- How and to what extent did the proportion of employers' job applicants, overall workforce and executive team with disability change through the trials?
- What challenges did the employers encounter?

b. How and to what extent have the trials led to changes in the long-term capacity of mainstream employers and their employees to be confident employers of people with disability?

4.2 Experience of employers

At the start most employers were slow to engage in the trials. Interactions between GSE and employers to establish contact and administrative systems. As time went on, partnerships strengthened and knowledge about how to collaborate with each other increased for all parties.

Having a person or **people with disability in the workplace** through the provision of service model began to **influence** employer's approaches to **inclusive workplaces**. They gradually witnessed the benefits of committed and capable employees with disability, resulting in a gradual increase in demand for more labour. Several mainstream employers started offering more shifts, more diverse roles and deeper collaboration with GSE. One employer after about 1 year offered a full-time open employment position to an employee they knew through the provision of service arrangement, although the person declined the offer. This change demonstrates a positive outcome from the approach of 'getting a foot in the door' by building relationships with employers, people with disability demonstrating their capability and commitment to working in OE through hybrid positions.

Implications for the evaluation are that to answer the questions about employers the evaluation will require evidence from qualitative and quantitative data about the long-term impact of the hybrid trial on employers' capacity to engage, commit to and build inclusive employment within their organisations. Data are needed from the perspective of people with disability in hybrid employment about the impact of the hybrid work on their life, satisfaction with the work and how these positions meet people's longer term work goals and interests, so that they are sustained over time.

Implications from the limited data to date about the current hybrid trial is that it is a slow approach. It relies on first building familiarity through provision of service arrangements to then move into more sustainable and inclusive employment positions, where employers directly employ and take responsibility for employee support and workplace adjustments.

Other approaches to consider or incorporate could include

- Supporting people into open employment in workplaces specific to the person's interest (customised employment or place and train models)
- Building GSE workforce capacity for customisation and employer inclusive practices
- Engaging with employers to employ people directly and build employers' inclusion awareness and capacity for workplace adjustments.
- Engaging with DES providers to leverage their capacity and employer relationships to achieve open employment placements.

5 Impact on the GSE business model

5.1 Summary of impact from trials on business model

One goal of the trials is to transform GSE from a closed employment model to supporting people with disability through training, work experience and mentor support to gain and maintain open employment. The evidence in the literature about the 10 principles to achieve that change is summarised in Section 1.2. GSE management report the trials aim to achieve that business transformation through a commitment to similar principles.

It is too early in the trials and evaluation to know the extent to which GSE is transforming to a transition pathway for people with disability into open employment. Future evaluation will require data about the 10 principles to be able to address the evaluation questions about the relationship between the trials and a transformed business model.

Implications for the evaluation. The evaluation of the trials aims to assess the impact of the funding partnership with the Paul Ramsay Foundation and other funders on GSE. To date the evaluation has no data about the influence of the trials on the transformation of GSE. The evaluation will seek to collect this data through the longitudinal interviews. The future economic analysis in the evaluation will require data to analyse the impact of the trials on the GSE business model including on sustainability of the trials beyond the existing grants.

Evaluation question 3. Impact on the GSE business model

- a. What are the impacts of the traineeship and hybrid models and its associated outcomes on GSE's business model in the short, medium and longer terms?
- b. What do ongoing supports in employment look like for trial graduates? What is the role of ADEs in delivering this?
- c. What are the impacts of the models and any associated open employment outcomes on business for ADEs?
- d. What does it look like when GSE operates more as of a transition pathway instead of a destination employer?
- e. To what extent can these models be supported by existing funding streams?

Experience of changes to the GSE business model. It is too early to establish the effects and impact in the short and medium term from the trials on the GSE business model, in particular on the financial sustainability of the program streams or the associated employment outcomes of people currently in supported employment or new people with disability seeking employment support from GSE.

Some findings are emerging about **relationships and partnerships**. GSE was investing in increasing the connections with community partners, schools, RTOs, mainstream organisations and employers. A question for transforming GSE is how to establish a complementary role between the contribution of GSE expertise and the responsibilities of these community partners.

GSE was also **advancing their profile in the broader community** including with families and young people who may not know GSE or the diversity of services they offer or provide, including open employment planning and transitions for young people leaving school. It appears that the growth in the profile and expansion of GSE programs, for example through the school leavers traineeship program into regional communities (with distinct WA funding), means that more young people with disability and families were connected to and aware of GSE. The diversification of offerings and programs raised their expectations that GSE could support people to build skills and move into award wage jobs in the community.

