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Hoping to find work for everyone at 'Jobbortunities'

By Richard Davison (/author/richard.davison%40odt.co.nz)

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"Jobbortunities" co-ordinator Ruth Carraway says more than 7000 jobs in fields such as construction, clerical work and fruit-picking will be available during work fairs in Balclutha and Queenstown next month. PHOTO: RICHARD DAVISON

A drive to fit "faces to places" throughout Otago is gaining momentum.

On August 20, the Clutha District Council announced it would be launching an Otago-wide initiative under the \$12.5 million Ministry of Social Development-funded Mayors' Task Force for Jobs Community Recovery Programme, since christened "Jobbortunities".

Clutha co-ordinator Ruth Carraway said yesterday she had spent the past fortnight "drumming up" jobs for those seeking new or additional employment in Clutha, and the wider region.

"We've identified more than 7000 jobs throughout Otago, which we're expecting to grow as we continue to speak to more employers.

"We're confident anyone who's lost work through Covid, who is looking for a change of employment, or who simply wants a bit more work, can come along to one of two Jobbortunities work fairs next month, and find something to fit."

Although the bulk of the roles on offer were seasonal work such as fruit-picking in Central Otago, viticulture or freezing works positions, overall the variety was "huge", she said.

Tertiary institutions would be represented at the events.

Clutha Mayor Bryan Cadogan said he continued to support Jobbortunities "behind the scenes".

"Although Clutha is our first and major focus, part of our remit is bringing in the wider region in terms of employers and employees.

"There are thousands of foreign nationals in limbo in Queenstown at present, and I'm meeting Immigration Minister Kris Faafoi tomorrow to see what can be done either to get them home, or get them into work and productive for our employers and economy."

Mr Cadogan praised Otago employers for their willingness to take part in the initiative.

"There's an immediacy and urgency to the current situation that demands a collective, positive response, and that's what we've seen, without exception."

Clutha district Jobbortunities takes place at the Cross Recreation Centre, Balclutha, from 4pm to 7pm on October 1.

The Queenstown event is scheduled for October 10 at the town's Memorial Hall.

richard.davison@odt.co.nz (mailto:richard.davison@odt.co.nz)



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