

GOING PLACES

Melbourne Polytechnic Newsletter

December 2023



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Melbourne Polytechnic acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Victoria. We honour the first educational practices that have been occurring on these lands for tens of thousands of years.

We acknowledge our campuses rest on the lands and waters of the Kulin Nations, and we pay our respects to all Elders past, present and emerging.

Building a net zero future. Supporting the clean energy economy

Australia needs at least 2 million new 'clean economy' jobs to achieve a Net Zero future.

We're part of the Victorian Clean Economy Skills Taskforce working with other TAFEs to build Victoria's clean economy.

We've set an ambitious target of Net Zero target by 2040, the first Victorian TAFE to do so.

Preparing students for the clean energy future

We teach students sustainability principles such as reducing and reusing waste, climate change mitigation and adaptation and supporting the circular economy.

Many of these principles and practices can be easily replicated by students in the workforce offering beneficial flow on effects to employers and industry.

Innovative sustainability principles are built into 22 training programs across:

- ▶ Construction
- ▶ Horticulture
- ▶ Food and agriculture
- ▶ Hospitality
- ▶ Engineering
- ▶ Electrotechnology

Reducing waste in landscape training

We're the first Victorian TAFE to install a Slurry Tub. Traditionally sand and lime used in landscaping is washed down the drain in commercial settings. Sand and lime are now collected at the end of each lesson and can be reused again and again, reducing waste to landfill by approximately 4.5 tonnes per year.

Reducing waste in construction training

We've invested in a finger jointing machine for our construction programs. This machine allows two pieces of wood to be glued together to form a complete piece. It's a game-changer for reducing timber waste and off cuts and offers significant cost savings on timber procurement. It's estimated that up to 176 tonnes of timber waste is diverted from landfill each year based on this machine alone.

Grow Hub: Bringing sustainable farming practices to life

Construction of our Grow Hub at Epping Campus was completed in 2022. This state-of-the art food production facility will provide future-ready workforce skills in aquaponics, hydroponics and modern agricultural practices.

It features innovative and sustainable design features including:

- ▶ energy efficient acrylic panels allowing more than 90% ultraviolet light
- ▶ passive solar design principles
- ▶ solar water heating
- ▶ rainwater reuse for toilet flushing
- ▶ LED lighting

Grow Hub in action

- ▶ Our Bachelor of Agriculture and Technology students tackle industry-relevant issues and topics from plant pests and pathogens to aquaponics and other sustainable farming practices
- ▶ Applied research collaboration with industry partner, Repurpose It, supporting the circular economy:
 - investigating potential to reuse composted municipal organic food waste
 - trialing a new viticulture mulch product developed from composted municipal organic food waste

Investing in solar renewables

We're in the final stages of installing rooftop solar panels at our Preston, Heidelberg and Epping campuses.

After the installation, we will have one of the largest rooftop solar installations in the Victorian TAFE sector and will deliver approximately 1.3 MW of renewable energy.

Diversity, equality and inclusion

Award-winning training and support for students with disability

Melbourne Polytechnic was awarded the 'Inclusive Training Provider of the Year' for 2023 at the Victorian Training Awards ceremony in recognition of outstanding improvements regarding the achievement, engagement and wellbeing of students with a disability.



The event delivered a double win with Melbourne Polytechnic student, Rebecca Hope snaring the Trainee of the Year award. Having once struggled to attend school without one-on-one support because of autism, Rebecca started in the Work Education at Melbourne Polytechnic and was supported to complete a Certificate IV in Business. Today Rebecca thrives in the world of human resources.

Engaging First Nations people in glass art making

GLAAS Inc. is a not-for-profit organisation supporting artists and makers of glass art - an ancient art and craft that was at risk of disappearing in Australia.

Since 2019, Melbourne Polytechnic and GLAAS Inc. have formed a partnership, providing unique learning opportunities to progress the use of high-quality design glass in art and architecture.

In 2022 - 2023, with funding from the City of Stonnington, we delivered a workshop program to engage 22 First Nations people and artists. The workshop offered the opportunity to develop their skills and express their creativity and unique cultural influences to glass art works.