The **hybrid trial design relies on provision of service arrangements**, which means GSE employees on supported wages remain with GSE. GSE has worked with NDIS to calculate costs associated with workplace supports (mentors) and the open employment team for future customisation of open employment. GSE has worked out how to claim supports delivered through the hybrid trial. They are resolving administrative and policy issues internally through GSE systems and building relationships with NDIS.

A **transformation question for GSE** is about how to avoid the risks of acculturating young people not yet connected to ADEs to becoming accustomed to closed employment through their traineeship or hybrid work experience. GSE has experience and expertise working with and supporting people long term accustomed to closed employment. The transformation is requiring GSE to adjust the content and approach of GSE staff, managers and systems to work with new people with disability and their families to focus on customised employment goals and supporting people to find and maintain positions in individualised workplaces.

6 Generalising from the trials

This section of the report will be completed in the final evaluation report, when data noted in the other sections are available for analysis.

6.1 Summary about generalising from the trials

6.2 Replicability and scalability of the trials

Evaluation question 4. Replicability and scalability of the trials

- a. What is the potential of GSE's model to be replicated by other ADEs and/or other social enterprises? What learnings from implementation inform replication in new sites?
- b. What insights do these trials provide for ADE transformation toward becoming an employer and provider of pathways into open employment of first choice?

6.3 Systemic change and advocacy

Evaluation question 5. Systemic change and advocacy

- a. How effective are the traineeship and hybrid models of employment at transitioning people with disability into open employment compared to the conventional pathways through Disability Employment Services?
- b. To what extent has the trials been successful in influencing policy, funding and practice related to employment services provided through NDIS and DES?
- c. To what extent has the trials been successful in influencing mainstream employer attitudes, capabilities and practices in employing people with a disability?
- d. How has GSE's advocacy efforts contributed to shifting policy, funding and practice within the disability employment sector?

Appendix A Evaluation questions

The evaluation will answer the following questions:

1. Impact on participants with disability

- a. To what extent are GSE's traineeship and hybrid trial models effective at achieving open employment outcomes for people with intellectual disability after six, twelve and eighteen months - and relative to the baseline at GSE and to other ADE and to DES providers? How do effects vary between different cohorts and demographic groups?
- b. To what extent have the traineeship and hybrid trials achieved the employment goals of the participants and relative to the baseline of direct transitions?
- c. To what extent have the trials resulted in increases in the weekly incomes of participants after six, twelve and eighteen months?
- d. What factors have contributed to or hindered the durability of employment outcomes for participants?
- e. To what extent have the programs increased participant's confidence and preparedness for work?
- f. What other outcomes (e.g., confidence, wellbeing in addition to employment) did participants and their families experience as a result of the trials and open employment?
- g. How effective were the programs in addressing participants non-vocational needs?
- h. To what extent and how have the trials contributed to improved economic dignity and independence for participants?
- i. What aspects of each model are contributing to successful open employment outcomes and for whom? In particular
 - How do nationally accredited training programs contribute to open employment outcomes?
 - How does providing hybrid employment across ADE and open settings prepare participants and employers for mainstream employment relative to direct transitions?

2. Impact on mainstream employers

- a. To what extent have inclusive employment practices become part of the practices of mainstream employers involved in the trials?

- How and to what extent did the trials contribute to changes in employers' practices of attracting, recruiting and retaining people with disability?
 - How and to what extent did the proportion of employers' job applicants, overall workforce and executive team with a disability change through the trials.
 - What challenges did the employers encounter?
- b. How and to what extent have the trials led to changes in the long-term capacity of mainstream employers and their employees to be confident employers of people with disability?

3. Impact on the GSE business model

- a. What are the impacts of the traineeship and hybrid models and its associated outcomes on GSE's business model in the short, medium and longer terms?
- b. What do ongoing supports in employment look like for trial graduates? What is the role of ADEs in delivering this?
- c. What are the impacts of the models and any associated open employment outcomes on business for ADEs?
- d. What does it look like when GSE operates more as of a transition pathway instead of a destination employer?
- e. To what extent can these models be supported by existing funding streams?

4. Replicability and scalability of the trials

- a. What is the potential of GSE's model to be replicated by other ADEs and/or other social enterprises? What learnings from implementation inform replication in new sites?
- b. What insights do these trials provide for ADE transformation toward becoming an employer and provider of pathways into open employment of first choice?

5. Systemic change and advocacy

- a. How effective are the traineeship and hybrid models of employment at transitioning people with disability into open employment compared to the conventional pathways through Disability Employment Services?
- b. To what extent has the trials been successful in influencing policy, funding and practice related to employment services provided through NDIS and DES?
- c. To what extent has the trials been successful in influencing mainstream employer attitudes, capabilities and practices in employing people with a disability?
- d. How has GSE's advocacy efforts contributed to shifting policy, funding and practice within the disability employment sector?

