



searchlight group
EXECUTIVE SEARCH & ADVISORY

Candidate Briefing Pack



Non-Executive Directors

Two Board appointments · Education and community services across Melbourne's outer east

August 2026

ABOUT CIRE SERVICES

Cire Services Limited (Cire) is an award-winning not-for-profit organisation and registered charity serving the diverse population of Melbourne's outer east. For more than fifty years, Cire has been a genuinely local institution: providing quality education and training for people of all ages and delivering innovative programs and services that meet the needs of its community. From early learning and community schooling to vocational training and community programs, Cire connects people of all ages, interests and backgrounds with lifelong learning opportunities and support.

From its home in Lilydale and campuses across the Yarra Ranges, Cire is now extending its reach into the neighbouring growth municipalities of Casey, Cardinia, Knox, Maroondah and soon to be Banyule, taking a proven, person-centred model of learning and support to some of the fastest-growing communities in Australia.

Vision. communities where everyone is empowered to reach their potential.

Promise. to create spaces and foster an environment where individuals and families can learn, grow, connect and thrive.

Values. Quality, Inclusion, Innovation, Integrity and Sustainability.

Cire scale and scope

- More than fifty years of continuous service to the communities of Melbourne's outer east.
- A person-centred service offer spanning early learning, community schooling, training and community support, tailored to the needs of the individual.
- Serving people of all ages and backgrounds: children, adolescents, young people, adults and older Australians.
- A growth trajectory from around \$50 million towards \$80 million as new campuses open with a number of major capital projects currently in delivery.
- A campus extension at Berwick this year, and two more planned at Clyde and Briar Hill next year.
- A registered charity, investing its surpluses back into service delivery, facilities and staff development.
- A child safe organisation, committed to a workplace where all children and young people are safe and feel safe, with a deliberate focus on those most at risk.

Cire is one of the sector leaders in this growth market, and it is making a great impact: in classrooms and early learning hubs, in training rooms, and in the community programs that hold local families together.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

The Strategic Plan 2023–2027

Cire's current five-year strategic plan was built through consultation between the Board and the executive leadership team. It commits the organisation to four goals: transform the learning sector, be driven by impact, grow a financially resilient Cire, and act as a catalyst for change. Underneath these sit initiatives that range from codifying the 'Cire Learning' model and strengthening the transition-to-employment offer, through to directing investments that drive commercial returns, growing Cire's footprint, and exploring a single flagship precinct that would bring Cire's strategic elements together behind one focus.

The plan is now in its closing years, and a refresh is approaching: the next strategic plan will be developed by the Board and executive together in early to mid-2027, and the incoming directors will join in time to help shape it.

Growth, and the governance of growth

Cire is growing quickly. New campuses are opening across the outer-eastern growth corridor, with Berwick expanding this year and two further campuses at Clyde and Briar Hill next year, part of a portfolio of a number of current capital projects. Revenue is on a trajectory from around \$50 million towards \$80 million. The sector itself is creating more demand: communities are growing, expectations of education are diversifying, and how children and adults learn is changing.

The central question for the Board, and one the incoming directors will help address, is how Cire's governance should evolve as the organisation grows while maintaining its high standards of education and service delivery. Growth at this scale requires strong Board oversight of capital, risk appetite, major partnerships, digital capability and organisational capacity, together with continued assurance that quality and outcomes are sustained.

A maturing governance structure

Cire's governance has just taken a significant step. In July 2026, Cire completed its transition from an incorporated association to Cire Services Limited, a public company limited by guarantee, adopting a new Constitution and Board Charter and introducing a remunerated Board model. The Board comprises between three and nine directors, its composition reviewed at least annually against the Board Skills Matrix, supported by two standing committees: the Board Governance Sub-Committee and the Board Finance and Audit Sub-Committee. These changes reflect an organisation whose scale and complexity now call for the governance architecture of a significant company, while keeping the community connection that has defined Cire for fifty years.

