

Bright Ideas



Refugee Council
of Australia

Local strategies to support
refugees and asylum seekers

22. FOOD JUSTICE TRUCK

Photo of the Food
Justice Truck
launch 12 August
City Square



What?

The Food Justice Truck is a mobile fresh food market that enhances food security for asylum seekers in the Victorian community by offering locally sourced produce including fresh fruit, vegetables, grains, legumes, tea and bread at a 75% discount to people seeking asylum. It is the world's first retail model that enables the general public to invest in quality fresh food for their family, while re-investing profits into affordable nutritious food for asylum seekers.

Where?

In Melbourne: Footscray, Thomastown, CBD and soon in Dandenong, Dalas and Brimbank.

When?

The Food Justice Truck started operating in March 2015 and is currently expanding to new locations.

Who?

The Food Justice Truck is a social enterprise initiative by the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre (ASRC). Shoppers are people seeking asylum and the general public.

Why?

- 90% of people seeking asylum run out of food and cannot afford to buy more
- The conditions for the 10,000 people on Bridging Visas in Melbourne severely undermines the ability for them to gain access to nutritious food they can afford
- To empower the general public to support people, not profits and directly assist people seeking refuge in Australia

How?

Asylum seekers can access affordable fresh fruit and veggies by purchasing produce from the Food Justice Truck at a 75% discount.

Members of the general public can support the project by buying their fruit and veggies from the Truck too. This makes the project financially sustainable and is key to its long term success.

Truck Locations:

- Footscray, Friday, 3–6pm at Footscray Primary School, cnr Geelong Rd and Barkly St.
- Thomastown, Tuesday, 3–6pm at Thomastown Primary School, Spring St, Thomastown. Enter via High Street or Stewart Street
- CBD, Wednesday, 12-6pm at Wesley Church Melbourne, 148 Lonsdale St

Successes

- Using the ASRC's supporter base to crowd-fund \$150,000 from over 900 contributors to pay for the Truck itself and the Manager for one year.
- Exciting the imagination of the media, the welfare sector generally and the asylum seeker sector more specifically to be interested in this social enterprise.
- Engaging a number of key pro bono advisors and supporters to ensure the Food Justice Truck is as good as it can be.

Challenges

- Starting a social enterprise is a big deal; a world's first model presents it's own challenges. Getting all stakeholders on-board went smoothly, but it was a lot of work.
- As per all food businesses, managing fluctuation in pricing, availability and stock control are big jobs, and key to long-term success.
- The long-term challenge will be to counterbalance asylum seeker customers with the general public/ethical shoppers/hipsters. If the model is not financially sustainable it's over.

Advice for others

To plan ahead, understand the need and make sure the model is financially and socially sustainable

More info

Website: <http://www.asrc.org.au/foodjustice/>

Contact: foodjusticetruck@asrc.org.au / (03) 9326 6066

Follow: <https://twitter.com/JusticeTruck>

Bright Ideas

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