Appendix B Stories of significant change

Ten stories of change of people with disability in hybrid employment and traineeships and licences informed the findings of this report.

Some stories of most significant change were written by people with disability, others were collected with the input from trial participants by family members, GSE mentors and other supporters. The submitted stories have been modified or edited for consistency and length. All names in the stories are aliases.

At the end of the section are two stories of change with parents of traineeship participants.

Story of change 1: Kenny changing his mind about his work

Hi, I am Kenny, I like movies, bowling, dancing, church and I also like playing the drums.

I've been with Good Sammy for some years. One day Sylvie asked me if I wanted to try a job at Recycling business. I said yes.

The work at Recycling business is similar to what I do at Good Sammy warehouse. I like organising things into boxes.

At [Recycling business] it was strange to work at an unfamiliar place, but some of my colleagues from Good Sammy were there too, that made it a better experience.

We used to be six staff there, but now it's only two. I liked it a lot more when there was six staff because we could socialise at lunch and there was more of a community. I missed the social connection when there were only two employees from Good Sammy at Recycling business, that's why I stopped working there.

It was a noisy environment; I didn't like it there. I asked Sylvie if I can change my mind about the job, she said yes. So, I left that job.

Good Sammy, they help me with everything, Sylvie is good, Jamie is good too. They help me with things to do with my employment. I like working there.

Later Sylvie said there was a new job in the community and it would be very different, less noisy, than the first one. At first, I hesitated but I trust [my GSE mentor], so I gave the second job a go.

At Logistics company we do all sort of different stuff tidy up the gates and straps lying about, the truckies just throw them out. We tidy the carpet; we do small painting work. I enjoy the days I go out to [Logistics company] much better. Its outside, there is lots of machinery and I am with some of my friends. I've learnt a lot from doing these different tasks.

Working at [Logistics company] is closer to my dream job, gardening. In the future I would like to get

a job in [Warehouse], but there is a lot of paperwork and online forms. I'm really good at gardening.

When there is not much to do at [Logistics company], I can get a bit bored. I don't enjoy it as much. When there is lots to do, the day goes faster. When the work team is smaller, I enjoy my work less. I feel more motivated and happier when there are other people.

Key message from person's story

It's been a great experience to try something new. I liked that I could change my mind about work when it didn't suit me. I've learnt a lot of new skills.

I prefer my work when there's a bigger team, it's more fun and social. I'd recommend the program to others in Good Sammy who want to try out new things.

Story of change 2: Tameca gaining confidence and skills working as part of a team

I am 18 years old; I finished school last year. I like sketching and hot baths. I have pets at home, I love my dogs and rabbits and learning about other cultures.

I started the Good Sammy traineeship program so I can get experience working in a kitchen and working with a team. I enjoy cooking.

My dream job is working in a bakery and make my own sweets and pastries. I am really good at cakes. I have a very good memory. I can make a cake once or twice and can remember the recipe.

During my traineeship I get support, I get feedback on what I do well from my manager. I feel I am working with people who respect me. I am getting experience and learning the "do's and don'ts" of cooking and baking.

I like working there because it's quite and slow paced, but not too slow! It's a good environment. I can always ask [Matt] the chef cook for help.

When I started, I was doing simple tasks, like cleaning. It was boring. I started observing Matt in the kitchen and taking notes, memorising the recipes and steps. Then Matt asked me to do sensory recipes like pizza dough. I liked that. When Matt needed cakes, I said I can do them. I started baking more cakes, I have even made eclairs, that was a special treat!

What don't I like? Sometimes other people curse and there can be loud noises. I don't like curse words or noise.

Doing the traineeship helps me not only with getting work experience and I am learning about food safety and how to cook delicious meals. It also helps me with my routine – getting up early, getting ready for work, taking the bus and coming to work on time.

Story of change 3: Conrad being creative in an office admin traineeship

My name is Conrad I am in year 12 at [name] college. I attend the ED unit. My school is very good, they help me to get my work done on time. I like my play station and watching horror movies.

My teacher asked me if I was interested to learn new things and get paid for it [do a traineeship with Good Sammy], I said “yes, I also was a bit sceptical; trying out new things can make me feel anxious.” I had done work experience at Coles, but it was boring. I didn't learn much at all.

At Good Sammy, today, I work in the main office. It's an administration type traineeship. I get to use computers, prepare or fix up presentations, using PowerPoint and animations. I enjoy that, I want to be a game developer one day.

When I started [at Good Sammy] I wasn't sure what I wanted to do, I tried out sorting clothing in the warehouse for Containers for Change, I didn't enjoy that much it felt meaningless, I wasn't learning new things, just repeating the same thing over and over. I spoke to [mentor] and she supported me to change to an office based traineeship, once they found out that I liked working on technology and on computers.