THE BOARD AND CIRE'S CULTURE

A Board deliberately renewing itself

These appointments are stage two of a planned renewal of Cire's Board. As the organisation has grown, the Board has progressed deliberately from the hands-on, operationally involved committee of management typical of a community organisation to a proper Board of governance. The current directors describe it as an elevation: lifting the Board's focus to strategy, assurance and performance, and trusting a capable executive to manage.

The Board that the incoming directors will join is described from inside as highly collaborative and highly relational: a Board that works hard on trust and on maintaining a psychologically safe environment, and that consciously balances support for the executive with accountability. Directors are expected to engage respectfully, challenge constructively, and commit to collective decision-making as part of a skills-based Board. They are also expected to show up: Board Directors attend Cire's community events, and the connection to the communities Cire serves is part of the role, not an optional extra.

What the Board is looking for

In briefing this search, Cire's directors and executive were clear about the capabilities these two appointments should add.

- Growth experience, viewed from a governance perspective: directors who have governed (and/or led at executive level) organisations through significant expansion, and who bring sound strategic and commercial judgement to decisions about capital, risk and pace.
- AI, cyber and digital capability. Cire is at the start of this journey: policies are being developed and the organisation is compliant, but the Board wants genuine depth in AI, ICT, cyber, data governance or digital transformation, exercised with a conscious eye to the communities Cire serves.
- Education and sector insight, experience in education, training, employment or community services is valued, particularly as demand grows and the ways children and adults learn continue to change.
- Emotional intelligence and judgement, directors who read the room, know when to lean in and when to hold back, and strengthen relationships between the Board, CEO and executive leadership team.
- Diversity, broadly understood, gender, age, cultural background, lived experience, professional background, geographic connection and diversity of thought. No single candidate is expected to carry every attribute; the aim is a Board whose members complement one another.

The two appointments will be considered together rather than sequentially, so that each preferred candidate complements not only the existing Board but the other incoming director.

THE OPPORTUNITY

Role. Non-Executive Director of Cire Services Limited (two positions). Directors are company officeholders, ACNC Responsible Persons and are Members of the company while holding office.

Board. a skills-based Board of between three and nine directors, supported by the Board Governance and Board Finance and Audit Sub-Committees. The recruitment is overseen by Cire's Director Recruitment Working Group.

Remuneration. a Board Director allowance of \$15,000 per annum, plus \$1,500 per committee membership (usually one committee per director), inclusive of superannuation. Full NFP salary packaging is available.

Commitment. eleven Board meetings a year plus committees, briefings and Cire events: see The Role of a Cire Director for the full picture.

Location. Melbourne's outer east. Board meetings are held in person in Lilydale; genuine connection to the region is valued.

Term. three years, renewable, with tenure capped at nine consecutive years (extendable to twelve only by special resolution).

Cire is seeking two experienced directors to join a collaborative, skills-based Board at the moment the organisation steps up, adding governance depth in growth, commercial judgement and digital capability as revenue grows towards \$80 million, new campuses open, and the next strategic plan takes shape.

What the incoming directors will do

- **Govern growth:** bring strategic challenge and commercial judgement to a multi-campus expansion across Melbourne's fastest-growing corridors, and to the capital, risk and partnership decisions that come with it.
- **Shape the next strategic plan:** join the Board in time to co-create the plan that succeeds the 2023–2027 strategy.
- **Strengthen assurance:** support the continued maturing of Cire's governance, risk and compliance settings as the entity structure modernises.
- **Add digital depth:** help the Board govern AI, cyber, data and digital transformation wisely, and in a way that is conscious of the communities Cire serves.
- **Hold the culture:** contribute to a highly collaborative, psychologically safe Board culture that balances support for the executive with accountability and models the governance–management distinction.
- **Be present:** represent the Board at Cire events and in the community and help tell the story of Cire's purpose and impact.