Participant and Wiradjuri artist Rickie Martin has progressed to our Cert III Glass and Glazing qualification.

Rickie has been commissioned to create glass art works for Melbourne Polytechnic's refurbished Collingwood campus to honour and uplift First Nations perspectives and stories. The project will be supported by former student and renowned glass artist, Nadine Keegan.



Teaching and supporting women in trades

Industries like construction, manufacturing and mining are some of Australia's biggest employers. Yet women make up only 3% of the trade workforce.

Addressing gender imbalances in these and other sectors is becoming increasingly critical for economic growth.

We recognise the industry need and social benefit of increasing female participation in trades. We're committed to becoming a destination of choice for female apprentices, and gender diverse and non-binary people.

Targeted student recruitment activities include:

- ▶ The Tool Skills Day - where prospective students can try different trades in a safe environment
- ▶ Industry Engagement events - opportunity to connect current and prospective students with engineering and construction employers
- ▶ Welding short courses for women
- ▶ Collaboration with organisations such as Empowered Women in Trades.

Targeted initiatives supporting female, gender diverse and non-binary students and apprentices in construction trades include:

- ▶ Mentoring and support provided by a female trade teacher to encourage networking and social connectedness
- ▶ Fostering an organisational culture that challenges gender stereotyping and addresses resistance and backlash
- ▶ Staff training to create safe and respectful workplaces and promote understanding of societal pressures linked to masculine stereotypes.

Celebrating 75 years of migrant and refugee learning, language and connection

This year, the Melbourne AMEP (Adult Migrant English Program) celebrated 75 years of Australia's service to migrants and refugees..

The Melbourne AMEP, led by Melbourne Polytechnic, is the largest Victorian AMEP provider and is funded by the Australian Government.

This vital program helps people with migrant and refugee backgrounds learn English and settle and participate in Australian life.

Since 2002 our program has helped transform the lives of more than 50,000 people. Our students hail from 59 countries, speaking 72 languages.



Celebrating student success

Medal wins at the WorldSkills Championships

Australia's best trainees and apprentices went head-to-head in high-pressure skills competition at the 2023 WorldSkills Australia National Championships. Two Melbourne Polytechnic students claimed medial wins. Luca Mascaro received the gold medal for Joinery and Marc Colarusso received the bronze medal for Bricklaying.

Finding strength in difference: Jessie's story

Cabinet Making student, Jessie Currie was awarded the Melbourne Polytechnic Outstanding Apprentice/Trainee of the Year 2023. She is an apprenticeship with boutique furniture design company, Beeline Design.

Diagnosed with ADHD when she was 10 years old and has spent much of her life learning the skills she needs to manage it. Teacher and employer support and flexibility has helped Jessie achieve career success and win the student award.

"It feels really good, especially being a female in the industry as well as for all the people who are neurodivergent and in the trades."

In November 2024 Jessie was awarded a prestigious national prize, winning the student category in the Maker of the Year Awards.



Top honours for students in bloom

Our students proved their horticultural prowess, taking home several awards at the 2023 Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show (MIFGS), with several students taking home awards. In total 6 students took home awards including:

- ▶ Oliver Ashworth-Martin won the Award of Excellence in the Achievable Garden Competition (our students have won this award for the last 4 years)
- ▶ Leana Rose Cox won first place in the Hanging Basket Competiton

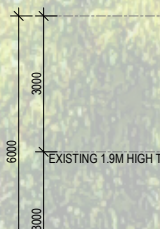
Supporting industry growth and innovation

AMCOE: a new era in manufacturing training

The \$3.2 million Advanced Manufacturing Centre of Excellence (AMCOE) will supply the future workforce and upskill existing workers to support innovation and the increasingly technology-driven, value-added manufacturing sector in Melbourne's north.

AMCOE repositions and elevates vocational engineering training to meet the needs of the rapidly changing and expanding \$30 billion Victorian manufacturing industry, which currently employs more than 260,000 people.

With applications ranging from aviation and biotechnology to construction, advanced manufacturing is critical to securing a sustainable future for this sector and to compete in global markets.



Safeguarding the future of beekeeping

Bees play a critical role in food production. With the looming threat of the Varroa mite, protecting our bee populations and training the next generation of beekeepers is more important than ever.