The team I work with keep challenging me and I keep learning new things. I have used all Microsoft programs now but designing PowerPoints is my favourite! I get task to do and then have time to work out the solutions by myself, I enjoy that. Also, I can always ask for help when I need it.

My work is a friendly and good place to work. I also enjoy getting paid for my work. There are also boring things about my work, like when the task is too repetitive. Doing the written certificate tasks can feel like a burden, a chore sometimes.

Its been 7 months now in the office and I feel I learned a lot. I know different computer programs, can do my own PowerPoint presentation, I am more confident to speak to people at work.

I feel more hopeful, when I finish year 12 it will help me finding employment and making new friends. I also know that I can learn new things when a person takes the time and shows me how to do it. Also, when I am left alone to try it out for myself.

I have saved all my money from my traineeship and saving up for a new play station and computer games.

Main message you would like others to know? It can be difficult to start a new thing, like a job. I didn't know what I wanted to do, I had to try out different things. I learnt that I can speak up and change my mind about it later.

Having the GSE mentors helps me, I can talk to them when I am unhappy, want to change something with work. I am glad I started the traineeship with them!

Story of change 4: Benjamin starting a new job, trying to fit in socially

I am Ben, I love I love spending time with my fiancé Kim. I also enjoy the outdoors, going camping, fishing in the local creek and crabbing.

My manager at Good Sammy asked if I wanted to try out a different role at government service. At first, I was hesitant, the extra pay was a welcome bonus. I can get bored easily at work. Trying something new was exciting.

At [government service] I refill and restock the fridges, organise the milk by dates, prepare milk and other staples, get the orders in for tea and coffee. I attend the job together with a mentor [Lucy]. Having Lucy there for support and company is great, it makes my work easier when there are challenging tasks to do and more interesting.

I find with [government service] that the work is always different, also I get paid more than in my second job.

One day, I would love to own my own café. I love chatting to and serving people, I also enjoy being a leader. Helping people and having people who look up to me is something I enjoy.

I am a chatty and friendly guy, being around people is important to me. Unfortunately, the work at [government service] is a bit isolated, I don't get to meet many of the other people who work there. Sometimes the other staff can be a bit snobby. I don't expect deep conversation but someone saying hi in return would be nice. That's one thing I'd like to change about my new job.

Other than the social aspect I like my new job. I enjoy working at [government service] because there's no rush to finish the tasks. I don't like being rushed, it's stressful. As long as we get the work done, my manager seems happy.

Since starting my new job, I feel a little more confident about myself and one day running my own café. I am learning new skills like planning, placing orders, restocking, ... I didn't think I'd ever be able to do a job like that. I feel more confident to be able to do things if I put my mind to them now and I can ask for support when I get stuck.

Lucy, the mentor I have at [government service] is probably the best mentor I've ever had. She makes the work really fun and easy; we work well together as a team!

I really enjoy mixing up my work week, having a few hours at [government service] and then being at Good Sammy with my old mates.

Story of change 5: Melissa gaining personal independence and confidence

Hi, I am Melissa. I finished school last year. My family heard about the Good Sammy program and we asked about me getting a drivers licence. I live outside of town and it's hard for me to get around, go to uni or get a job without a licence.

When Good Sammy accepted me into the program and they said they would pay for my driver lessons, that was an exciting day for me.

I took regular lessons together with Sam, my teacher. Sam also got help from Tony [behaviour support specialist] how to best communicate with me.

It wasn't always easy, there were days where I felt quite anxious of doing something wrong, driving too slowly, or driving too fast. But Sam was very supportive and understanding. He knew how to motivate me, he kept talking to me and helped me believe in myself, that I could do it. Having Tony involved was important too.

Last month was the big day for me, when I passed my driving test on the first attempt! I could not believe it, ...I was absolutely thrilled!

Since then, I feel more confident in my abilities to learn new things and to succeed! And I love driving mum's car, go shopping, see my friends. I plan to apply for work, hopefully my driver licence will be a testament to my skills and get me more work opportunities.

I feel more confident about my future, doing a TAFE course further away and finding work. I love being independent, getting around by myself is a big achievement; I am proud of myself!

Story of change 6: Rich speaks about the importance of diversity and challenge at work

My name is Rich. I like doing martial arts and acting. I do mixed martial arts and I like doing stage acting and screen acting.

I want to get an agent and be a Hollywood martial arts superstar. That's my dream job!

I have worked at Good Sammy for four years or longer. I like working there. Tom [manager] asked me if I wanted to try a new job, its outdoors and its better paid. I said yes, that sounded interesting.