THE ROLE OF A CIRE DIRECTOR

Within the Board's collective responsibility, each director contributes independent judgement, governance oversight, relevant expertise and constructive challenge. In practice, each director:

- Acts with reasonable care and diligence, honestly and fairly, in Cire's best interests and for its charitable purposes.
- Contributes to setting and overseeing strategy, the annual budget, organisational performance, the risk and control framework, regulatory compliance, culture and stakeholder accountability.
- Oversees the integrity of financial and non-financial reporting, and monitors Cire's financial position, sustainability, cash flow and solvency.
- Prepares diligently for Board and committee meetings, critically assesses papers, asks informed questions and exercises independent judgement.
- Contributes to the appointment, support, evaluation and remuneration of the CEO, while maintaining the boundary between governance and management.
- Discloses and manages conflicts of interest, maintains confidentiality, and upholds the Code of Conduct and Cire's child safety obligations.
- Participates in Board skills reviews, succession planning, director recruitment and induction, performance evaluation and continuing professional development.

Time commitment

- Eleven Board meetings a year: the fourth Tuesday of the month, in person in Lilydale, from 5:30pm.
- Four to six committee meetings a year, held online during business hours (usually one committee per director).
- Four one-hour online organisational updates from the CEO each year.
- At least one strategic planning day each year.
- The AGM or similar event, the December Board and executive dinner, the end-of-year school graduation afternoon, and other Cire events and functions through the year.

Safety screening

Cire is a child safe organisation, and its screening reflects that. Appointment is subject to a National Police Check, a Working with Children Clearance, a Fit and Proper Person declaration and other relevant checks. Personal information collected through screening is handled in line with Cire's privacy obligations, and a conduct history does not automatically preclude appointment: relevance is assessed strictly against the requirements of the role.

WHAT YOU WILL BRING

Cire does not expect any one candidate to hold every attribute below. The priority is depth in several relevant areas, genuine complementarity with the existing Board, and a positive contribution to Cire's governance culture.

Essential

- Strong governance judgement, independence and integrity.
- Previous Board and/or executive leadership experience, with a practical grasp of the distinction between governance and management.
- Cultural fit for a skills-based Board: respectful engagement, constructive challenge and collective decision-making.
- Completion of the Australian Institute of Company Directors' Company Directors Course, or an equivalent recognised director education or governance qualification.
- Commitment to effective Board, CEO and executive leadership team working relationships.
- Sufficient financial literacy to understand financial statements, budgets, cash flow and solvency, and to question management appropriately.
- The ability to understand Cire's services, participants and operating environment quickly.
- Capacity to support continued governance maturity, assurance and a positive Board culture.

Priority experience and capabilities

- Strategic thinking, change leadership and sound commercial judgement, particularly relevant as Cire scales across four additional local government areas.
- Not-for-profit, community, education, employment, training or social services sector knowledge.
- Capability in AI, ICT, cyber, data governance or digital transformation.
- Credibility with government, funders, community, philanthropic or corporate partners.
- Contribution to diversity, including gender, age, cultural background, lived experience, professional background, geographic connection and diversity of thought.

Disposition

- Motivated by Cire's mission and by the governance challenge of a growing, multi-site for-purpose organisation, not primarily by remuneration.
- A genuine complement to the existing Board: bringing something not already well represented, while fitting a collegial, skills-based culture.
- Available for the Board's meeting cycle, and willing to contribute to at least one committee.
- Committed to Cire's Objects, values, child safety, cultural safety, inclusion and community impact.

THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS

Searchlight Group manages every stage of these appointments on behalf of Cire's Director Recruitment Working Group. The process is rigorous, confidential and respectful of your time, and we provide feedback at each stage.

