



# STRATEGIC PLAN 2023-2028

*Our vision is to have a truly inclusive society,  
that defies the odds and breaks down barriers*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Bolting Ahead acknowledges the traditional custodians of country throughout Queensland and Australia and on whose land we live, gather and work. We acknowledge the continuing connections the traditional custodians have to land, sea and community, and pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.

Bolting Ahead aims to be respectful to all of the communities with which we work. The terminology we have chosen and used throughout this Strategic Plan and in our operations aims to be inclusive and respectful. We use the term disadvantage, and acknowledge that not all those within the communities we support describe themselves with that terminology. We appreciate that all people choose their own language, and have particular preferences based on individual experiences, and we recognise this right.

At Bolting Ahead we lean into our responsibility to be good humans: To one another, to our environment, for our future. We ambitiously pursue innovative impact on society, while intentionally minimising any harmful impact of our activities on the earth. We invite you to join us in this pursuit.

## PREFACE

Regardless of where a person is born or the abilities they have, the environment in which they live or the people that surround them, everyone should be given opportunities to find their purpose. This belief underpins what we do and how we operate at Bolting Ahead.

At the time of preparation, our newsfeeds and news cycles are reporting the increasing prevalence of youth crime, youth unemployment and inconsistency of effectiveness in disability support. Statistics show us that approximately 16% of young Australians aged between 15 and 24 are unemployed<sup>1</sup>. Furthermore, people who live with a disability are twice as likely to be unemployed as their peers who live without a disability<sup>2</sup>. Youth crime and disengagement is escalating. Communities are calling out for change.

Bolting Ahead seeks to be part of the solution to these social issues by providing opportunities that ensure our disadvantaged youth are not left behind. We achieve transformative change through inclusive person-centred initiatives, and create self-belief by encouraging individuals to find their purpose and by supporting them to achieve their goals.

We deliver intervention and engagement programs that teach and cultivate core values, focus on personal development, and build the essential skills to gain meaningful employment. Due to the cycle of disadvantage that many of our young people find themselves in, they may not have previously been given this opportunity or have known any better. It is our role to help them overcome this cycle and assist them to reach their potential.

By creating microenterprises that are designed by our young people, we build teams that are capable of great things. These businesses will provide pathways for people from disadvantaged backgrounds to gain employment that is meaningful and sustainable. These programs and employment opportunities are possible due to the unique approach developed and implemented by Bolting Ahead and its partners. These microenterprises allow us to provide benevolent relief to the people we support via the creation of genuine employment opportunities for our young people.

The first of these businesses was Backyard Bolters. By building a team, identifying a common interest, and exploring employment opportunities that relate to that interest, Backyard Bolters was born and now provides youth interested in gardening and lawn care to have meaningful and sustainable employment. The establishment of this business has ensured brighter futures for the people who work in it, beyond what they had initially believed was possible. It is the social proof that highlights we can be part of the change that will break down long term barriers to social inclusion and cycles of disadvantage. This in turn provides us all with hope for a brighter future for all.

## A WORD FROM OUR PRESIDENT, RICHARD

Almost 10 years ago, I was at a school delivering an event for students who came from a disadvantaged background. I asked a teacher where the kids would end up after they finished school, and the answer became the catalyst for the creation of Bolting Ahead Incorporated.

Championing hope and action, Bolting Ahead Incorporated now launches its first strategic plan, detailing our priorities for 2023-2028. This is a bold plan, committed to improving inclusion in employment and social domains for our young people.

Our team dreams of the day where all people, regardless of their circumstances, can gain the skills and confidence required to find and keep a job of their choice and live a fulfilled life in an inclusive society.

Bolting Ahead, its Board and our young people are a force for change.

## **BOLTING AHEAD STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 2023-2028**

### **OUR VISION:**

To have a truly inclusive society, that defies the odds and breaks down barriers.

### **OUR PURPOSE:**

To create engaging and sustainable programs and pathways for the young people we work with towards employment and social inclusion.

### **OUR VALUES:**

#### **Never Settle.**

Challenge the status quo. Embrace innovation. Always be learning.

#### **Create Connection.**

With our young people. With our community. With our partners.

#### **Rise Above.**

Show respect. Do what you say and say what you mean.

#### **Fight for it.**

You can knock us down. But we will get up again.

#### **Adapt.**

Move Fast. Overcome Obstacles.