The my new job in the community at [Logistics company] ... it's a surprise, I never know what's up that week. We have done paining jobs, we put away the gates, tidy the truck cabs, sort the shed. A mentor [Tom] goes there with me and some others, he explains what we need to do that day. Tom gives us instructions and helps fix problems.

I enjoy learning new skills and also making more money! I also enjoy when my work is diverse, it's a bit different every week, that keeps it interesting.

Sometimes the work at [Logistics company] [the logistics yard] it can be hard work. the gates are heavy. It's good we work there as a team, otherwise I could not do the job on my own.

A few times the truck drivers were rude to us but our supervisor told them to go away. They truckies are busy people, always in a rush. Its good Tom [Good Sammy mentor] comes to work, he deals with this.

The workers at Good Sammy are good. I can speak to the coordinators about what I want to do in the future. They are helping me to apply for Tafe.

I like my work in the warehouse [Good Sammy] but it's good that I get out one day a week [Logistics company] and work outside, I don't get as bored with my work and learn new things.

If there are options to do more work outside, to work at different sites and business every week that would be my preference, because it's more interesting to go to different places, have different tasks to do, meet different people.

Story of change 7: Freddy learning to travel to work independently

My name is Freddy, I am 17 years old. I like reading, going out of town and on holidays down the coast, I like to dance every Wednesday.

My teacher asked if I wanted to do a traineeship to learn to be a retail assistant. I thought, why not. My dad thought it was a good idea, so we said yes

One day a week I work in a Good Sammy Op shop. The other days I go to school. The day I work I also get paid. I enjoy my work at the Op shop, I get to do different things, like decorate the shop front, I am learning how to take credit cards and process the payments. I learn about the different parts of running a shop.

I like working as part of a team, being useful and I feel accepted at work. That's helping me to improve my confidence and to be more comfortable being around new people.

The paperwork tasks, part of the certificate in retail, they can be difficult to do, I'd rather be working than completing the online work. At the beginning I had a support teacher from school helping me with my certificate tasks, now I have learnt how to complete them myself.

I am learning how to take the bus to work independently, that's a big change. My dad is helping me to work out which bus to take and where to get off. It is a bit difficult because I have to change busses, when one bus is late, or not on time, I feel anxious about missing the second one. I still need to practice more.

After the traineeship I'd like to stay on and keep working at Good Sammy in the Op shop. My manager is very kind, she's funny and she understands my needs. I am okay to start a different job too. Once I finish school, I don't want to stay home do nothing, that would be terribly boring. I want to keep earning my own money and feel useful. I have something to do every day, I meet people and leave the house.

Good Sammy is helpful. They met with my dad to talk about my future work options and what I'd like to do once the traineeship is done in April next year. I hope they can help me find work in a café or a retail job, any shop that's not too stressful and busy. Where my manager understands me and takes their time. I get paid and am saving my money, the traineeship is! I feel I am being part of a work community.

Story of change 8: Chen gradually gaining in confidence at work

My name is Chen, I am 17 years old. I go to high school and doing a traineeship with Good Sammy. I like playing games with my friends and family. I like PlayStation. On the weekends I like kayaking, also watching movies and TV shows.

I started at the Good Sammy warehouse managing the recycling, sorting clothing. I care about the environment, it's a good job. I also like learning new skills and earning money while I study.

I enjoy seeing the recycling come into the warehouse and how it gets processes and sorted. I enjoy getting different challenges most shifts, trying out new things. I like most of the people I work with. I like that the traineeship there are other young people with disability.

Some days I can feel overwhelmed with the number of things that come into the warehouse, when work is too fast or too intense and noisy. I prefer to work in a quiet area, if work gets too noisy, I feel nervous and anxious.

The mentors are patient and helpful. I have a mentor he provides me with support. When I have questions, I can also ask my colleagues. I meet the RTO worker every few weeks, she helps me with the traineeship paperwork, so I can get my certificate.

Some mentors are not so understanding. They don't seem to understand my disability, they can get impatient with me, hurry me. They think I am not trying enough.

If there was a something I'd change about my work, it's the noise and the lack of storage space. I need to bring my safety equipment with me on the bus when I come in every day. That can be hard to remember.

Since starting at Good Sammy I have learned a lot. I am proud of it. I am no longer that nervous around other people or people at my workplace. I understand how the machines work. I feel more comfortable going about my tasks.

This traineeship has given me hope that there are other jobs out there for me. The mentors support me to overcome challenges and make adaptations at work. I am not yet sure what I'd like to do in the future.

I think I'd like a job where I am busy with new skills and leaning things every day. I don't like maths or numbers, but I am very good at storing and organising. I would like a job with detailed work processes in a quiet environment.

Story of change 9: Tim building skills in office administration

My name is Tim, I am 17 years old. I go to college, and I am studying a Certificate 2 in Workplace Skills at Good Sammy.

