

Hi, my name is Kaitlyn Meehan. I'm 23 years old, and I work as the marketing coordinator for a mutual bank here in Brisbane, Australia. On a personal level, I see the cooperative identity as a pathway forward to better global communities, which are established on a foundation of fairness and working towards a common good.

As I see the ongoing challenges faced across the globe, it has become clear that our pathway forward to a sustainable life on this planet can only be achieved through a cooperative effort, with the leaders and communities from all nations working towards a common good. The cooperative movement is a working example of the good that can be achieved when we turn our focus away from individual success and shift to a vision of community prosperity. The movement demonstrates that these two outcomes are not mutually exclusive but intrinsically linked.

The mutual bank I work for began in 1968 as Railways Credit Union with just 39 members. Today, MOVE bank helps improve the financial wellbeing of 22,000 people across Australia and has been named Australia's best mutual bank two years in a row.

Our mission is to provide great value, easy to use products that improve the financial wellbeing of our members and help Australians reach their financial goals sooner. Our model as a customer owned bank allows us to achieve this - by giving a hundred percent of our profits back to members, we give people a real voice in their financial futures.

While the cooperative movement within the financial services industry in Australia is small, these organizations are working hard to provide exceptional value and meet the unique needs of niche audiences across the country. Mutual banks Like the one I work for are proving that you can operate sustainably and thrive whilst pouring profits back into benefiting members. The follow on effect of this financial empowerment allows individuals to improve their socioeconomic status, improving financial stability within the country, and ultimately contributes towards global efforts to reduce poverty, drive economic growth and give people the financial resources to engage in sustainable consumption.