



Make this part  
of your business...  
*and help change lives*



**The NILS Network of Tasmania Inc.**

# The NILS Network ambassador program



*The No-Interest Loan Scheme has helped thousands of low-income and disadvantaged Tasmanians for the past 15 years.*

It has improved lives and created opportunity, not just for individuals but for communities and businesses.

To grow and prosper so that Tasmania can continue to benefit from these successes, the NILS Network needs to strengthen its corporate financial support and forge new and enduring partnerships.

We need business leaders and organisations to add their voice, their influence and their expertise to the work that the NILS Network and its partners do every day to make a difference to the lives of low-income Tasmanians.

## The NILS Network impact

**BUILDS** financial literacy and responsibility.

**LIFTS** the standard of living for low-income Tasmanians.

**DEVELOPS** greater financial independence.

**BOOSTS** self-esteem and resilience.

**ENCOURAGES** small business development.

**BREAKS** dependency on high-interest loans from lenders of last resort.

**ADVOCATES** for responsible lending across the finance and lending sector.

## Why business benefits

- ✓ Small businesses launched with micro-loans move to become clients in fields as diverse as investment, loans, financial advice, legal advice, and real estate.
- ✓ New small businesses broaden the customer base for businesses that service them.
- ✓ New businesses add to the tax pool.
- ✓ There is a direct benefit to the retail and service sectors from microfinance loans for essential items and services.
- ✓ There is a flow-on to businesses that service these sectors.
- ✓ Improving financial literacy means a rise in spending power for the individual.
- ✓ With those new skills, people can move to the traditional finance sector for advice and support.
- ✓ Dependence on government support is reduced.
- ✓ The positive effects of a rise in self-esteem, resilience and financial literacy can strengthen families, increase employment opportunities and deliver better physical and mental health outcomes.

*"It is a very good system for helping those claiming a government benefit to advance their circumstances."*

## The success story

- ▶ The Tasmanian Government and the National Australia Bank contribute the capital funding for the loan pool.
- ▶ In 2016 NILS approved 2300 household microfinance loans – a total of \$2 million.
- ▶ 75 microbusiness loans totalling \$215,570 to help a wide range of small businesses with development costs.
- ▶ In 2015–16 NILS Network of Tasmania trained 154 volunteer loans officers.
- ▶ There are 70 delivery partners around Tasmania, from neighbourhood houses, to welfare organisations, to Enterprise Centres.
- ▶ The NILS Network has a proven track record, delivering more than 13,000 loans in the past 15 years.
- ▶ Funds are well managed, with a 4% debt default rate – significantly below the rate for commercial lenders.