If I am not at work or school I read a lot, I also write on different topics and play chess with my family. My friends call me the 'human dictionary'. I used to rock climb and cycle in my free time.

Now I work in the Good Sammy head office. I edit excel spreadsheets, make PowerPoints, I write up notes and other office work and tasks. I enjoy my work. Excel

can be difficult, but I am very good at PowerPoint. I learn a great deal at work. It's worth my time. I love being paid and I am saving up my money.

When I started, at first, I was in the retail online store. I didn't enjoy the work there, I found it quite boring. That was resolved by me changing roles. My mentor helped me to organise it, to get into a different traineeship program, in Workplace Skills Certificate 2.

With the traineeship certificate I will have the basic skills and knowledge working in an office, at a reception desk. I will know about safety at work, different software, how to work in a virtual space online with Zoom and other stuff. These will be invaluable skills for my future work.

In the future I'd like to study and do something in the political sphere. Have a leadership position. Few politicians have the will required to fix problems, I hope, one day, I can make a difference for myself and for others.

One thing I don't like much about my traineeship is the accreditation tasks. They are online and it takes me some time to complete them, when I'd be rather doing other work. I get support from the people work with to achieve my tasks.

Once I finish the traineeship I want to find work in the community, so far not much progress has been made towards my goal. But for now, I enjoy the work I do and look forward to coming every week.

Story of change 10: Aldo training to become a bus driver

I am Aldo. I am 18 years old. My favourite things are busses I know all the different brands of busses, the technical detail, how many passengers they can carry.

School work is not my strength, I don't enjoy sitting all day long. My teachers suggested I try a traineeship to help me get skilled and get work later. Once I complete my traineeship, I'd like to work close to buses or trucks. A General Charters relieve school bus driver, or a bus taking people to different places, like workers to mines, students to school excursions – that is my dream job!

At Good Sammy I have a team of support people around me [the Learning and Development team]. They explain the tasks and work to do and show me how to do it. Because I love buses that much, the team are working to help me learn how to drive a bus, first I need to get my driver licence.

If I am not taking driver licence lessons or studying for the test, I do different jobs around the warehouse, like washing the Hi-vis vests, putting them in the machines and getting them out. I work on the belt in the warehouse, laminating, doing CDS, I have done at least 20 different jobs in the Good Sammy warehouse.

Most of the jobs were OK. But I didn't enjoy writing minutes or working on the computer. Also, doing repetitive jobs, like preparing marketing materials and packs, I get too easily bored.

I like the diversity of tasks in Good Sammy, most of all, I look forward to the driver's licence lessons and getting my licence. Once I get the licence, I can start with the training for the heavy vehicle licence to drive a bus. It's going to take some time but it's something I really look forward to.

Good Sammy help me pay for my driver lessons. They talk to me about getting into a career and job that I would enjoy doing. Good Sammy have many staff and employees they too need to a bus to get people around; this could be my job.

Eduardo's father speaks about the families experience with the traineeship program

My son has had a few other casual jobs - gardener, delivery guy, and last year Eduardo stated his Cert 2 in retail with Good Sammy.

The school contacted us, they offered Eduardo the traineeship with GSE, we were happy to go ahead for two reasons, first he gets a qualification at the end of 18 months, a piece of paper. But when you attend the TAFE during school you only get an attendance, not a completion certificate. The second reason we decided it was a good option was the pay; he gets about \$10/hour.

Eduardo is learning retail skills; he is also learning to be a young adult. He is taking responsibility to arrive on time, be dressed for work, plan his bus route. [...] In the beginning Eduardo still had support from the school EA within a couple of months, he no longer needed the extra support.

We are satisfied with GSE because they give the person with disability real work opportunities like in the op shops, in a supported environment, to gain certified training and skills. These work opportunities give people with disability opportunity to feel useful, become more independent, and earn an income that's acceptable for a young person, it's a great program.

Our experience with Good Sammy was amazing. We, my son and I, were out with other young people to see a movie at the cinema for free, Eduardo also attended the Grand Ball, a costume party at GSE. I feel that GSE are more authentic, they don't only want to take your NDIS funding, giving you hope your child will find a job, but nothing ever happens, they write a CV and that's it.

Future employment plans

Eduardo likes to work at his current workplace. If he could continue there after completing the traineeship, build on his skills and increase his hours that would be fine. Similarly, if he wanted to explore new retail options or if Good Sammy can help us find other community paid employment, that's good too. Possibly doing two days in GSE op shops and two days in a different job and environment to make sure he keeps learning and diversifying his skills.

My main concern is about Eduardo completing high school and doing nothing all day. Just staying home alone, that's not a healthy environment and prospect for any young person. It is important for Eduardo to feel he has a purpose in life, he is working and earning, building his independence.

