



# 2024 ANNUAL REPORT



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## OUR MISSION:

**We aim to re-invent the definition of equal opportunity by providing food, training and employment where opportunity isn't equal.**

## THE SOCIAL IMPACT:

Plate It Forward uses the universal love of food to drive sustainable change for those who need it most. By combining 'for-purpose' hospitality ventures with charitable programs, we remove barriers and improve outcomes for vulnerable and marginalised individuals, including asylum seekers and refugees, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, those battling homelessness and addiction, people with disability and individuals in contact with the justice system.

Through our restaurants, catering services, and events, we create change using a 'pay it forward' model that donates 3,000 meals weekly to address food insecurity. Our training programs empower vulnerable communities with hands-on experience and pathways to career and personal development.

Guided by our four pillars—Food Security, Employment, Training & Education, and Connection—we tackle inequality by ensuring no one goes hungry, barriers to employment are broken down and meaningful connections are made through the shared joy of food.

By combining delicious food with a purpose-driven mission, we've built a movement that's reshaping lives through education, employment and empowerment.



# OUR IMPACT



## Social Enterprise Venues

Plate It Forward’s social enterprise restaurants and kitchens provide training and employment opportunities to individuals from marginalised communities—and for every guest who dines with us, we donate a meal on their behalf.

Our impact  
to date



**+625,000**  
meals donated locally  
& overseas

## The Social Meal

Each week, our dedicated team prepares and delivers over 2,000 free, nutritious meals to food-insecure communities in Sydney. This initiative repurposes surplus food, preventing waste while supporting those in



**+250**  
marginalised community  
members employed



**+56,000**kg  
food rescued



## Second Chance Kitchen

This program equips justice-involved youth with culinary skills and job opportunities, empowering them to build careers and reduce rates of reoffending.



**+169,000**hrs  
employment  
& training



**+5,000,000**\$  
wages

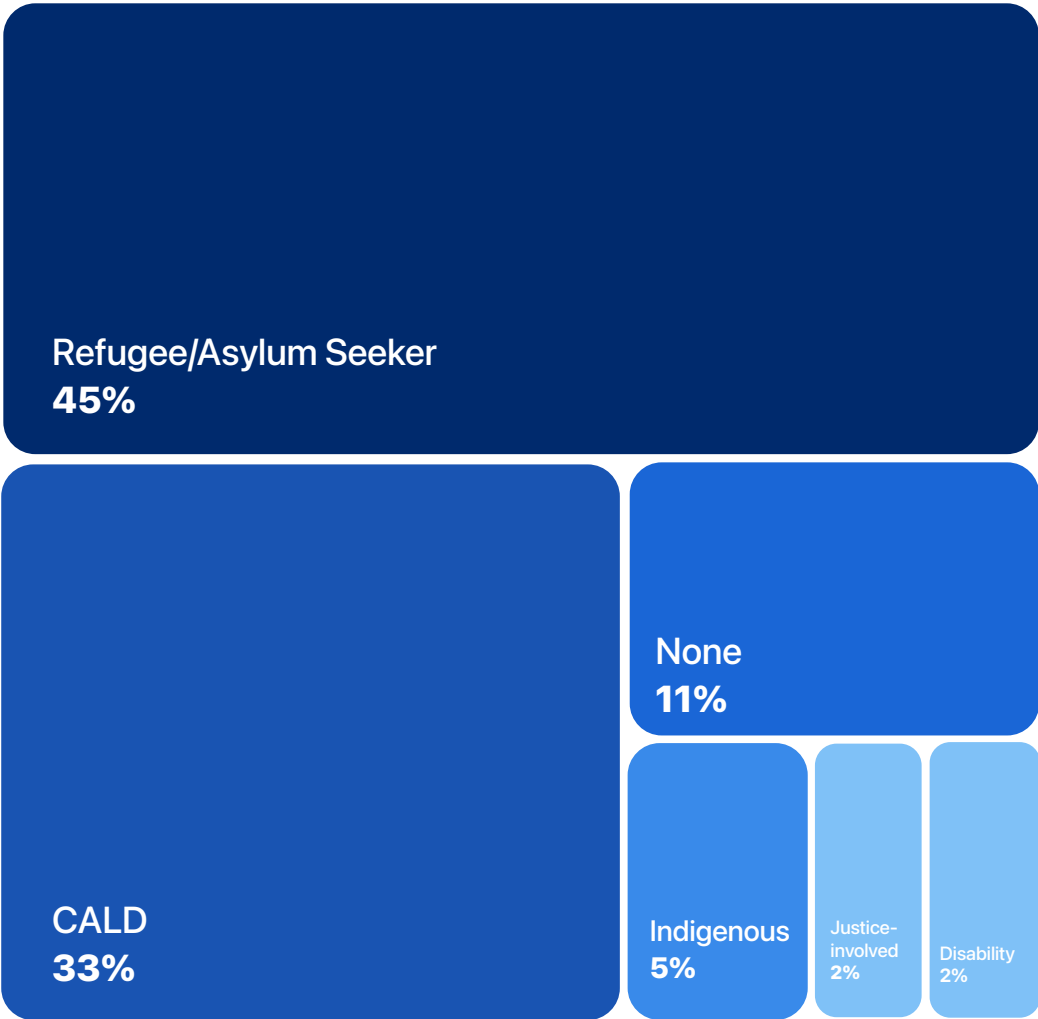


# OUR PEOPLE

We are proud to employ a diverse and resilient workforce, including asylum seekers, refugees, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, individuals from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds, people overcoming homelessness and addiction, individuals living with disabilities, and those with experiences in the justice system.

By embracing diversity and fostering inclusion, we aim to create opportunities that empower individuals, strengthen communities, and contribute to lasting social impact.

