

Media Release

The Hon Natalie Suleyman MP

Minister for Veterans

Minister for Small Business and Employment

Minister for Youth



Sunday, 19 January 2025

INVESTING IN ST ALBANS SMALL BUSINESSES

The Allan Labor Government is backing small businesses in St Albans to grow from strength to strength, providing support to local multicultural traders and precincts.

Minister for Small Business and Employment Natalie Suleyman and Minister for Multicultural Affairs Ingrid Stitt today joined the community at the annual St Albans Lunar New Year Festival to announce support for the St Albans Business Group Association.

The \$200,000 grant will support St Albans Business Group Association to host the annual St Albans Lunar New Year Festival until 2027, as well as delivering a week-long event as part of the Melbourne Food and Wine Festival for the next two years, starting with St Albans Westside Wanders in March 2025.

The Association will also host engagement nights involving over 120 traders over the next two years, with each event to include awards for traders.

Now in its 27th year, St Albans Lunar New Year Festival attracts around 100,000 Victorians each year to celebrate the community's cultural heritage and showcases Southeast Asian culture and traditions, featuring rides, traditional food, music and entertainment.

The project is funded under the Labor Government's \$17 million investment to support multicultural traders and precincts. As part of that investment, \$2 million was invested to support multicultural traders' associations, so they can work directly with the local businesses and communities.

Multicultural businesses play a crucial role in our economy – they create employment opportunities, strengthen the vibrancy of our business precincts across Victoria, and build connections to diverse local communities.

Victoria is proudly home to over 718,000 small businesses, and over a third are owned by migrants. The new year is the perfect time to shop small and support local businesses, with that support flowing into the state's economy.

This initiative is just one of the ways the Labor Government is supporting small business to start, grow and thrive by investing in skills, mentoring, and business precincts. Projects are also being supported through the Springvale Asian Business Association, Oakleigh Village Traders, the Asian Business Association and more.

Small business operators also have access to support through Business Victoria. For more information about support for small businesses, visit business.vic.gov.au.

Quote attributable to Minister for Small Business and Employment Natalie Suleyman

"The St Albans Lunar New Year Festival has been an important community celebration for almost 30 years, and we are delighted to help it continue, celebrating the proud multicultural spirit of St Albans and supporting local businesses."

Quote attributable to Minister for Multicultural Affairs Ingrid Stitt

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“It is great to lock in the St Albans Lunar New Year Festival for another three years, the festival celebrates the community’s proud Asian culture and drives people to the area helping the local economy and multicultural businesses.”

Quote attributable to St Albans Business Group Association President Sebastian Agricola

“The assistance from the Victorian Government is invaluable. It is a huge boost for the St Albans town centre, empowering businesses to embrace digital media and host our inaugural business award.”