Tony's mother speaks about their involvement with the traineeship program

My son Tony heard through VET trainer at school. He started another traineeship with another company in hospitality, but they didn't put the time in to support him in his learning. He didn't enjoy it, he was coming home and not very happy, they didn't show him how to do any of the tasks.

His teacher recommended Good Sammy and Tony did the interview and got selected. When he was accepted [into the program], we had a meeting at the school with Tony's teacher, Tony, the GSE staff and me. They explained what would be involved, it sounded like a good fit.

Tony was keen to try a different traineeship, have a job and earn his own money. To start with he tried working in the recycling area but it didn't suit him.

Now Tony is doing a Certificate 2 in Workplace Skills. He's been with GSE 1-year and he is loving it! Tony has functioning Autism, he's good with numbers, he is working on computers in the head office, learning programs and entering data, producing comics and advertising material.

He enjoys his work and training. He loves the money, Tony gets about \$170/fortnight, he works one day from 8 am to 4pm. He also gets paid sick days and public holiday leave, works through the school holidays. He loves the continuity of his job.

Once he finishes year 12, Good Sammy offered him ongoing employment in the office, once he's completed his training and school. Tony might do that as a side job.

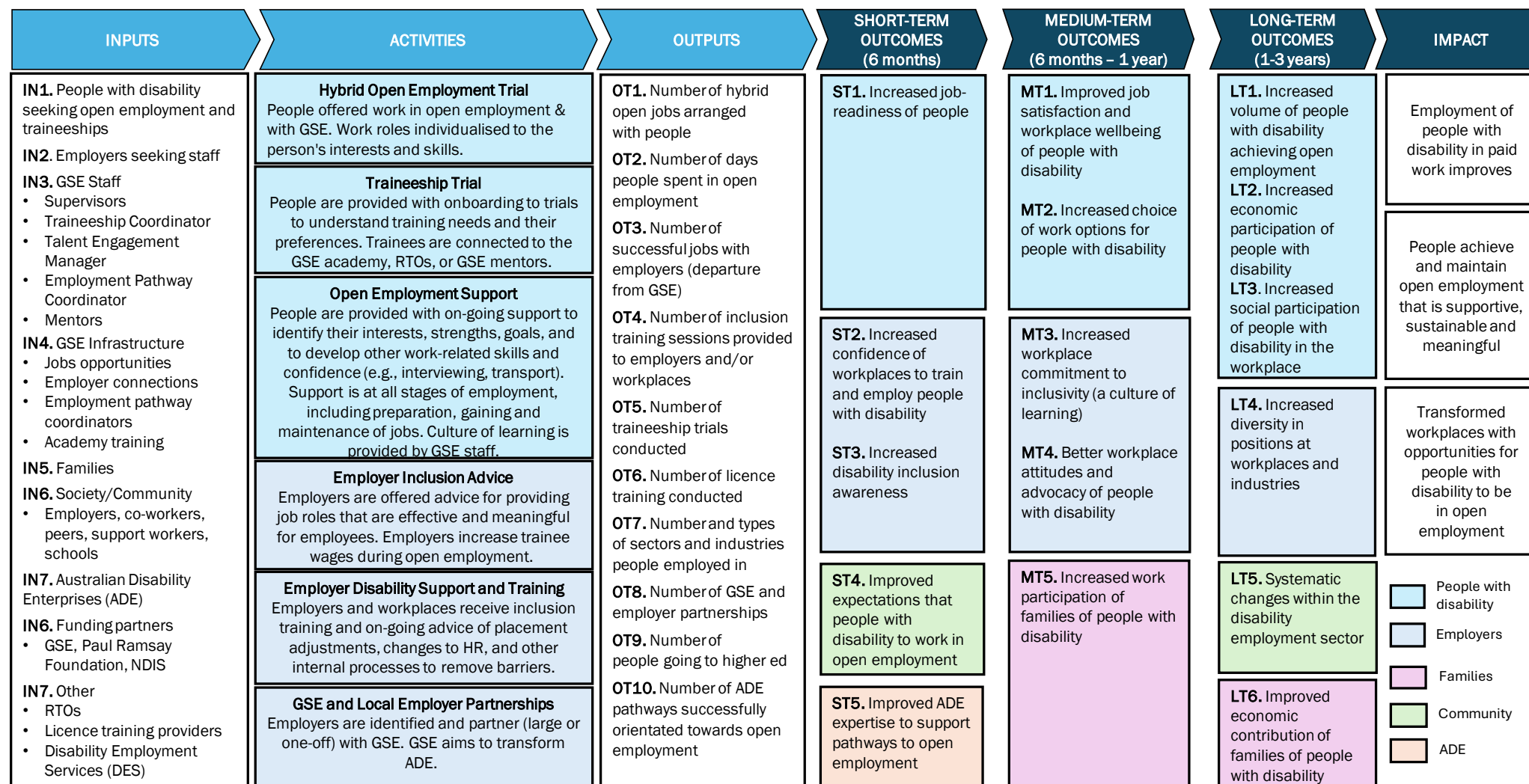
For future work he'd like to go to university, he's good at sciences and English. He originally thought about working part time in a cafe, but that first bad experience really disheartened him. At Good Sammy he feels understood and included.