#### **Inclusion Matters.**

It is that simple. (and that difficult)

### **OUR GOALS:**

#### **Goal One – Creating jobs for our young people through our microenterprises**

- 1.1 Refinement and expansion of Backyard Bolters Business Model
- 1.2 Identification of additional microenterprise opportunities
- 1.3 Development of strategic partnerships to facilitate the expansion of microenterprises and job creation

#### **Goal Two – Developing our young people through intervention and engagement programs**

- 2.1 Delivering Intervention and Engagement Programs
- 2.2 Delivering Workplace Ready Programs
- 2.3 Delivering Life Skills Programs

#### **Goal Three – Facilitating placement in open employment**

- 3.1 Supporting the transition to open employment
- 3.2 Supporting employers for the transition of our young people into their workforce, including through job customisation, and education on diversity and inclusion in their workforce

## **GOAL ONE - CREATING JOBS FOR OUR YOUNG PEOPLE THROUGH OUR MICROENTERPRISES**

***This goal will see creation of microenterprises for long term, sustainable employment of people from a disadvantaged background, without reliance on other organisations or initiatives. This will ultimately allow them to earn a wage and overtime, to rely less on formal and informal income support streams.***

### **1.1 REFINEMENT AND EXPANSION OF BACKYARD BOLTERS BUSINESS MODEL**

#### **1.1.1 - Developing sustainable business practices**

- As Backyard Bolters continues to grow and create employment opportunities for the young people we work with, it will need to refine its business policies and practices for optimal adaption and replication to other microenterprise opportunities.
- Opportunities will be sought to expand the business model to extend beyond private and business customers and into government funded initiatives such as My Aged Care.
- Currently, Backyard Bolters operates two days per week, for five hours each day. Expansion of this program to a five-day per week business will enable increased employment opportunities for existing employees. It will also create additional roles for people engaged through Bolting Ahead. The expansion of this program will ultimately decrease reliance on external welfare and support systems (Disability Pension, Job Seeker Payments and NDIS-funded supports).

#### **1.1.2 - Establish community connection and assess needs**

- Creating connections in the local community is critical to expansion of the Backyard Bolters model. Key connections will be created with individuals, businesses, local government and other applicable organisations to ensure the successful replication of the Backyard Bolters business.

## 1.2 GENERATING NEW MICROENTERPRISES

### 1.2.1 - Identifying additional microenterprise opportunities

- Expansion to other industries and service types will facilitate growth and create more employment opportunities for the young people that we work with. Identification of additional opportunities will be done in consultation with our young people, partners and community, and be informed by Government policy and strategy.

### 1.2.2- Develop 'white label' system and process to facilitate rapid expansion of microenterprises

- A simple, unified set of systems and processes that are universal for all businesses will be created to support the rapid expansion of the microenterprise business model. This will ensure that as additional microenterprises are created, time, energy and resources are put into key tasks. These key tasks will revolve around creating employment opportunities for people and delivering on revenue goals.

## 1.3 Develop strategic partnerships to facilitate the expansion of the microenterprises and job creation

### 1.3.1 – Develop partnerships with private enterprise and Government

- Partnerships with private enterprise groups will support the expansion of the microenterprise business models and will promote job creation and growth. These partnerships will be mutually beneficial.

### 1.3.2 – Identify grant and fundraising opportunities to fund program delivery and microenterprise business start-up

- By expanding revenue streams, Bolting Ahead will look to meet community needs through funded programs and grants, and meet resourcing requirements of microenterprise start-ups, including operational and potentially capital funding, grants or gifts.

## GOAL TWO - DEVELOPING OUR PEOPLE

***Our second goal focusses on skill acquisition and development. Our aim is to create engaging programs that will allow the young people we work with to develop the skills they need to improve their capacity to find and keep a job. This involves helping people manage various stages of their life transitions, including transitioning from education settings to the workforce.***

### 2.1 DELIVERING INTERVENTION AND ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMS

#### 2.1.1 - Implementation of intervention and engagement programs for disadvantaged youth

- These programs aim to help them break the cycle of disadvantage and risk. The programs will specifically seek to support people coming from the following backgrounds:
- Disability
- Substance Abuse – either personally or by a family member
- Disengaged students – students who are at risk of leaving the education system prematurely due to social factors.

#### 2.1.2 - Resourcing and expanding our Intervention and Engagement Programs

- We will expand our service offering over the next five years, by identifying and training future program facilitators.
- Additional localities will be identified for program implementation, utilising opportunities sourced through our partners, and based on the needs of the local community.



## 2.2 DELIVERING WORKPLACE READY PROGRAMS

### 2.2.1 – Development of Teams (I.e. good team member, employee, inclusion and acceptance of each other)

- These programs are designed to support people to develop the essential skills to become a great employee. This program focusses specifically on bringing individuals together to learn the essential social and communication skills to be an effective employee and member of the community.

