

Item 3.3

CareerSeekers Article 23 Program

File No: S051491

Minute by the Lord Mayor

To Council:

Asylum seekers and refugees face barriers when they try and enter the Australian job market. They have little or no Australian employment experience, have difficulty getting recognition for any qualifications they have, may not be fluent in English and may not be able to provide references or referees.

Some groups also face racial or cultural discrimination. Many professionals cannot find professional jobs and end up working in low-skilled roles.

The City is committed to helping refugees and asylum seekers adjust to life and work in Australia. One such way has been offering internships to enhance employability.

Since 2016, the City has participated in the CareerSeekers New Australian Internship Program. The program creates employment opportunities for asylum seekers and refugees by enabling paid internships in professional occupations. With NSW recently welcoming 12,000 Syrian refugees there is even more need for support.

CareerSeekers is a non-profit organisation supporting Australia's humanitarian entrants into professional careers. Their program provides in-depth preparation and support to both refugees and people seeking asylum who are either currently studying at university, or looking to restart a professional career in Australia.

The City has offered CareerSeeker internships since 2016, engaging two interns and enabling them to gain valuable local industry experience and job support. Our current intern is from Syria and is working in the City Projects team. The City has also offered skilled volunteering in the form of training and training advice to Career Seekers staff.

CareerSeekers are now seeking a partnership with leading Australian organisations in support of a new initiative called Article 23, which derives its name from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was ratified as a common standard for all peoples and all nations in 1948 and celebrates its 70th Anniversary 10 December 2018. CareerSeekers is asking employers across Australia to stand together in recognition of what they are calling Article #23: Work is a Human Right.

Article 23 of the Declaration, which sets out an individual's right to work, underpins this initiative:

*Article 23: **Everyone has the right to work**, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment.*

I strongly support this move as a way for the City to continue supporting refugees and people seeking asylum with employment opportunities.

Recommendation

It is resolved that Council:

- (A) make an annual cash contribution to CareerSeekers of \$10,000 for three years until 2021 to be funded from the Workforce Services Operational Budget;
- (B) request the CEO to continue to support internships for refugees/asylum seekers via CareerSeekers and other appropriate agencies; and
- (C) publicly endorse CareerSeekers Article 23 Program as set out in this Minute.

COUNCILLOR CLOVER MOORE

Lord Mayor