## 2024 team



89%  
from marginalised  
backgrounds

60%  
women

97%  
staff retention rate



*"Plate it Forward has given me, and continues to give me, the opportunity to unlock my potential in a foreign country."*

**Karyna**  
Front of House Supervisor, Kyiv Social

*"They give people chances. They give all sorts of people an opportunity to be better versions of themselves."*

**Nola**  
Logistics Coordinator, Plate It Forward Central Kitchen



**Joe & Nu**  
Colombo Social



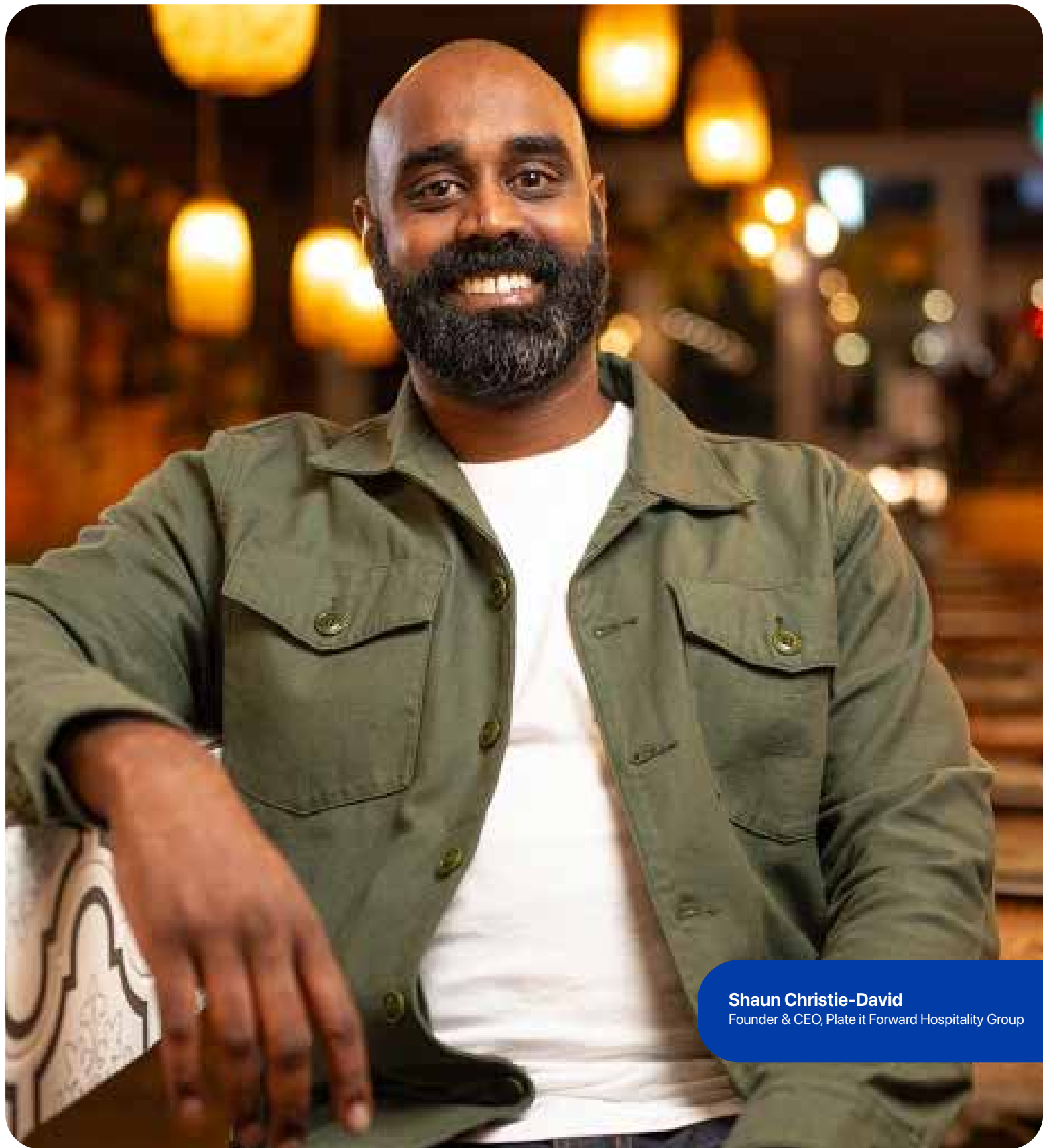
**Stanislav & Valentyna**  
Kyiv Social



**Yakut**  
Kabul Social



# A NOTE FROM OUR CEO



**Shaun Christie-David**  
Founder & CEO, Plate It Forward Hospitality Group

Holy SHIT!

Every time I think we've faced the hardest year, the universe throws another curveball, and 2024 was no exception.

In our world the cost-of-living crisis is a double edged sword with the profits in the restaurants declining while simultaneously experiencing high requests and unprecedented demand for our meal donations. But Plate It Forward always does what Plate It Forward does, and we responded with the kindness, humanity and care required when we are needed the most.

That means a significant increase in the number of meals donated, deeper connections with our community, more impact led programs and more employment opportunities - achieving the impossible not only quickly but providing meaningful and lasting change while doing it.

Having founded the movement less than 5 years ago, the impact that we have created is fucking mind blowing and it is hard to comprehend the huge amount of food we have donated (over 248,000 kilos!) and the number of hours of meaningful employment we have provided to some of the best people I have been fortunate to work alongside. But nothing fills me with more pride than seeing our team seek out new ways to deliver food, support, and outcomes to our charity partners and community. Their tireless, generous spirit ensures we respond with high-quality food, knowing how crucial it is during these times.

Our dream of being fully self-funded is becoming a reality—this year, 75% of our operations were funded through revenue. The Plate It Forward Hospitality Group, our largest donor, contributed over \$465,000 in donations and \$228,000 in in-kind support, including rent, food supplies, and staff.

This year the Plate It Forward Hospitality Group set up a huge new kitchen (triple the size of our last!) to respond to the need to supply more food relief in the community. Our Group will also cover the rent and bills for the charity, meaning any funds raised will go directly to food relief and supported employment. This incredible support will significantly amplify our impact and enable our food program to respond faster and more effectively.

We need your support to make this happen and the ways to do this are:

- Order catering for your office or event (40% of our funds come from catering for over 1,500 people weekly)
- Dine on a set menu at one of our many high-quality restaurants
- Donate directly via our website

This year, we're gearing up for one of our most impactful, uplifting, and incredible years yet - after another fucking insane and frantic year. We need your support to help create the world we all deserve, with equal opportunity around the table.

Thanks to you all and let's hope this year is not as brutal for us all.

