

2022/23

# Annual Report

[brite.org.au](http://brite.org.au)



brite  
☺



# contents

From the Chair and CEO	4
2022-2023 at a glance	6
What we do	8
Brite Pak	10
Brite Plants	12
Service Delivery	14
Brite Institute	16
Future of supported employment	18
Staff Recognition	20
Ways to give	22
Ways to volunteer	24
Our Board	26
Our Executive Team	27
Profiles	28

# From the chair



For over 45 years, we have been actively providing employment opportunities and support for people with disability in Melbourne's northern community. We understand that meaningful employment serves as a powerful catalyst for positive change, empowering our employees to overcome barriers and achieve their goals.

Over the last year, our primary focus remained on recovering from the economic impacts of the pandemic while continuously adapting to the evolving regulatory landscape of the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

In this same period, we encountered challenges in our plant sales due to significant infrastructure delays and faced disruptions in our packaging activities, as several major customers struggled with supply chain issues. This coincided with the ageing term of our facilities.

These factors underscored the pressing need for a new long-term Strategic Plan that will steer our efforts over the next decade and beyond. To advance this plan, we are currently engaged in consultations with a broad range of stakeholders to ensure that we maximise our opportunities and provide person-centred meaningful employment and training opportunities.

Having actively participated in these discussions, I am filled with optimism about our future and eagerly anticipate the exciting next phase of Brite's growth.

I would like to extend my heartfelt appreciation to outgoing Board members Cindy Shelley, Shelley Karpathakis and Neslihan Dastan for their commitment to Brite over the years. Additionally, I want to express my gratitude to the outgoing Interim Chair Michael Wilson, who stepped in admirably on short notice. I am immensely thankful for the expertise and support shown by my colleagues on the current Board throughout the year.

I also want to extend a sincere thanks to our CEO, Management Team and all our staff for their unwavering dedication to our mission and the unfailing support they provide to our clients and each other on a daily basis. You are a true reflection of why Brite exists.

As we move forward, we eagerly anticipate building on our past achievements and creating an even brighter future for the entire Brite community in the year 2023-2024.

**John Carter**  
Chair

# From the CEO



The year 2022-2023 was a turning point for Brite in terms of commercial growth and the breadth of opportunities that we continue to offer our supported employees.

Highlights included a significant expansion of food packing work that resulted in increased operational scale and growth in revenue of 236 per cent. Pak operations overall increased by 20 per cent, underpinned by higher volume assembly and kitting work.

While nursery sales were down on the previous year due to fewer orders, we are preparing to gear up for anticipated growth in 2023-2024. This will be supported by expansion of our nursery infrastructure, which will allow us to meet expected future demand.

This year the Strategic Plan 2020-2023 ended and development of a new Strategic Plan commenced. This new plan will outline our vision and guide our activities over the next few years.

Partnerships continued to be important to Brite during the year. Our activities included partnering with Hume City Council, NORTH Link and other regional bodies. We established training partnerships with Uniting Employment Services, Sunraysia Residential Services and Neurodiversity. And we continued to successfully deliver packing and nursery services to our commercial clients.

Brite's contribution to the community during 2022-2023 was underpinned by giving local schools and aged care facilities the opportunity to trial the Brike. This generated significant interest and appreciation.

I continued my participation on key regional advisory boards and committees, including the Advanced Manufacturing Taskforce, Broadmeadows Revitalisation Board, SEED, Melbourne's North Advanced Manufacturing Group, Hume Multiversity Steering Group and Hume Jobs and Skills Taskforce.

My sincere thanks to our Board members for their valuable contributions and support during 2022-2023. In particular I thank our outgoing Interim Chair Michael Wilson for his tireless efforts and stewardship, and our outgoing Board members.

Our successes would not be possible without the dedication, professionalism and hard work of all our staff, and I am grateful for their support.

The future for Brite is extremely positive. With the support of our new Executive team – Gerald, Samantha and James, along with our experience, passionate and driven Management Team – we will move into 2023-2024 with renewed energy, ready to continue work on our new Strategic Plan. I am confident that, for Brite, the best is yet to come.