Stage	What happens	Indicative timing
1 • Apply or enquire	A CV and short cover letter to Searchlight Group, or a confidential conversation first.	From now
2 • Initial conversation	A discussion with Michael Holdway about the roles and your background.	August–September
3 • Structured interview	A structured governance interview with Searchlight Group, plus written assessment and conflicts screening.	September
4 • Shortlist	Written assessment reports and shortlist presented to the Working Group.	Early October
5 • Panel interview	Interviews with Cire's selection panel.	13 October 2026
6 • Meet the Board	Short meetings or coffees with other Cire directors, around the October Board meeting.	Late October 2026
7. Observe Board meeting	Attend the October Board meeting as an observer	27 October 2026
7 • Due diligence and appointment	Referencing, verification and safety screening (National Police Check, Working with Children, Fit and Proper Person), offer and induction.	From late October

Timing is indicative. Applications are reviewed as they are received, so early contact is encouraged.

HOW TO APPLY

Please upload a CV and a short cover letter on what you would bring to Cire's Board through the website portal link:

<https://searchlightgroup.com.au/jobs/non-executive-directors/>

Closing date for applications is midnight on August 30th, 2026. If you have any questions before applying, contact Michael Holdway for a confidential conversation.

About Searchlight Group

Searchlight Group is a Melbourne-based executive search firm specialising in the public and for-purpose sectors. Board and non-executive director search is core to our practice. Michael Holdway leads this engagement personally, and every conversation is confidential.

Contact

Michael Holdway · Managing Director, Searchlight Group

Mobile 0400 006 513 · michael@searchlightgroup.com.au

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This pack is provided in confidence for candidates considering the Non-Executive Director roles at Cire Services. It remains the property of Searchlight Group.

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Non-Executive Director



OVERVIEW	
Position Title	Non-Executive Director (Director)
Business Unit	Corporate Services
Accountable To	Cire Services Limited, responsibilities are exercised collectively through the Board
Direct Reports	N/A
Status	Company officeholder and ACNC Responsible Person, also a Member of Cire Services Limited while holding office as a Director
Time commitment	Currently 11 Board meetings each year, together with preparation, relevant Committee meetings, Cire functions, organisational briefings, professional development and agreed Board actions
Remuneration	As per Remuneration of Board Directors Policy & Procedure

ORGANISATION PROFILE

Cire Services Limited (Cire) ACN 698 203 842, is a public company limited by guarantee, and an award-winning not-for-profit organisation serving the diverse population across Melbourne's outer eastern region.

We provide quality education and training opportunities for people of all ages and deliver a range of innovative programs and services that meet community members' needs.

At Cire, we are driven by our commitment to connect people of all ages, interests and backgrounds with lifelong learning opportunities and support.

OUR VISION

Communities where everyone is empowered to reach their potential.

OUR VALUES

Quality

We strive for excellence in all areas of our organisation.

Inclusion

We believe in diversity and welcome people of all circumstances and backgrounds.

Innovation

We are driven by our vision and offer creative and flexible solutions to reach beyond our potential.

Integrity

We are committed to the highest standards of integrity and professionalism in everything we do.

Sustainability

We are dedicated to ensuring the economic, environmental, and social impacts on our community are considered in all we do.

COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFETY

Cire Services is committed to creating a child safe organisation where all children and young people are safe and feel safe.

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Non-Executive Director



Cire Services has greater focus on safety for those children and young people who are considered more at risk to abuse and neglect.

Cire Services actively supports and facilitates participation and inclusion of Aboriginal children, children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds (CALD), those who are unable to live at home, children with a disability and/or children from sexuality and gender diverse groups (LGBTQIA+).