Shaun Christie-David  
Chief Executive Officer, Plate It Forward



# AWARDS & RECOGNITION

## Awards:



01. NSW Humanitarian Award 2024

02. Time Out Magazine Sydney's Future Shaper 2024

## Press/Media:

01. The Sydney Morning Herald  
Is the job satisfaction better? 100 per cent:  
Why this boss doesn't mind being broke  
Jan 2024

02. ABC Australian Story  
Off Menu: Shaun Christie-David  
May 2024



03. Time Out (5 stars)  
Home-style Ukrainian food with purpose is what you'll find if you happen to wander down a Chippendale laneway (and you should)  
Jul 2024

04. Qantas Magazine Dine and Do Good:  
Meet the Ethical Australian Restaurants Giving Back to the Community  
Aug 2024



05. Forbes  
How Plate It Forward Is Transforming Australian Communities Through Food  
Nov 2024

## Podcasts

01. ABC Conversations  
Shaun Christie-David: Restaurants on a mission to end inequality  
Mar 2024

02. Everyday Greatness  
Episode 5 : Shaun Christie-David and Liz Ponitka  
Aug 2024



# 2024 HIGHLIGHTS

Impactful events and inspiring collaborations: celebrating the power of food to bring communities together

May



**ABC Australian Story**  
Australian Story's restaurateur trilogy showcasing Shaun and the Plate It Forward team changing lives one meal at a time.

June



**Vivid Sydney - 'Plates with Purpose: A Taste of Ukraine'**  
Celebrating Humanity through Light, Music, Ideas, and Food - an immersive experience of Ukrainian culture through a 10-course menu with live traditional music.

June



**Mum Cha launches at Colombo Social**  
A monthly lunch hosted by Shaun and his mum, Shiranie. Joined guest co-hosts: Dan Hong (Exec Chef, Merivale), Charlie Carrington (Chef/Owner, Atlas Dining), Farah Celjo (Editor/Producer, SBS Food), and Annabel Crabb (Journalist, ABC News) - and their mums!

July



**Carriageworks x Colombo Social Pop Up**  
Month-long residency celebrating Sri Lankan food and culture - accompanying Counting and Cracking theatre production.

August



**Rohingya Social**  
An unforgettable evening celebrating Rohingya cuisine, culture and resilience - co-hosted with Médecins Sans Frontières & The Creative Advocacy Partnership.

October



**SXSW Sydney x Kyiv Social**  
Kyiv Social is transformed into a key music venue, hosting performances and events showcasing diverse talent as part of the festival's vibrant celebration of creativity and innovation.





# **PROGRAMS & OUTCOMES**

**FOOD SECURITY**

**TRAINING & EDUCATION**

**EMPLOYMENT**

**CONNECTION**



# SOCIAL ENTERPRISE VENUES & KITCHENS

TRAINING & EDUCATION

EMPLOYMENT

CONNECTION

Plate It Forward operates dynamic social enterprise venues and commercial kitchens that are central to our goal of providing hands-on training and stable employment for marginalised communities in Sydney. Our venues - Colombo Social, Kyiv Social, and Kabul Social - along with our commercial kitchens, including Plate It Forward Central Kitchen, Sydney Swans, and Wesley Mission, serve as platforms for social impact, creating opportunities for people facing significant employment barriers.

In 2024, Sydney's hospitality sector faced significant economic challenges, with many high-profile closures and one in 13 businesses at risk of failure\*. **Against this context, Plate It Forward focused on strategies to maintain consumer engagement** - including expanding our catering & events range, adding restaurant specials & offers, and hosting monthly events such as 'Mum Cha' at Colombo Social and 'Beers 'n' Bangers' at Kyiv Social. **These efforts resulted in a significant revenue increase for Plate It Forward Hospitality, generating close to \$700,000 that was channeled directly into supporting our charitable programs.**

Training and staff progression remained a key priority in 2024 and we were thrilled to welcome two talented chefs to the training & development team - Ahana Dutt (Le Cordon Bleu trained - Aria, Firedoor & Raja) and Adrian Crabb (trained under Gordon Ramsay & Jason Atherton - multiple Michelin Star London restaurants). They have been working tirelessly across all venues and kitchens to provide best-in-class training to our staff.

\*CreditorWatch. (21 May 2024). One in 13 hospitality businesses facing failure in 12 months' B2B payment defaults hit record high.



*"It is quite a special feeling when you look around a restaurant during service and realise that you're not the minority. Being exposed to cultures that I would not have experienced otherwise also enables me to join the thread of commonality when it comes to flavours in food. And that is priceless."*

**Ahana Dutt**  
Training & Development Manager



# Colombo Social

Enmore

Opened in 2019, Colombo Social combines soulful Sri Lankan food and inventive cocktails with social purpose. This busy flagship serves as a key front of house training hub for employees across the group – vital for developing our emerging talent base. This cross-venue training program ensures that guests receive the same exceptional level of service, whether they dine at one of our other restaurants or are guests at a Plate It Forward catered event.



11,416

meals donated in Sri Lanka & Sydney



15,363<sup>hrs</sup>

employment & training



# Kabul Social

Sydney, CBD

Operating in Sydney's CBD since 2022, Kabul Social is run by a team of inspiring and courageous female refugees from Afghanistan. Every weekday lunch, these women bring their generational recipes to life, giving Sydney diners a taste of Kabul's dynamic street food scene. For every meal purchased, Kabul Social donates two meals: one to disadvantaged communities in Sydney and another to families in Afghanistan.



100%

women asylum seeker staff



\$756,343

in wages





# Kyiv Social

Chippendale

Opened in late 2023, Kyiv Social celebrates tradition and resilience, serving dishes inspired by Babusya's recipes, lovingly prepared by our team of newly arrived Ukrainian refugees. Many team members began with no hospitality experience and rapidly advanced into leadership roles through a mix of hands-on training, mentoring, and sheer determination. These new leaders play an active role in creating new dishes and enhancing the dining experience.

Throughout 2024, Kyiv Social became a hub for community events, providing a welcoming space for Ukrainian refugees and sharing their vibrant culture with the broader community.



25

Ukrainian refugees employed



55

onsite English language lessons



## Faces of Plate It Forward Karyna - Front of House Supervisor

Karyna is one of Plate It Forward's most inspiring success stories of 2024. Arriving in Australia as a Ukrainian refugee with no hospitality experience and limited English, Karyna embraced every opportunity for growth. "I gained an endless amount of new information and knowledge about the hospitality industry through hands-on experience in various areas of this field over the past year." In just a year, Karyna became Front of House Supervisor at Kyiv Social, running the floor with confidence and grace. She has represented Plate It Forward through public

speaking, sharing her journey on radio and panels. Alongside her full-time role, she is studying Human Resources to build a bright future.