I am confident that, for Brite, the best is yet to come.

**Robert Hannaford**  
Chief Executive Officer



# 2022-2023 at a glance



**142**  
supported team members



**102,897**  
hours worked by supported team members



**400,000+**  
plants sold



**700,000**  
plants grown



**750,000**  
units of chocolate confectionary packed



**150,000+**  
products labelled for the export market



**156,811**  
hours of training delivered



achieved food accreditation  
standard FSSC 22000  
certification



passed Quality  
Safeguards  
Commission Audit

# What we do

For over 45 years, we have been creating meaningful employment and training opportunities for people in our community. Our core purpose is the provision of inclusive and accessible employment for people with disability. We empower our people by investing in their strengths and providing tailored supports, helping them to break down barriers, and achieve their true potential. Through our innovative social enterprise solutions, Pak and Plants, we engage the community in purposeful partnerships, in which we are committed to delivering high quality services. We continue to work with local industry and community to develop an integrated employment approach, driving change for a more inclusive society.

## Our history

Brite was established in the late 1960s, when a group of parents and carers saw a need for an inclusive workplace and environment that supported the needs of people with a wide range of abilities and skills. Representatives from local and state governments, local service clubs and families worked hard to purchase land in Broadmeadows, build a factory and offices, and establish our organisation. Today we have grown and evolved into a successful social enterprise providing genuine employment opportunities for more than 140 people.

## Our strategic drivers

- Brite is recognised locally as a provider of choice and nationally as a market leader in the delivery of NDIS services and supports.
- Brite is a highly respected registered training organisation.
- Brite is commercially focused and financially viable.
- Brite culture consistently delivers high impact outcomes.
- Brite is acknowledged as a partner of choice.
- Brite achieves improved access to government, philanthropic and corporate funding opportunities.
- Brite Board, executive and management performance is well understood and well managed.

## Our Strategic Plan

Our Strategic Plan focuses on the following:

- 1** Employment and training, including disability employment supports and services (such as support in employment), training (Brite Institute) and our Community Learning and Employment Hub.
- 2** Social enterprise, including nursery, advanced manufacturing and food.

### OUR VISION

Equity and access to a better life.

### OUR MISSION

Provide sustainable services that create opportunity and support for people living with a disability or who are vocationally disadvantaged.

### OUR VALUES

Courage, dignity, compassion, accountability, flexibility, performance.



# Brite Pak

**Brite Pak offers quality, reliable contract assembly, packaging, food co-packing, plastic manufacturing, labelling and warehouse services at a competitive cost..**

Brite Pak achieved outstanding results during the year, underpinned by the commitment and dedication of our team to continuous improvement. Sales within the division increased by 47 per cent on the previous year. We also made significant progress in diversifying our revenue streams and growing operational capability.

Food co-packing work continued to grow in both revenue generation and operational scale. Our food co-packing revenue grew by 236 per cent on 2021-2022. We also solidified substantial co-packing arrangements with new customers, maintaining our strong commitment to excellent customer service and delivering in full and on time, every time.

We enhanced our capability to undertake higher volume packing work through our specialised food packing machinery. We anticipate continued growth within the food co-packing space as we continue to procure a diverse range of work that provides significant upskilling opportunities for our employees.

Our plastics team experienced a 15 per cent increase in revenue generation from production of recyclable food grade plastic containers. We worked closely with one of our larger customers over the year to successfully transition from a product with limited recyclability to one that is more sustainable and environmentally friendly while maintaining the durability of the product.

This required a significant amount of research and development, and extensive trials. It is a credit to our highly skilled team that we achieved a positive result given the complexity of the project.

Across the division Pak performed well, with growth of 20 per cent on the previous year. This was generated largely through higher volume assembly and kitting work of gift packs and beauty care products.



# Brite Plants

Brite Plants supplies a diverse range of quality plants at competitive prices to customers in Victoria and Australia-wide.