ROLE PURPOSE

Each Director contributes independent judgement, governance oversight, relevant expertise and constructive challenge so that the Board can advance Cire's Objects, set and oversee strategy, steward Cire's resources, oversee risk and compliance, monitor organisational performance and discharge its responsibilities under the Constitution, Board Charter and applicable law. The Director must act with reasonable care and diligence, in good faith, honestly and fairly in Cire's best interests and for its charitable purposes.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- **A Director will** comply with the duties applying to a company Director and ACNC Responsible Person, including acting with reasonable care and diligence, acting honestly and fairly in Cire's best interests and for its charitable purposes, not misusing their position or information, disclosing and properly managing conflicts, supporting responsible financial management and not allowing Cire to operate while insolvent;
- comply with the Constitution, Board Charter, Code of Conduct and applicable Board policies;
- diligently prepare for, attend and actively participate in Board meetings, relevant Committee meetings and meetings of Members when convened, critically assess Board papers and minutes, ask informed questions and exercise independent judgement;
- If unable to attend a Board meeting, notify the Chair and Secretary as soon as practicable and, provide written questions, comments or feedback on agenda items to the Chair and CEO before the meeting. Written feedback is provided for the Board's consideration only and does not constitute attendance, participation in the meeting or a vote;
- obtain prior approval by Board resolution before being absent from three or more consecutive Board meetings;
- contribute to setting and overseeing Cire's Objects, strategy, annual budget, organisational performance, risk and control framework, regulatory compliance, culture and stakeholder accountability;
- oversee the integrity of financial and non-financial reporting and monitor Cire's financial position, sustainability, cash flow and solvency;
- contribute to the appointment, support, monitoring, annual evaluation, remuneration and, if necessary, removal of the CEO, while maintaining the boundary between governance and management;
- identify, disclose and manage actual, potential and perceived conflicts of interest in accordance with the Constitution, Board Conflict of Interest Policy and applicable law;
- maintain confidentiality and comply with the Code of Conduct, child safety obligations and all applicable Board policies;
- participate, as requested, in Board composition and skills reviews, succession planning, Director recruitment and induction, Board and Director performance evaluation and continuing professional development;
- maintain an informed understanding of Cire, its operating environment and regulatory obligations, and promptly complete Board-approved actions allocated to the Director;
- Attend online evening quarterly organisational updates convened by the CEO, where reasonably practicable.

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Non-Executive Director



- engage with stakeholders and represent Cire only when appropriately authorised; and
- not direct the CEO, Executive Leadership Team or other employees unless expressly authorised by the Board, Chair, CEO or an approved delegation.
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- Other duties and projects as reasonably directed from time to time.

ESSENTIAL SELECTION CRITERIA

- Demonstrated governance judgement, integrity and capacity to exercise independent judgement in Cire's best interests and further its charitable purposes.
- Skills, experience and perspectives that complement the current Board and respond to priorities identified through the Board Skills Matrix.
- Sufficient financial literacy to understand financial statements, budgets, cash flow, solvency and key financial risks, and to question management appropriately.
- Strategic and commercial judgement, with the capacity to assess evidence, risk, performance and long-term impact.
- Capacity to challenge constructively, listen to diverse perspectives, contribute to collective decision-making and support Board decisions once made.
- Understanding of the for-purpose, education, training, early learning or community services environment, or the capacity to acquire that understanding promptly.
- Sound stakeholder judgement and clear, respectful communication skills.
- Capacity and willingness to commit the time required for meetings, preparation, professional development and agreed Cire activities.
- Commitment to Cire's Objects, values, child safety, cultural safety, inclusion and community impact.
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- Commercial experience and the ability to build relationships with relevant stakeholders.
- Values and conduct alignment, including respectful engagement, inclusive behaviour, constructive challenge and collective decision-making.
- Capacity to influence constructively, communicate clearly and exercise collective leadership without assuming an executive role.
- Diligence, sound preparation and attention to the quality and accuracy of information used in Board decision-making.
- Ability and willingness to use Cire's Board systems securely and comply with privacy, confidentiality, information security and acceptable-use requirements.

DESIRABLE EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATIONS

- Previous Board, senior executive or equivalent governance experience.
- Relevant tertiary, professional or governance qualifications, or lived experience relevant to an identified Board skills need.
- Relevant not-for-profit, community, education, employment, training, early learning or social services knowledge.
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POSITION DESCRIPTION

Non-Executive Director



PRIVACY STATEMENT

National Police Check, Fit and Proper Persons Declaration, Working with Children Clearance and other relevant checks will be conducted as part of the selection process.