Her favourite aspect of the job is sharing Ukrainian culture with guests, especially stories about her heritage, "I absolutely love all our dumplings. My grandmother prepares about 400 of the most delicious ones every season, making them an important traditional dish for me," she says.

Karyna's journey highlights the power of opportunity and resilience as she continues to grow her professional skills and contribute to Kyiv Social's welcoming atmosphere.



Karyna

*"We have formed a team whose members get along excellently, creating a friendly and supportive atmosphere at work - I appreciate this above all."*



# Plate It Forward Central Kitchen

Alexandria

Plate It Forward's central production kitchen is the heart of our operations, where charity meals are prepared and catering events come to life. Here, the team refines their culinary skills across diverse cuisines, learning from best-in-class chef-trainers. Breaking the traditional kitchen/front-of-house divide, the team also serves at events, gaining hands-on, cross-functional experience that helps cultivate future leaders in hospitality.



gained invaluable cooking skills, including mastering dishes beyond her Palestinian culinary heritage, but she has also improved her English by working closely with her supportive team. "This company has done me a great favour," Nehad says "they teach me everything and help me feel part of a team. I've learned about healthy food, food safety, and how to be a skilled cook by cooking all kinds of food, whether Arabic or otherwise."



15,910

additional free meals prepared



15,345<sub>kg</sub>

rescued food

"We have been working with Plate it Forward for a year now during which time they have provided full-time catering staff, buffet lunches, and managed food deliveries for us. Their staff are always happy and engaging, and the provided lunches are diverse and delicious."

**Dan Whellens**  
Netflix Animation Studios

## Faces of Plate It Forward Nehad - Chef, Plate It Forward Central Kitchen

Originally from Gaza, Nehad fled the devastating conflict, seeking safety in Malaysia, where she waited three years for her Australian visa to be approved. Upon arriving in Australia, she started working in a kitchen almost immediately, where her food was met with praise, but it proved challenging to find consistent work. Unable to access government aid, her family struggled financially until she joined Plate It Forward in early 2023. Through her role in the kitchen, she has not only



"I looked for a job and my financial situation was bad because we did not receive aid from the government. After four years I found Plate it Forward and I agreed to work with them. Here my whole life changed."

**Nehad**  
Chef, Plate it Forward Central Kitchen



## Sydney Swans Kitchen

Moore Park

Our partnership with the Sydney Swans focuses on employment, training, and development, fostering collaboration between our team and their athletes, coaches, and staff. This year, Plate It Forward's kitchen staff enhanced their skills by creating nutritionally balanced menus for high-performance athletes. Swans players also participated in our charity programs, including The Social Meal and Second Chance Kitchen, strengthening their ties with the community.



3,391hrs

employment & training  
provided for refugees



3,826

meals donated from  
Swans catering sales

*"The Sydney Swans have been fortunate to partner with Plate It Forward as our onsite caterer over the past two years. We've enjoyed watching their kitchen team grow and develop, delivering high-quality, nutritious meals for our athletes and high-end plated events for our boardroom. The Sydney Swans dining room serves as the Club's cultural hub, where everyone comes together to eat, drink coffee and connect. The Plate It Forward team has contributed to this homely feel both through their meals and care for our people."*

**Liz Ponitka**  
Head of Swans HQ

## Wesley Mission Kitchen

Surry Hills

We partner with Wesley Mission to provide restaurant-quality breakfasts and dinners on-site 365 days a year at the Wesley Edward Eagar Centre. Our service supports residents in emergency accommodation as they rebuild their lives after experiencing homelessness or recovering from addiction.



100%

staff completed Food  
Safety Supervisor training



31,200

nutritious meals  
prepared on site



# THE SOCIAL MEAL

FOOD SECURITY

CONNECTION

The Social Meal initiative provides over 2,000 free, nutritious, restaurant-quality meals weekly to Sydney communities experiencing food insecurity by repurposing food that would otherwise go to landfill.

Originally launched in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, **this program addressed the uncertainty and food insecurity many vulnerable community members faced during those challenging times.** In 2024, unprecedented demand emerged as the cost-of-living crisis deepened. By expanding our supplier partnerships, we rescued more food, resulting in an additional 15,910 free meals this year.

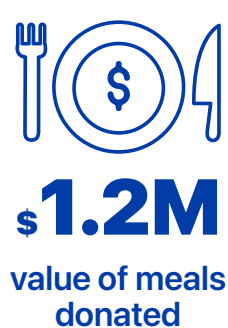
Plate It Forward reached a remarkable milestone in 2024, **surpassing 500,000 donated meals across Sydney**—a powerful testament to our commitment to tackling food insecurity. This contribution not only strengthens Australia's food relief sector but also leaves a lasting impact, providing nourishment, dignity, and hope to those most in need.

Our achievements are made possible by the generosity of our partners and supporters. With their continued backing, we strive to expand our reach, innovate our programs, and make an even greater difference in the lives of vulnerable Australians.

Food relief charities are continuing to experience heightened demand:

In 2024, **32% of Australian households** (an estimated 3.4 million households) **experienced food insecurity** (either moderate or severe).

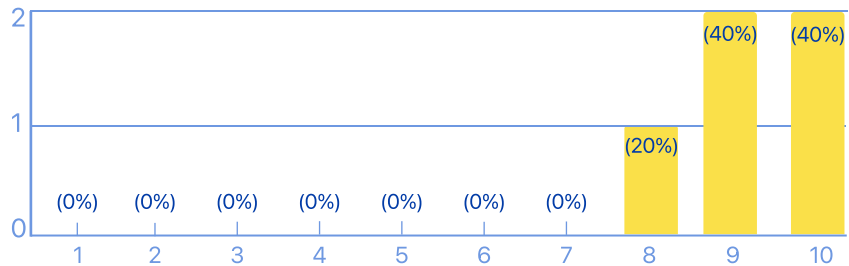
Foodbank Australia. (2024).  
Foodbank Hunger Report 2024



All Plate It Forward charity partners reported increased demand for their services, citing as the main causes:

- ▶ **100%** increased/high living expenses
- ▶ **40%** reduced/low income or government benefits
- ▶ **40%** changes in household/living arrangements

On a scale of 1 to 10 how crucial is this food service to your organisation and clients?