In 2022-2023, sales within our Plants division fell 33 per cent after record sales growth of 104 per cent in the previous year. This was due to a reduction in plant supply work to Big Build projects and a reduction in demand from retail nurseries.

Despite this drop in sales, the business remains in a strong position. We renewed our focus on growing nursery infrastructure and plant growing space, which will equip our team to deal with expected future demand for plant supply across the landscaping and building sectors.

Larger plant supply contracts formed a significant part of our sales revenue for 2022-2023. The team completed plant supply work on a range of projects, including:

- Cranbourne Line Rail Upgrade and Level Crossing Removals
- Northern Hospital
- Bulleen Park and Ride
- Bell to Preston Level Crossing Removals
- Brunswick South West Primary School
- Monash Hospital
- Northcote Aquatic and Recreation Centre Redevelopment Project
- Kolbe College Landscape Work
- Veneto Carpark Upgrade.

The Plants team delivered all these projects in full and on time, reinforcing our organisation's reputation as a supplier of choice. Continuous improvement remains integral to our operations.

During the year, we made significant progress on our nursery redevelopment project. Completion of two new plant growing yards and one new advanced tree growing yard provided additional capability to grow and supply larger volumes of plants and trees. In June we took delivery of a new advanced tree potting machine, which will enhance production of advanced tree stock through semi-automation.

Plants staff continued to ensure our team members were equipped with the horticultural skills they need to take on anticipated high volume plant supply work in the near future.

## Service Delivery ensures that our employees are given every opportunity to learn new skills and succeed with their employment goals, and that all NDIS regulations are followed and obligations are met.

During 2022-2023, our focus was to build the foundation for a strong team that will enable us to provide the support and training required to successfully upskill our employees while we seek to diversify our employment opportunities. Over the 12 months, we've worked hard to create meaningful connections and partnerships with businesses across the Hume local government area and beyond. Some of these partnerships have provided opportunities for our Pathways students to complete work experience and volunteer placement hours within

their organisations, giving our students a real taste of what working in these environments might be like. We continue to work with these organisations to explore the possibilities for our permanent employees, including the development of specialised skills outside of Brite's scope such as training and experience in using innovative machinery. Every employee who commences supported employment with us undertakes My Journey to Employment, a program that encompasses topics such as workplace safety, code of conduct and the responsibilities of

having a job. This program provides the opportunity to get to know each other, Brite and the new employee, to bring out each others best. Upon completion of the 12-week program, employees complete their first Employee Assistance Plan (EAP) in which they highlight the workplace goals they would like to achieve in the following 12 month period.

Bi-monthly Family Forums continued throughout 2022-2023, offering a welcoming way for stakeholders to engage with us, ask questions and raise issues. During the year we focused on creating a new leadership program that will be rolled out towards the end of 2023. This program will create opportunities for employees to develop soft skills such as leadership, effective communication and advocacy.