Cire will protect personal information collected in the course of undertaking employment related checks by restricting its distribution to individuals who require it to make or participate in making an employment decision, and ensuring proper record management procedures are adhered to. Cire will comply with relevant privacy legislation requirements. You will be able to gain access to any relevant personal information that Cire collects about you throughout the recruitment process.

A preferred applicant with a conduct history (criminal or misconduct) will not necessarily be precluded from employment. The relevance of any information collected will be assessed strictly in relation to the requirements of the position applied for.

2023 - 2027

CIRE SERVICES

5-year Strategic Plan



Acknowledgement of Country

At Cire Services, we acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the waterways and lands where we work. We pay our respects to Elders past and present. We commit to ensuring everyone we work with is safe, empowered, supported and respected, especially our young people. We support and celebrate diversity of race, culture, ability, gender, sexuality and gender identity. We are an inclusive organisation that values the unique perspectives of all our employees. We believe diversity makes us stronger and helps us better serve our community. Our goal is to create a workplace where everyone feels welcome, respected and valued.

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*We believe in the
power of learning for
people of any age*

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Our vision

Communities where everyone is empowered to reach their potential.

Our values

Quality

We strive for excellence in all areas of our organisation.

Inclusion

We believe in diversity and welcome people of all circumstances and backgrounds.

Innovation

We are driven by our vision and offer creative and flexible solutions to reach beyond our potential.

Integrity

We are committed to the highest standards of integrity and professionalism in everything we do.

Sustainability

We are dedicated to ensuring the economic, environmental and social impacts on our community are considered in all we do.

Our promise

To create spaces and foster an environment where individuals and families can learn, grow, connect and thrive.

Our impact

We want to provide even greater impact to the communities we serve - for that, we need to be financially resilient and ready for change; we need to be sure that the model of support we provide is gold standard; and we need to be prepared to hold ourselves accountable for the work we do.



Our communities are supported to thrive through access to education, learning and employment opportunities tailored to their unique needs.



Through partnerships and collaborations and working closely with other players in the community, Cire is able to contribute to broader social change.



Cire will strive to influence the way education and learning is delivered across Victoria and Australia through advocating for policy reform and change.



Our primary focus is on supporting the communities we serve, drive change and optimising our reach and impact.

Because

We believe that everyone, whatever their circumstances or age, deserves the chance to reach their full potential through accessing education and learning opportunities in a safe, supportive and welcoming environment.

We provide

A person-centred approach to early learning, schooling, training and community support, tailored to the needs of the individual.