## WHO RECEIVES OUR MEALS?





# Nourishing Young Minds and Building Community

Redfern Jarjum College, a K-6 school for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in Redfern, supports 25 enrolled students with a focus on education, wellbeing, and cultural pride. Meals are a key part of the school’s mission to ensure children are nourished and ready to learn. Each school day, students receive breakfast, morning tea, a cooked lunch, and afternoon tea, with extra food packages often sent home.

In 2024, Redfern Jarjum College faced rising grocery costs, with weekly shopping expenses doubling over the past two years. These increased costs strained the school’s budget, limiting funds for essential services like dental care, counseling, and speech therapy.

**Plate It Forward alleviated this pressure by supplying 150 meals per week, cutting the school’s grocery bill in half and freeing up funds for critical services.** Plate It Forward’s nutritious meals were provided at least three days a week, ensuring students had access to high-quality food that supports their development. Additional meals were also distributed to homes and the community.



*“We, at Jarjum, are well aware it takes a Community to raise a child and we are thankful to have Plate It Forward as part of this Community.”*

**Gayl Hardaker**  
Volunteer Coordinator & Pastoral Care,  
Rederfern Jarjum College



*"Our clients look forward to the day our Plate It Forward meals arrive each week. Sometimes it's been a few days between meals, and they're always grateful to be able to dig in and fuel up."*

**Sarah Geatches**

Intake & Referral Officer  
Weave

*"The delivery of food we receive from Plate It Forward has brought the community together by providing a hot meal at the beginning of the week. A quote from a resident: 'thank you for this food, it's great to get a home cooked meal every week!'"*

**Peter Akkermans**

Community Change Coordinator  
RedLink

*"Please know you make a wonderful difference at Early Bird Café. Our clients (who have increased by 50% in the last 6 months) love your prepared meals. Our volunteers love handing them out each morning."*

**Marilyn Smith OAM**

Early Bird Café

## Faces of Plate It Forward

# Nola - Plate It Forward Logistics Coordinator

Nola, a single mother of seven, faced significant barriers to stable employment after leaving incarceration. She started as a casual employee at Plate It Forward and quickly transitioned to full-time within six months. "Without Plate It Forward, there would be no job stability," she explains. "Stable employment means your life can be better, less stressful. Stability for my home and kids."

Now, after two years with the organisation, Nola does much more than organise and

drop off deliveries—she is the true face of Plate It Forward for many of our charity partners, delivering much-needed meals each week. This is her favourite part of her role - "I love them, the people (at RedLink) are sitting outside waiting for the van, ready for a chat and excited about the food."

Nola is passionate about growing her skills and has a clear vision for the future. "My goal is a role in community services, helping the homeless," she states. "I want to take my kids and show them the strong community."



*"I'm really happy right now, my job is stable and I don't have to rely on anyone. I'm financially independent. I learnt this, I can do it on my own."*



# SECOND CHANCE KITCHEN

TRAINING & EDUCATION

EMPLOYMENT

Second Chance Kitchen supports the reintegration of young people from the juvenile justice system by providing hospitality training and employment pathways.

In 2024, the program, which began the previous year, continued with three intakes, each lasting six weeks. Participants gained hands-on experience, including knowledge of the operational aspects of a commercial kitchen, food handling, hygiene, and cooking techniques. Each week features a top industry chef to motivate, inspire and provide young people with relevant hospitality skills to increase their employability post-release.

Program objectives include:

- ▶ Providing insight into the hospitality industry
- ▶ Teaching roles within a commercial kitchen
- ▶ Offering food handling and hygiene training
- ▶ Facilitating connections with industry mentors and potential employers

Second Chance Kitchen is more than just a training program; it's an opportunity for young people to gain the skills, confidence, and support they need to reintegrate into society and build a brighter future.



20

students trained



9

chef mentors from top  
Sydney restaurants



100%

course completion rate



*"This program was extremely powerful for each young person involved. They each shared with me that they were excited to put what they learnt into practice in the real world with their families. The rapport and respect built between the young people and the Chefs/Guests that facilitated this program was instant. The young people looked forward to their 'Wednesday' morning program almost as much as the Chefs were excited to come back each week."*