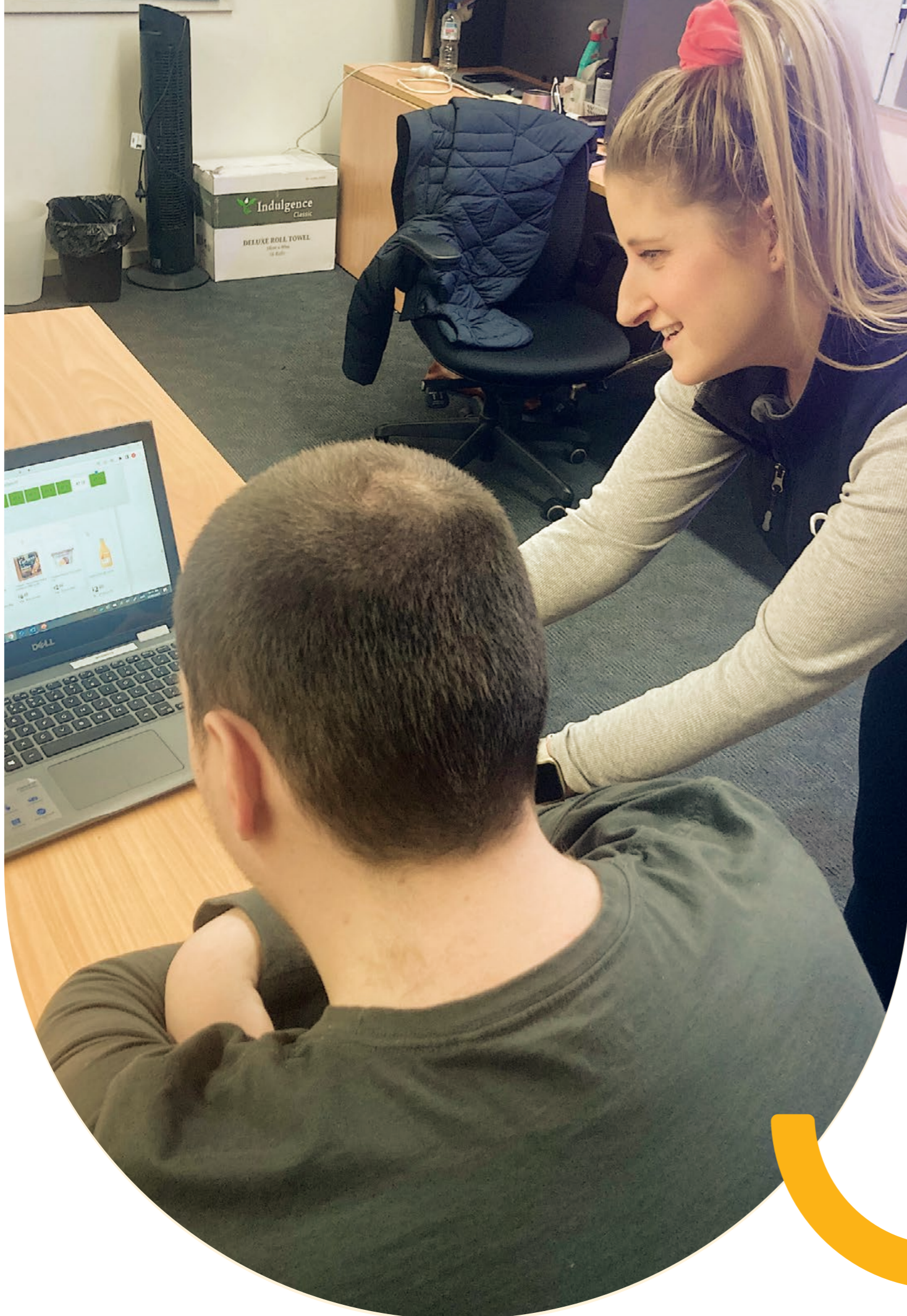
Our Brite Pathways programs continued, with the 2022 class due to graduate in December 2023. The 2023 Students are progressing well this year with a day in the classroom and two days work experience at Brite. These students are expected to transition into employment in March 2024. A successful mid-term NDIS audit put us in a positive position for our recertification audit, which is scheduled for November 2024. 2023 also saw the introduction of the new Supported Wage Tool, which came into effect in July. Significant support work is required to establish effective processes and benchmarking prior to the first assessment utilising the new tool, expected to occur in June 2024.



# Service Delivery

OPERATIONS





# Brite Institute

Brite Institute is a registered training organisation that provides students with the skills, knowledge and confidence they need to follow the career they want.

Over 600 students were enrolled with Brite Institute during the year, across a broad variety of programs.

Our programs ranged from pre-accredited training through to Certificate IV courses in areas such as aged care, work education, first aid, adult literacy and numeracy, individual support, disability, and leisure and health. Training was delivered both in person and online, providing students with flexibility to fit learning around other commitments.

Our scope of registration changed with the two updated training packages added – CHC33021 Certificate III in Individual Support and CHC43121 Certificate IV in Disability Support.

During the year we commenced delivery of a major contract with Uniting Employment Services. This joint initiative involves us delivering foundation skills training across six sites to more than 70 people with disability who are working towards an employment outcome.