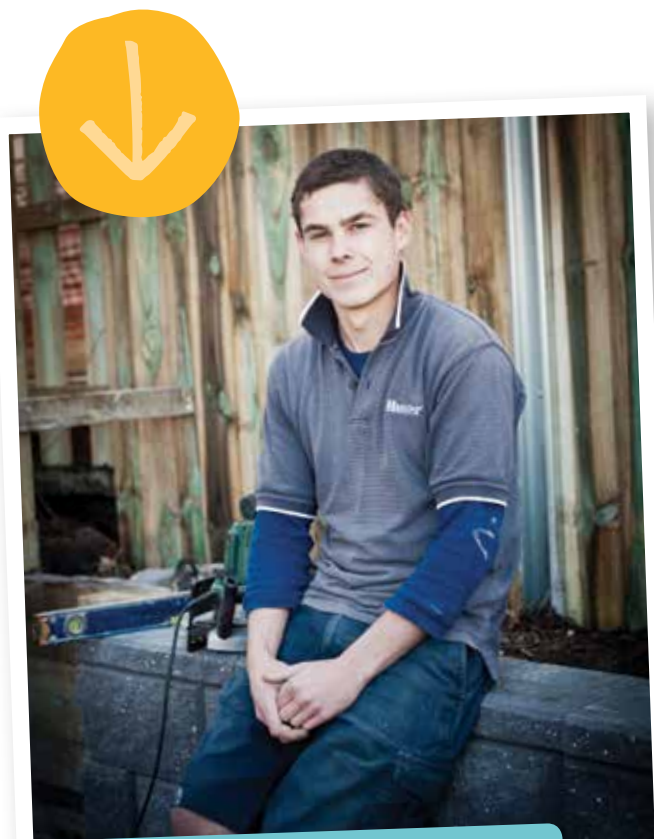
## The NILS Network mission

*'To improve the standard of living for Tasmanians on low incomes by providing affordable finance for goods and services and small business development and by providing financial literacy support.'*

The program offers access to interest-free credit.

### **NILS has five products:**

- Microfinance loans for essential items and services
- Microbusiness loans
- Humanitarian entrants reunification loans
- StepUP loans
- Financial literacy and support program



## Creating new businesses

**The Microbusiness Loan Program** began in 2005 as the Women in Business Micro-Credit program, a partnership between the Department of Economic Development, the Department of Premier and Cabinet (Women Tasmania) and NILS. In 2009 the program expanded to include loans to men.

NILS Tasmania microbusiness loans are small, no-interest loans (currently up to \$3,000) given to help people on low incomes develop businesses without the risks associated with high-interest commercial loans. A well-known example of microcredit for business is the Grameen Bank program in Bangladesh.

Since 2005, NILS has lent \$2.5 million to more than 800 low-income Tasmanians to help the start or grow a small business.

We work in partnership with Enterprise Centres Tasmania, which provide the business planning support our clients need.



## NILS resources

- ▶ We have microbusiness loan capital courtesy of a supported loan of \$1million from the state government.
- ▶ We have business planning support via Enterprise Centres Tasmania
- ▶ We have the operational funding to pay for a 0.2FTE position to manage application processing.

Our current operational funding allows us to support the delivery of just 65 – 85 microbusiness loans each year.

We want to double the support we provide to low-income Tasmanians to help them join the Tasmanian business community, and to build their own prosperity and the state's prosperity.

## What we need

NILS needs financial support from business partners to expand our microbusiness loan program and encourage a spirit of entrepreneurship and self-reliance across Tasmania.

### To do that we need:

- ▶ Increased development, promotion and administration capacity
- ▶ Marketing and promotion resources.

## A NILS loan can change lives.

*Just some of the heartfelt praise from our loan recipients.*

Without the microbusiness loan I would still be unemployed. Starting a business has changed my life and the life of my children. I feel much better about myself and have so much more confidence. Thank you NILS for helping me change my life for the better.

Everything happened so fast, from initial contact to approval and continuation support from staff. A very pleasant and positive learning experience for myself.

I really appreciate the service and think it is incredibly valuable to the community.

Great thing, I have had more than one loan and it allows me to improve business without a big hit to my bank account.

This was such an amazing resource to have when we were just getting started. When we applied, we wanted to hire an employee, but didn't have the funds to fix the faulty fuse box to make our workplace safe, and the bank wouldn't help us. This loan allowed us to fix the fault and employ our first employee. Since then our turnover has increased from 60k pa to 500k pa. We are no longer on any Centrelink payments and the future is looking pretty good.

I was granted the NILS loan at a time when I had no other support, the Bradford business enterprise centre saved my business and gave me the empowerment back that I had lost due to financial and personal obstacles. The NILS loan helped me greatly on a personal and business level, especially at a time where I couldn't find substantial work in the local area. The loan got me operational on a scale where I could contribute to the community and I have been on a positive path since that point.

How you  
can help

**The NILS Network** has engaged former Tasmanian newspaper editor Garry Bailey to work with corporate Tasmania on this project. He can be contacted on [garry@nilstasmania.org.au](mailto:garry@nilstasmania.org.au) and on 0409 970431.

For more information on the NILS Network, go to our website [www.nilstasmania.org.au](http://www.nilstasmania.org.au)