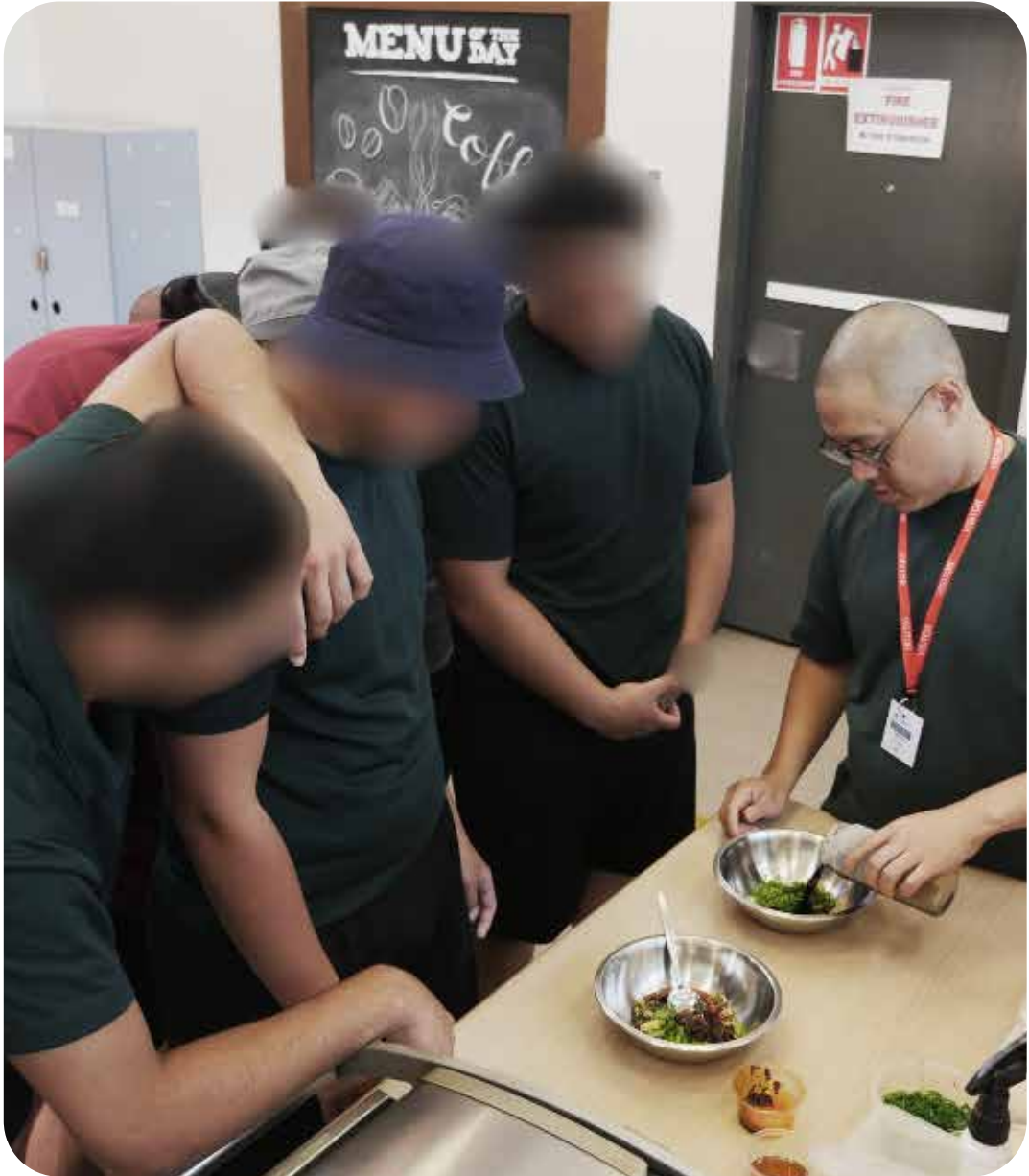
Hans

Youth Officer, Cobham Youth Justice Centre



# 2024 Guest Chefs/Mentors

- 1 - Dan Hong - Mr Wong, Ms G's
- 2 - Luke Powell - LP's Quality Meats, Bella Brutta
- 3 - Jean-Paul El Tom - Baba's Place
- 4 - Mitch Orr - (previously) Kiln, Prince Dining Room
- 5 - Morgan McGlone - Bar Copains, Bessie's, Alma's
- 6 - Mitch Westwood - Westwood Pizza
- 7 - Ben Greeno - Fred's, Hotel Centennial
- 8 - Luke Bourke - Rockpool Bar & Grill
- 9 - Corey Costelloe - 20 Chapel



*"Spending the day at Cobham was an eye opener for me, sharing the love of cooking that I have with the young people was a great experience. The really cared about what they had to do and took the time to do it properly. I'd hire them all."*

**Ben Greeno**  
Executive Chef, Merivale

Finding a job after leaving the program is important to me:

**100%**  
participants strongly agreed

The biggest barriers to finding work reported by participants were:

Not knowing where to go

**31.3%**

Lack of a support network to find employment

**18.8%**

At the completion of the program, participants were asked if they felt more confident about finding a job:

**81.3%**  
strongly agreed

**18.8%**  
agreed



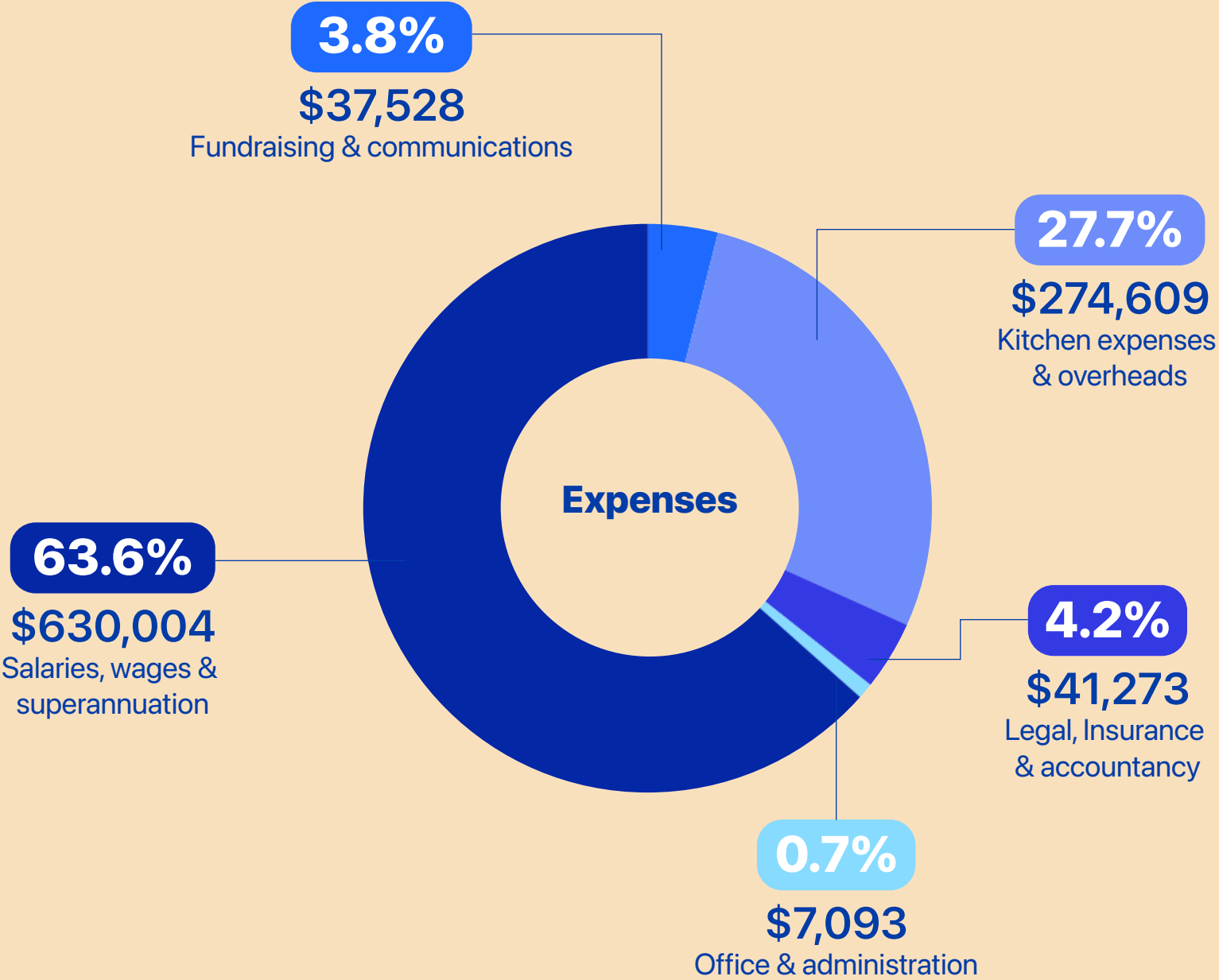
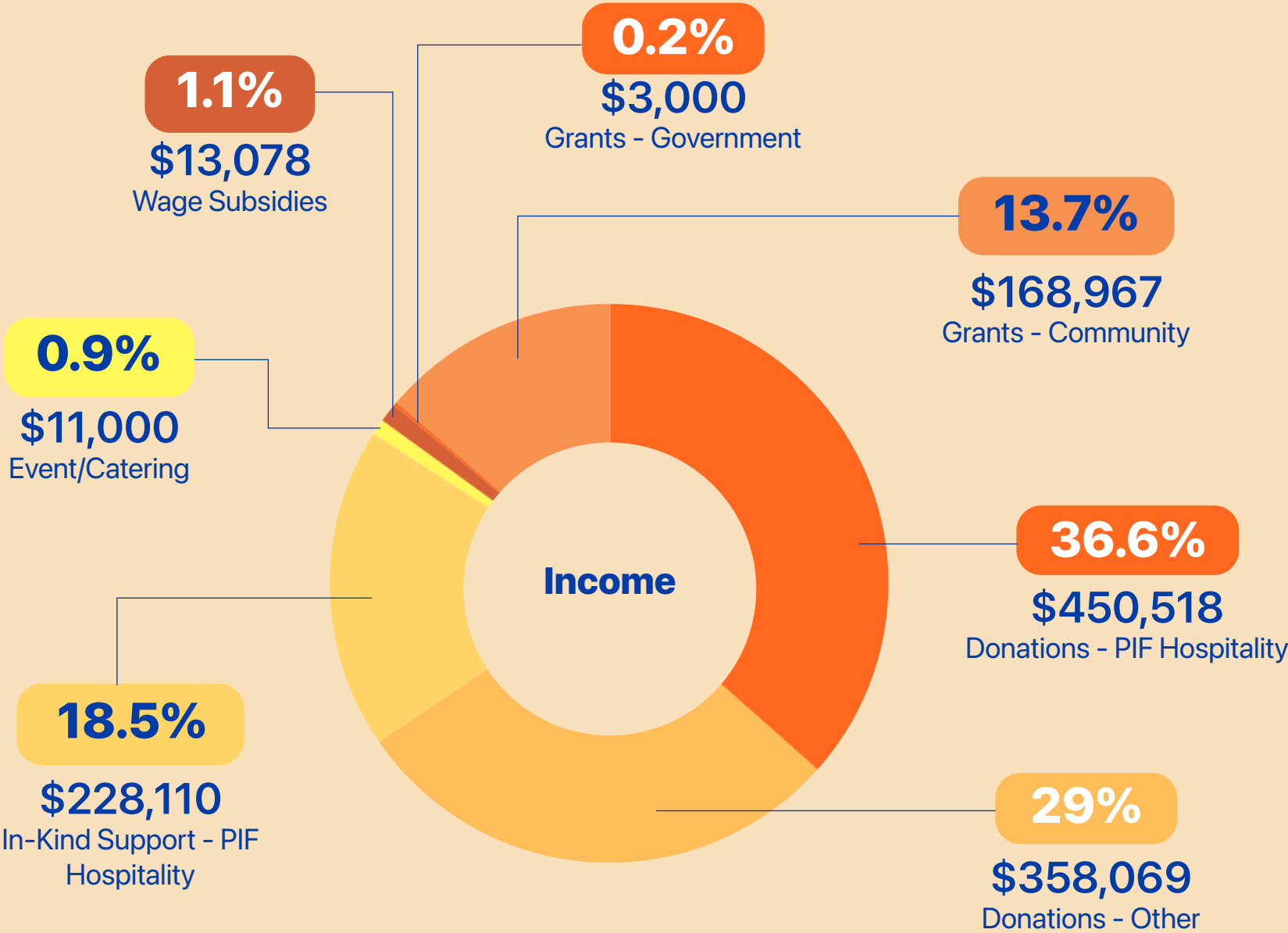


# **FINANCIAL SUMMARY**



# FINANCIAL SUMMARY 2023/2024

Plate It Forward Hospitality proudly contributed 55% of 2023/2024 income—over \$675k—directly supporting training opportunities for our talented community members and providing continued support for our food relief programs.





## Balance sheet

As at 30 June 2024

	2023/2024	2022/2023
<b>Current assets</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	199,326	27,438
Debtors	3,190	0
<b>Total current assets</b>	<b>202,516</b>	<b>27,438</b>
<b>Non-current assets</b>		
Property, plant, equipment and motor vehicles	89,785	67,575
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>292,301</b>	<b>95,013</b>
<b>Current liabilities</b>		
Trade and other payables	7,680	30,076
Other creditors	38,507	15,289
GST account	(4,987)	(7,530)
Borrowings - income in Advance	91,667	0
<b>Total current liabilities</b>	<b>132,867</b>	<b>37,835</b>
<b>Non - current liabilities</b>		
Trade and other payables	(3,345)	248
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>129,522</b>	<b>38,083</b>
<b>Net assets, equity, retained earnings</b>	<b>162,779</b>	<b>56,930</b>

## Income statement

For the year ended 30 June 2024

	2023/2024	2022/2023
<b>Income</b>		
Charitable donations received	1,036,767	576,082
Event income	11,000	430,953
Less: direct costs	136,397	344,903
Grants & subsidies	184,775	355,303
Interest received	212	701
<b>Total income</b>	<b>1,096,356</b>	<b>1,018,135</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Fundraising & communications	37,528	46,370
Kitchen overheads	274,609	61,739
Legal, insurance & accountancy	41,273	69,376
Office & administration	7,093	21,120
Salaries, wages & superannuation	630,004	854,354
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>990,507</b>	<b>1,052,957</b>
<b>Net profit (loss)</b>	<b>105,849</b>	<b>(34,822)</b>
Retained earnings at the beginning of financial year	56,930	91,752
<b>Retained earnings at the end of the financial year</b>	<b>162,779</b>	<b>56,930</b>