To support

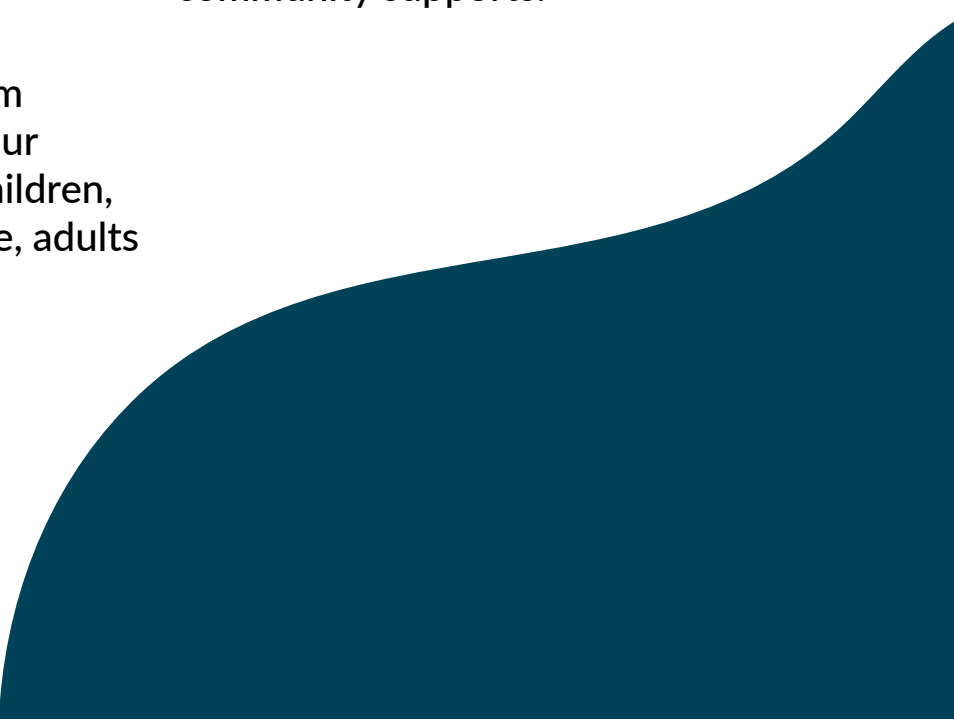
People of all ages and from all backgrounds living in our communities, including children, adolescents, young people, adults and older Australians.

That leads to

Individuals with the support, skills, knowledge and confidence to realise their full potential, communities with access to high quality learning and personal growth opportunities and collaborations and partnerships across the education and learning sector.

That results in

Communities that are supported to thrive, and reflective systems level change around learning and community supports.



Our five-year strategic goals lay out a roadmap for how we will deliver our strategic outcomes and maximise our impact.



Transform the learning sector



Be driven by impact



Grow a financially resilient Cire



Act as a catalyst for change

Goal 1

Transform the learning sector

Strategic Initiatives:

- Embed the Cire Service principles
- Codify the 'Cire Learning' model
- Strengthen our brand
- Strengthen our transition to employment service offering

Goal 2

Be driven by impact

Strategic Initiatives:

- Put our people at the centre
- Adopt an outcomes-driven approach

Goal 3

Grow a financially resilient Cire

Strategic Initiatives:

- Direct investments that drive commercial returns and align to our principles
- Establish formal corporate partnerships
- Grow our social enterprise footprint

Goal 4

Act as a catalyst for change

All our other goals will help transform Cire into an even better organisation, but this goal is about looking at how the different initiatives interact, identifying where we can leverage our intentions around growth and partnerships and pushing ourselves to be more impactful.

Strategic Initiatives:

- Establish a precinct to bring together our strategic elements behind a single focus

Our future | in five years time

We will have an education model backed by robust evidence and widely known as good practice across the education and learning sector.

The Cire name will be synonymous with forward thinking and innovation.

We will have consolidated our financial position, setting ourselves up for future financial security through smart investments and pursuing commercial interests and partnerships without losing sight of our vision.

We will have explored the potential to consolidate our position in one location to super-charge our impact for surrounding communities.

Most importantly, however, our team will feel supported and valued, viewing Cire as an employer of choice; and we will have the tools, processes and systems that will allow us to demonstrate that we are having the impact we set out to achieve.

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Most importantly, our team will feel supported and valued, viewing Cire as an employer of choice.



Our core focus will continue to be education, training and learning.

We believe, however, we can continue to push our thinking and grow our reach through leveraging our unique service offering, sharing our learnings and expanding our influence with a view to delivering even greater impact for those who need our support.

We want to build a financially resilient Cire that has many pathways to growth. We will explore ways in which to leverage our existing assets and balance sheet in such a way that will drive commercial returns whilst always ensuring alignment with our values.

Achieving our first three goals will see Cire transform into a high-impact, financially robust organisation. We believe, however, that many of the initiatives we might consider can be brought together under one single umbrella precinct – this would become a flagship initiative for Cire, creating a space that would see us leverage our assets in one place to drive real change for the community.