### 2.2.2 - Provision of a 'Soft Skill' Curriculum

- This component of the workplace program is designed to teach the essential 'soft skills' that employees need for a successful career, including but not limited to, workplace communication and appropriate social interactions for the workplace and expectations.

### 2.2.3 - Provision of a 'Hard Skills' Curriculum

- This component of the workplace program targets the development of job task specific skills needed to gain employment. This can also include the completion of tertiary qualifications to gain employment. These skills include job specific training such as operating specific machinery, learning to use software and universal workplace health and safety.

## 2.3 DELIVERING LIFE SKILLS PROGRAMS

### 2.3.1 - Implementation of our Life Skills Program

- Provision of an in-house life literacy skills program to develop independent living skills, including financial literacy, responsible living and human rights.

### 2.3.2 - Implementation of our Society Skills Program

- This program will introduce or improve interpersonal skills, values and morals (I.e. how to be a good person in society), through set expectations and modelling, with the aim of decreasing welfare dependence and antisocial behaviours.
- We will foster community mindedness and giving back, through facilitated active volunteering and civic participation.

## **GOAL NUMBER THREE - FACILITATING PLACEMENT IN OPEN EMPLOYMENT**

***Transition and placement into open employment is the culmination of the Bolting Ahead programs. Engaging in open employment means that our young people will reduce or remove their reliance on formal or informal income support, gain greater self-value by achievement of employment goals, and actively contribute to the workforce needs of Queensland.***

### **3.1 SUPPORTING THE TRANSITION TO OPEN EMPLOYMENT**

#### **3.1.1 - Making and strengthening connections with potential employers**

- Our Program Facilitators will connect with community leaders and business owners to identify and develop open employment opportunities for our young people.

#### **3.1.2 – Helping our young people take the Next Step**

- We will actively identify when our young people are nearing job readiness and initiate transition processes and final preparations for open employment.

#### **3.1.3 – Helping our young people transition into open employment**

- We will support our young people to transition into the open workforce by providing on the job support until they are able to access open employment independently.

### **3.2 SUPPORT EMPLOYERS WITH THE TRANSITION OF OUR YOUNG PEOPLE INTO THEIR WORKFORCE**

#### **3.2.1 - Workplace Optimisation**

- Our Program Facilitators will work with employers to customise jobs, and to deliver unique personalised diversity and inclusion awareness in the workplace.

#### **3.2.2 - Mentoring employers through the transition process**

- Our Program Facilitators will provide support and assistance to employers to ensure a successful transition of our young people into their employment.

#### **3.2.3 - Influencing and optimising employment support networks to assist transition into the workforce**

- We will actively work with existing networks surrounding our young people to enable scaffolded supports are in place to smooth transition into an open employment lifestyle. This will include working with families, formal and informal supports that our young people may have, to ensure consistency in approach and alignment of purpose.

## WHO WE ARE

We are a community-based organisation, overseen by our Board, working in service to our communities. We value the contributions of our volunteers, employees and partners. At our core, we are informed and guided by the voice of the young people we work with – we are here to serve them and support them to be included in both the workplace and their community.

We enjoy working with our partners and create working relationships based on alignment between our values and organisational goals. Our partners are community, corporate and government-based organisations who share our vision for true inclusion in both employment and social settings.

Bolting Ahead is a registered Charity and is also endorsed for deductible gift receipts.

## IN CONSULTATION, INCLUSIVITY, AND WITH UNIVERSAL DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Bolting Ahead is an organisation that prides itself in taking action, not just talking actions. We intentionally put our principles into practice, and apply our values. We are driven to achieve our strategic priorities, and will influence and advocate for social inclusion.

Yes, we will help our young people to overcome barriers through social inclusion and employment, but we will also help them by instilling and expecting good behaviour. We will mentor our young people to understand and practice good social values and morals, and we will lead by example by championing being good humans.

At Bolting Ahead, we work with respect to diversity of ability, culture, gender, and socio-economic backgrounds. We inclusively design our programs to cater for difference, to meet our young people where they are at, and to draw them together towards achievement of great things.

We will centre our young people in all that we do. We recognise disadvantage as a complex context of society, and aim to tackle it through empowering our young people. We celebrate the diversity and uniqueness of our young people, and design our programs and microenterprises with them, following the ‘nothing about us, without us’ model. We aim to have broader beneficial social impact, achieve big picture change and be ideal partners to our supporters and communities.