Partnerships were also established with Sunraysia Residential Services for delivery of a Certificate IV in Disability (traineeship) to 13 students, and with Neurodiversity for delivery of foundation skills training to 23 students over two years.

Completion rates increased across the year as compulsory work experience and practical placements were able to resume with the removal of COVID restrictions.



# Future of supported employment

Attendees at the Australian Government's Supported Employment Roundtable in October agreed to a set of guiding principles for the future of supported employment. These principles reflect the changing landscape of the NDIS and guide the operations of Australian Disability Enterprises.

- 1** People with disability have genuine choice and control, which meets their individual needs.
- 2** People with disability have real options for employment and a range of support options available to meet their employment goals.
- 3** There is an expansion in the number and variety of workplaces that employ people with disability.
- 4** People with disability have support to make informed decisions about their employment options.
- 5** People with disability have the right to equal remuneration and associated conditions for work of equal value.
- 6** People with disability are supported to regularly review their employment options, pathways, goals and outcomes.
- 7** People with disability have the opportunity to develop their career by learning new skills and undertaking training on an ongoing basis.
- 8** NDIS participants and providers, including ADEs, are supported to make full use of NDIS employment support funding to achieve their employment goals.
- 9** All systems work together to support options and choice for employment (e.g. Disability Support Pension, DES, NDIS).
- 10** Encourage all levels of government to support the supported employment sector to deliver on these principles.
- 11** Seek wider community buy-in to support innovation, change attitudes and grow employment opportunities for people with high support needs.
- 12** The human rights of people with disability are respected and treated with dignity and respect.



FUTURE OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT

SUE - 25 years



RAYLEEN - 15 years



# Staff Recognition

During the year, we celebrated the achievements of five of our staff who reached service milestones in their employment at Brite. We thank them for outstanding contributions to our organisation and for being a vital part of what we do.

JAMES - 15 years



RYAN - 15 years



LES - 25 years





# Ways to give



## Become a Brite volunteer

Our volunteers make a huge contribution to the work we do. We would like to hear from people who are interested in a student placement, keen to get some experience in the caring profession or in the production workplace, or want to help out in the local community.

## Make a donation

Since we began operations in 1976, Brite has empowered thousands of people. But we need support to do more. All donations to Brite are gratefully accepted and will help us to continue our important work. Donations over \$2 are tax deductible.

## Make a bequest

People who make a bequest to Brite in their Will are giving a helping hand to people who need it and changing lives for the better. It is a positive way to be remembered.

## Spread the word with crowdfunding for brite

Instead of celebrating with gifts, you could nominate Brite to receive donations by setting up a crowdfunding page. There are a lot of different crowdfunding platforms around. It doesn't need to be a big amount to make a real difference to people in our community – every donation helps.

## Become a corporate partner

Aligning your brand to Brite will deliver value to your stakeholders and improve your triple bottom line. There are many different ways to get involved with us, including supporting a project or training program, sponsoring an event or activity, employee fundraising and more.

# Ways to volunteer

At Brite we value the role of our volunteers, who are essential to our organisation. We respect and appreciate their skills, talents and contributions.

Our goal is to maximise volunteers' potential by creating opportunities to utilise their talents and abilities. From the outset, we ensure that volunteer roles match their skills, interests and capabilities. We provide an induction and ongoing support.

We welcome volunteers across a range of areas:

- Student volunteers: project based or carer/support worker.
- Professional volunteers: including project management, workplace health and safety, technology, construction, business management, human resources, marketing, administration, horticulture and more.
- Production volunteers: including packaging, labelling, mail outs, logistics, maintenance and more.
- Community volunteers: we engage with local community groups representing a range of backgrounds and cultures; they may work with us to hold joint community ventures, host cultural events or use our facilities for their own community-based practices.