# OUR PARTNERS 2024

Thank you to all of our partners for your generous support this year

## Funding Partners

Plate It Forward Hospitality Group  
City of Sydney Council  
Chatleigh Foundation  
Deputy  
Westpac Foundation  
Snow Foundation  
BlackRock  
Blackstone



## Charity Partners

Wesley Mission  
Weave Youth & Community Services  
RedLink  
The Settlement  
Early Bird Cafe  
Cardoner Network  
Rough Edges  
Redfern Jarjum College  
Hume Housing

## In-Kind Support

SecondBite  
Steggles  
Foodbank Australia  
Tokyo Lamington  
Andrews Meat Industries  
Pepe Saya  
Unox  
Kingston Reid  
Clemenger Group  
Gerri Hughes  
Sam Leckie Admin

## Catering Partners

Sydney Swans  
Netflix Animation  
VivCourt Trading  
ITSM



# OUR BOARD



**LALI WIRATUNGA**

Lali has over 25 years of experience spanning corporate legal, consulting, and financial services in Australia and the UK. Currently a ESG Capability Lead at Westpac Group, he specialises in digital strategy, sustainability, marketing and operations management. A recipient of Pro Bono Australia’s Impact 25 Award in 2016, Lali is recognised for his leadership in the social economy. He serves as Chair of Plate It Forward and has held voluntary roles, including with Westpac’s 50PLUS advocacy group and UNSW Business School Alumni. Lali is a strong advocate for inclusivity and equity, with a commitment to building a better future for the next generation.



**DILUKSHI BROCK**

Dee is passionate about creating and delivering accessible spaces for next generation communities, with extensive experience in the public sector and on the development and delivery of city shaping infrastructure. She is currently employed by the Bradfield Development Authority as a Senior Development Manager working on the new Bradfield City and has worked previously on major projects including Sydney Metro - Western Sydney Airport, Western Sydney Stadium and the Moorebank Intermodal Terminal. A graduate of the University of Wollongong with a double degree in Commerce and Law, Dee previously served as a Director of The LBW Trust, supporting education for young people in the developing world.



**ARJUN BISEN**

Arjun is a policy advisor, startup founder, and former diplomat with over a decade of experience at the intersection of technology, social impact, and global affairs. He is currently an advisor on technology policy for Google Search HQ in Silicon Valley. A Fulbright scholar, he earned a master’s degree from Harvard, where he also designed a course on technology and social impact with President Obama’s Secretary of Defense, Ash Carter, and taught at Harvard’s Business, Engineering and Policy schools. As an Australian diplomat, he focused on cyber strategy and human rights, including leading UN Aid Programs in Cambodia on disability rights, election integrity, and landmine clearance.



**NICK VERHELST**

Nick brings extensive experience in the sports industry, having worked with professional teams, athletes, agencies, and global brands. After nearly a decade with the Sydney Swans AFL team, he joined EssenceMediacom to lead their sports and entertainment partnerships team, Prism. There, he managed major sponsorships, including KFC’s Big Bash, NRL, AFL, and Google x Australian Open campaigns. Now Partnerships Lead at M&C Sport and Entertainment, Nick focuses on building brand relevance through connecting with people’s passions. He has been a Plate It Forward Board member since 2022 and holds an MBA in Sports Administration.



**SHAUN CHRISTIE-DAVID**

Shaun is social entrepreneur dedicated to creating equal opportunities for marginalised communities through innovative social enterprises and partnerships. As well as founding Plate It Forward, Shaun also spearheaded the launch of the Aboriginal Health Television Network in partnership with the Australian Federal Government, improving health literacy for First Nations people. With extensive experience in corporate partnerships and fundraising, he has collaborated with major organisations like UK’s NHS and Macquarie Bank on projects promoting equitable health services. Shaun is also a founding board member for The Dental Truck, a not for profit providing free dental assistance to asylum seekers, remote Aboriginal communities and people experiencing homelessness.



# CHAIR REPORT

Dear Friends, Supporters, and Community,

I am proud to share the 2024 Annual Report for Plate It Forward. This year has been marked by growth, impact, and a strengthened commitment to reshaping lives through education, employment, and empowerment.

## A Year of Purposeful Action and Impact

**Food Security:** Our commitment to ensuring everyone has access to nutritious meals has been unwavering. We served over 2,000 meals weekly in Sydney, translating restaurant dishes into donated meals. To date, over 500,000 meals have been provided locally, fostering community, support, and a sense of belonging.

**Employment:** Empowering individuals who face employment barriers is at the core of our mission. We celebrated 145 success stories from our team of marginalised community members, focusing on career pathways that lead to financial independence and personal growth. Each job placement is a testament to resilience and transformation.

**Training & Education:** Education is the key to unlocking potential. Our team engaged in extensive training hours, enhancing skills for the hospitality sector. Funded qualifications have bolstered employability, confidence, and expertise, enriching our community one skill at a time.

**Connection:** Creating inclusive spaces where everyone feels valued and connected is essential. Events like Mum Cha at Colombo Social celebrated diversity and unity, bringing people together through shared meals, stories, cultures, and dreams.

**Financial Health and Sustainability:** Plate It Forward thrived financially, with a total income of \$1,096,356.07 and strong financial management. Our total assets stood at \$292,301.07, with a cash position of \$198,470.75, reflecting our prudent financial management and sustainability.



**Looking Ahead:** In 2025, we aim to expand our reach and deepen our impact through partnerships. We seek collaborators who share our vision for a more inclusive world, focusing on food security, employment, training & education, and connection. By joining forces, we can amplify our efforts and innovate in tackling social challenges.

Reflecting on 2024, we've made incredible progress. I am deeply grateful to our staff, partners, supporters, and the Plate It Forward community. Together, we are building a future where everyone has a seat at the table.

With your continued support, we are poised to take the next steps in our mission. The road ahead is filled with promise, and we are excited to walk it with all of you.

Explore our Annual Report to grasp the breadth and depth of our impact. Join us in celebrating our achievements and be inspired by the path ahead.

With immense gratitude and warm regards,

Lali Wiratunga  
Chair, Plate It Forward





We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians on whose land we live, work and play and we respect their Elders, culture, lore and values. We value Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture as a national treasure, and embrace it as a vital and rich part of the Australian identity.