

Every Thursday Michael sells out of the boxes of greens he delivers to a local yoga studio. He has transformed his yard and home with the help of Community Living Project and local service groups, installing raised garden beds and creating space to grow, prepare and pack his freshly harvested organic vegetables and herbs for sale.

Michael is one of many individuals who have found a niche market through micro enterprise. Every week people are developing customer bases and building enterprises that increase their independence and meet local needs, from lawn and garden care to hand-dried fruit, weekly delivered floral arrangements or upcycled timber furniture.

The Community Living Project's Micro Enterprise Program (MEP) offers opportunities to South Australians living with disabilities to explore and develop their own micro enterprise, at a scale and schedule that suits them. Michael is just one of the MEP participants who has received set up assistance, workplace mentoring and ongoing operational support through the program. The model builds on participants' strengths and interests - providing an alternative to day options or supported employment.

The Community Living Project launched the MEP with seed funding from the South Australian Government in 2013, partnering too with Purple Orange, the MS McLeod Benevolent Foundation and The Wyatt Trust. Jayne, Program Manager for the MEP, describes the partnership with philanthropy as going significantly beyond funding, as the relationships bring new connections and expertise to the individual enterprises, as well as to their small organisation.

The Wyatt partnership has provided funding at the individual enterprise level, giving flexibility for the program to provide more intensive support and resources as required. For Michael and other local micro enterprise owners, this has

meant that individualised support is available when they most need it, assisting program participants to successfully navigate challenges and overcome barriers as they arise.

Michael, through his involvement with MEP, has established his enterprise and has connected with a network of like-minded local businesses and community members through the sale of his produce. The benefits of purposeful work on individual wellbeing can be significant; and the program provides an inspiring example of how individualised funding can go a long way in facilitating meaningful enterprise and community connection.

If you're interested in exploring your own enterprise, and have access to individualised funding from the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) or State Government, MEP is an option you could explore. Contact Jayne at the Community Living Project on 8384 7866 for more information.

#### PARTNERSHIP SNAPSHOT

Partner: Community Living Project  
 Portfolio: Employment  
 Duration: 2014 - Current

Community Living Project's Micro Enterprise Program offers each participant micro enterprise start up services and invests in participants' networks to broaden the base of support. Participants are assisted in identifying and defining their business ideas and accessing the resources necessary to realise them.

See the Micro Enterprise Program in action: <https://bit.ly/2yTK7Ds>