

Melbourne entrepreneurs to lead “the new normal”

Melbourne’s ethical entrepreneurs will meet online in October to flesh out a plan for a post COVID economy that will end the “either/or” thinking about our economy and wellbeing.

Conference founder and fair trade advocate Susanna Bevilacqua says that the pandemic has quickly shown us that people are wary of the current economic metrics that produce only winners and losers.

Bevilacqua says the coronavirus asks us all to work collaboratively for the common good and we can equally do that long into the future with more ethical and collaborative approaches.

“We need to focus on both economic and social outcomes because our job market predictions are dire. We have to create local solutions in local communities. Social enterprise can fill that gap ” Bevilacqua says.

“Everything has changed. If we can work together on coronavirus, we can take those principles into the future”

Melbourne is the home of the emerging ethical enterprise movement for at least a decade. This includes over 3,500 social enterprises sustaining both profit and social outcomes across Victoria that employ over 60,000 people and are worth \$5.2 billion to the Australian economy. There are approximately 20,000 social enterprises nationally.

Bevilacqua says overcoming negativity and despair is critical and social enterprises are well placed to lead the way.

Social enterprises tend to be small and flexible and are locally based. This nascent part of the economy must be supported as a way forward for SMEs who need to reboot.

The conference will also award Australia’s Ethical Enterprises and host the Early Ethical Entrepreneur Pitch Competition. Over the years we have received hundreds of entries for both the Award and Early pitch competition showcasing impact driven enterprises and we look forward to receiving many applications this year showcasing innovation and survival for a post COVID economy.

Previous winners of the Ethical Enterprise Award include Victoria’s own [Pollinate Group](#) and [Seven Women](#), which are both focused on equipping women to lead themselves and their communities out of poverty through entrepreneurship, employment and education.

The [Ethical Enterprise Conference](#) will be held online from the 26th to 27th October with the [Ethical Entrepreneur Pitch Competition](#) and Ethical Enterprise Award on the final day on the 28th October.

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