Tony enjoys going to work because of his relationships with other staff and colleagues. His supervisor is great, easy to talk to, gets in touch with you, he has great suggestions. His supervisor offered him the driver licence program. Tony now gets 15 paid lessons for free. Currently, I drive Tony when he goes to work and pick him up. Once he has his licence he can go to uni or to work on his own.

It's great the program it gives him some independence, he's learning work skills towards his future work and university, making friends and connections, being in the office he's learning to socialise with others.

Tony is happy with his work, the people, and what he is learning. His work understands his Autism and behaviours, he can be righteous, the team seem to know how to work around it. Other employers can be non-inclusive, if you tell them, you have Autism.

Appendix C Program evaluation logic and description of GSE activities



Overview: GSE activities and inputs (descriptive)

Information and advice. People with disability and their families can receive information and advice around employment options and pathways, how to navigate systems, including NDIS funding, working with DES providers and receive help finding mainstream work opportunities.

Social enterprises. GSE has a network of interconnected and distinct social enterprises offering supported employment and training opportunities for people with disability. The social enterprises include retail (op shops and e-commerce), management and sorting of recycling, logistics and warehousing, hospitality (food preparation/canteen, catering services), property care (cleaning, landscaping) digital media and office administration. The social enterprises are staffed with mentors, support workers and supervisors who support people with disability in their job roles.

Community Engagement Lead (CEL). This role supports people with disability approaching GSE to purchase services (support of find OE) or join the GSE workforce. CEL will manage pricing estimates for service provision and connect the person with disability to relevant services within GSE (e.g. employment goal planning with EPC).

Mentors. GSE employs mentors with diverse experiences and expertise who work alongside employees with disability to build employment related skills and confidence. Support may include public transport training, on the job-support, getting 'job ready' (resume, interview preparedness) and others. Mentors work alongside Talent Engagement Managers to support participants' wellbeing, safety and achievement of employment goals. People with disability can choose to employ or work with an external job coach or mentor (not GSE staff).

Good Sammy Academy. This is a skill based learning component of GSE. The Academy provide structured learning and work experience opportunities through tailored programs. Participants receive practical workplace related skills, confidence building, obtain licences, or take part in traineeships.

Talent Engagement Partner/Manager. The Talent Engagement Partner (TEP) are primary responsible for overseeing the delivery of the Open Employment services and process at GSE.

Open Employment Service Process. Once a hybrid or OE opportunity becomes available a Talent Engagement Partner will meet with the person to discuss the opportunity and arrange support (NDIS funding, GSE quote and execution of service agreement). The process is tailored but will likely be conducted in three stages, Discovery, Job Carving, Post Placement support. In the discovery stage, individual

support plans, risk assessment, medication or seizure management plans and other information will be completed. The TEP will support the participant to visit up to two different workplaces, discuss the work tasks of the potential job. Once the participant has chosen a work opportunity, during the Job Carving process, the TEP will search for prospective employers and liaise with employers to tailor the work opportunity to the persons' skills and strengths. Once an OE opportunity has been secured – an employer has hired a person directly, the TEP staff will organise additional supports for the person (GSE mentor, routine on the job support and training), also disability awareness training to the employer and work team.

Procedures, policies and systems to facilitate Open Employment. GSE developed a suite of policies, procedures and tools to enable organisational change and implementation of the two trials. Changes run across GSE procedures like induction and onboarding, HR and payroll systems, safety and support, supported employee 'movement request forms' when a person commences part time OE. Examples of redesigned tools and forms include the Open Employment Quoting and Pricing tools to obtain NDIS funding for individualised planning, mentorship and on the job support to people in the Hybrid trial.

Disability Employment Services (DES). Disability Employment Service providers are government contracted services designed to support people with disability to find the employment that meet their interests and receive the support they need to succeed at work. GSE is planning to establish relationships to select DES providers.

Employer disability awareness training. GSE are planning to deliver inclusion capacity building to mainstream employers to assist them to make changes to workplaces, hiring and management practices. Awareness training and inclusion support may include employers in the hybrid OE provision of service model or those who are directly employing a person with disability.

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