

Ignite Small Business Start-ups

supporting small business creation for people from a refugee background

Settlement Services International (SSI) developed the Ignite Small Business Start-ups initiative to facilitate small business creation for people from a refugee background who want to start their own business or expand an existing one.

Research indicates that people from a refugee background display strong entrepreneurial qualities, with a higher than average proportion engaging in small and medium business compared to the general Australian population.

Ignite Small Business Start-ups (Ignite) harnesses these qualities and delivers the first start-ups program in Australia to focus on refugees, based on an enterprise facilitation model developed by the Sirolli Institute.

Why it works

Ignite taps into the existing skills, knowledge and experience of these new entrepreneurs by supporting them to navigate and succeed in the Australian business environment.

With the help of Ignite, budding entrepreneurs are helped to overcome the challenges of starting a small business, and create income for themselves, their family and potentially, over time, employment for others.

All business ideas are considered and to date, businesses have included:

- catering and hospitality
- photography and film making
- artisan products
- health and wellbeing
- fashion
- cleaning and painting services
- trade services

How it works

Ignite entrepreneurs are supported by trained enterprise facilitators, and have access to a Resource Team that includes business experts, volunteers, students and business mentors.

Potential entrepreneurs are referred to the facilitators by SSI case managers, Migrant Resource Centres and other organisations working with refugees in NSW.

Together, the Ignite team:

- works with refugees who are passionate about starting or expanding a business

- provides free and confidential support from locations that best suit the client
- supports capacity-building and networking in areas such as product development, marketing, and financial management
- helps to overcome barriers such as language, transport, and meeting venues
- assists with the Australian regulatory environment and local market knowledge

Join the Resource Team

Ignite entrepreneurs are mentored by a Resource Team, made up of stakeholders from the community including local business owners, finance experts, marketing specialists, universities, members of local councils, community organisations and chambers of commerce.

Members of the Resource Team provide their expertise, business knowledge and skills to the fledgling entrepreneurs to support product development and also to broaden their knowledge and understanding of issues including local laws, suppliers and business networks.

Ignite welcomes enquiries from people interested in supporting a promising entrepreneur.

About Settlement Services International

SSI is a community-based, not-for-profit humanitarian organisation providing a range of services in the areas of humanitarian settlement, accommodation, asylum seeker assistance, multicultural foster care, disability support and employment services in NSW. Formed in 2000, SSI is the umbrella organisation for the 11 member Migrant Resource Centres and multicultural services in NSW.

SSI is committed to ensuring that vulnerable communities, including refugees, humanitarian entrants and asylum seekers in NSW, are supported and resourced to fulfil their potential as members of the Australian community.

The organisation's aim is to achieve a society that values the diversity of its people and provides support to ensure meaningful social and economic participation. Our vision and mission are encapsulated in the words: settlement – support – independence.

SSI works closely with its volunteers, community organisations and stakeholders to provide support and links to activities that help clients to successfully integrate into the Australian community.

Contact Us

For more information about Ignite Small Business Start-ups or to join the Resource Team please contact:

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