# Our Board



**John Carter**  
CHAIR



**Jennie Pinnell**  
Board member



**Tom Carra**  
TREASURER



**Tom Tancredi**  
Board member



**Phillip Perroni**  
Board member



**Jenny Semple**  
Board member



**Seth Ferwerda**  
Board member

# Our Executive Team



**Robert Hannaford**  
Chief Executive Officer



**Gerald McCarthy**  
General Manager - Assistive Technology and Projects



**James Clark**  
General Manager - Social Enterprise



**Samantha Donaldson**  
General Manager - Corporate Services

## EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR

### William Kolak

William had an exceptional year across many work areas within Pak. He showed an aptitude and dedication to continue to develop new work skills. No matter how challenging the job role is, William is always keen to give it a go.

"I'm honoured to be Employee of the Year. I've worked at Brite for eight years and I like coming to work. I've made friends and had a lot of laughs.

Sometimes I work in the food room, but mostly in the plastics room. I like making the ice-cream trays. I loved working on the Brike too, that was my favourite."



## STUDENT OF THE YEAR

## PROFILES



### Ricky Zammit

Ricky is studying for a Certificate 1 in Transition Education onsite at his workplace, Brunswick Industries. He was nominated for his positive attitude to learning, strong engagement in class and the support he provides to his classmates.

"I really enjoy doing my course with my classmates. The subjects are very interesting, and I love our discussions and group activities. The course has really helped me develop my communication, teamwork and problem-solving skills. I know that will all help me in my job."



## Antonina Pancari

TEAM LEADER, FOOD ROOM

Anton joined Brite 12 months ago, after a career in food processing and manufacturing. She supervises the work of the food team, ensuring commercial needs are met.

“Brite is a great place to work because it’s such a happy, friendly environment and everyone is so supportive. No two days are the same.

It’s great to work with a keen, motivated team who celebrate their achievements every day. When we exceed our targets, they are so happy it’s contagious. I’m so glad I made the move to Brite.”

## Linda Hampton

NURSERY COORDINATOR

Linda studied horticulture at university after making a career change from photography. She oversees Brite’s nursery operations, setting and prioritising tasks for a team of 25.

“It’s the people who make Brite what it is. We’re doing horticulture work but the bigger picture is that we’re achieving something more meaningful. Part of my role is to find the right tasks for each person, and to modify things to suit the individual.

We have more heart, more caring and understanding than other workplaces. You feel that immediately. And we have so many laughs. We all look after each other.”







## Rob Dunn

### EMPLOYEE

Rob has worked at Brite for almost 44 years. With a role predominately in Pak, Rob has also spent time in plastics, plants and the food room and is always willing to help out when other departments are busy.

“This was my first job after I finished school and I love it! I can’t imagine being anywhere else. I enjoy working hard and making sure that I’m doing everything right.

I’ve made lots of friends and it’s great being able to work with them every day.”



## Sarah Dovey

### EMPLOYEE

Sarah works in Pak, the nursery and food room. Her duties include weeding, potting, labelling, packing, fillings bags of chocolates, weighing and quality checking.

“I like working with people and getting to see everyone every day. I also like that I work in different areas. Sometimes I’m inside and outside and even in the food room. It’s lots of variety.

Working at Brite for 16 years I’ve learned lots and I’m still learning.”



## Bella Medwin

### EMPLOYEE

Bella has worked at Brite for almost 10 years, first in Pak and now in the food room. She completed her Certificate I and II in Work Education with electives in hospitality, and still picks up the occasional shift in the Brite Café.

"I love working at Brite, especially in the food room with my friends. It's good to see the different types of chocolate come through!

Last year I did a Certificate II in Work Education and a barista course. That was good and I enjoy working in the Brite Café."



We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to all our incredible partners and supporters across various sectors, including community, philanthropy, corporate, and government, with a special shoutout to our valued commercial customers. Your unwavering commitment to Brite has a significant impact on the lives of our employees. By working together, we empower our people to unlock their potential through meaningful employment and training opportunities, fostering the growth of their social and community connections. Your support is truly appreciated and makes a significant impact on our mission.

Thank you!



1-7 Belfast Street,  
Broadmeadows  
VIC 3047

03 9301 7300  
[admin@brite.org.au](mailto:admin@brite.org.au)

