

JobSeeker (Newstart) Raise the Rate for Good



Situation

COVID-19 has had an extensive and devastating impact for millions across Australia. The health crisis has devastated families and communities with millions having lost paid work, and many Australian's unemployed for the first time.

For the next 6 months the Australian Government has doubled Newstart (now known as JobSeeker Payment), Youth Allowance and other allowances that were paid at \$40 a day.

Prior to the Raise The Rate campaign and COVID19 response, Newstart hadn't risen in real terms in 26 years, and currently 1.7 million people will benefit from this increase in the immediate term, and your support has been instrumental in making this phenomenal change.

However, the increase is only temporary and the campaign is not won. We have a time limited opportunity as the Government has only committed to 6 months for the current JobSeeker payment level before the 'snap back' begins. The next phase is the most important to ensure a permanent increase in the October 2020 and May 2021 budgets. We can never go back to \$40 a day but we have a significant fight ahead.

To lock in a permanent increase to JobSeeker, we need an additional \$633,000 over the next 12 months. The funding will ensure the following actions and impact is achieved:

Actions

- Retain the campaigns team otherwise we will lose the existing connections and relationships across the community, business and government sectors.
We must also broker relationships with existing and new supporters in the Coalition Government for a permanent increase, highlighting that we can afford to go back to \$40 a day, especially to support Australia's economic recovery.

Without these deep relationships it will be difficult to ensure a permanent increase as there will be 'voices' and strong lobbying to go back to \$40 a day.

- Commission an evidence-based discussion paper by leading academics canvassing what the post-COVID19 social security system should look like. Getting social security reform right after the pandemic will be critical to recovery. For example, the JobSeeker Payment is now paid at a higher rate than the pension. We need reform on the other side of COVID-19 to be fair, and ensure that everyone in the system has an adequate income to cover the basics, regardless of their circumstances.
- Test messaging for the campaign. We are in very different circumstances to where the campaign was in 2019 and it is integral that the messaging is right, so we don't alienate existing and new audiences. The Government expects there to be 1.7 million people unemployed by September, with the vast majority having recently lost their job. We need to reach out to the newly unemployed and engage them in the campaign, whilst working together with our existing supporter base to harness the support of this large contingent of the Australian community directly impacted.
- To develop proactive media angles and pitch to journalists, with a focus on people sharing their first hand stories, especially those new to JobSeeker and JobKeeper. This campaign has demonstrated that people's stories are what win over hearts and minds. For example, MP Pat Conaghan, the National Member for Cowper became an advocate for Raise the Rate based on hearing from members of his community who cannot get by on \$40 a day. We need to continue to hear the stories of people without paid work.
- Boost capacity and digital advertising, including in media outlets, to recruit supporters and to inform key audiences of policy positions.

Impact

1.7m people in the immediate term will be lifted out of poverty. This is a once in a 26 year opportunity and we have a time limited opportunity over the next 12 months to embed a permanent increase to JobSeeker (Newstart).

To transform our social security system and drive down poverty and inequality, and recover from COVID-19 a much more resilient Australia, as a permanent increase to JobSeeker will be critical to the recovery of the Australian economy. Before COVID-19, modelling showed that an increase to unemployment payments would deliver \$4 billion to the economy, with millions going directly to struggling communities around the country. It would deliver thousands of jobs and support local business. Analysis of the recent stimulus package spending showed that people on the lowest incomes spent the most, supporting local economies, while people on higher incomes have saved. A strong social safety net is not only the right thing to do, it is the smart economic thing to do to build back better after COVID-19.

Budget		
Community Organiser	Responsible for community organising and supporting and managing campaign volunteers.	
Campaigner	Extend campaigner contracts. Stakeholder and supporter mobilisation support, campaign project management, working with Community Organiser and Senior Advisor (Social Security).	
Rest of campaign team	Part-resourcing CEO, Director of Media and Communications and Senior Advisor (Social Security). Senior Advisor (Social Security) and Director of Media and Communications providing on-call advice to community groups on social security policy, law, communications and implementation. Senior Advisor (Social Security) directly supervising campaign team, including approval of content and professional support. Part resourcing of ACOSS's digital communications team to produce engaging social media content and videography.	\$460,000
Message testing	Conduct message testing to ensure communications hit the mark under the campaign refresh.	\$60,000
Discussion paper	Commission a discussion paper on social security reform, factoring in latest research and evidence around adequacy and reform required to ensure everyone has an adequate income that meets needs.	\$70,000
Digital infrastructure, and advertising Non-digital collateral	Boost capacity and digital advertising, including in media outlets, to recruit supporters and to inform key audiences of policy positions. Printed materials and merchandise to support community grassroots campaigns.	\$50,000
External media support (IMPACT FUND grant)	To develop proactive media angles and pitch to journalists, with a focus on people sharing their first hand stories.	\$20,000
Community organisation campaign support (IMPACT FUND grant)	Grants to external local and grassroots community groups, particularly representing people directly affected to participate in the campaign	\$20,000
Travel , Volunteer and bursary costs	Travel and accommodation. Bursaries for Newstart and Youth Allowance recipients to share their story via media and other avenues and engage in lobbying.	\$30,000
Project management (IMPACT FUND grant \$10,000 contribution)	Administration, governance, telecommunications, finance	\$70,000
Total needed: \$780,000 Already Secured: 147,000 Requested from Impact Fund: \$50,000 for external media, community organising and admin		