The Certificate III in Beekeeping is the first of its kind in Victoria. Co-designed with the Victorian Beekeeping industry it offers an innovative mobile training unit to deliver training to locations and regions across Victoria.



Accolades for our international education program

In recent months Melbourne Polytechnic has won three prestigious awards for our international education program.

We won the International Education and Training award at the 2023 Government of Victoria Export Awards (GOVEA). We were one of 14 Victorian businesses award winners recognised at the 44th GOVEA held at Government House in October 2023.

We also won two awards at the 2023 Victorian International Education Awards:

- ▶ Excellence in Innovation in Partnerships and International Engagement
- ▶ Excellence in International Education - TAFE

Reaching new heights in arboriculture safety

Our arboriculture training plays an important role in supporting the rapidly growing arboriculture industry, where qualified arborists are in short supply.

We will soon commence construction on our new \$1.347 million arboriculture tower. Arboriculture training involves tree-climbing, so safety is of paramount importance. The tower will provide our arboriculture students with a safer, purpose-built in-house training structure and reduce logistical and safety costs.

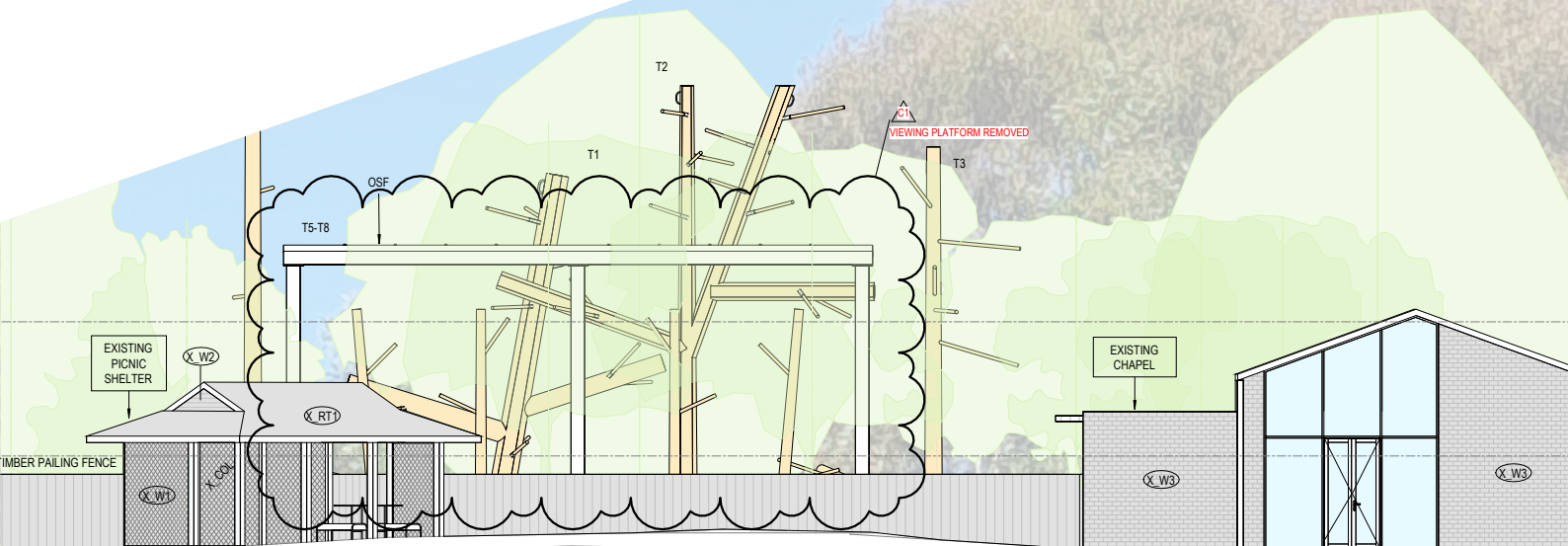
The tower is due for completion in February/March 2024.

FOODInc (Food Incubator)

FoodINC is a partnership between Melbourne Polytechnic, Melbourne Innovation Centre and Melbourne's North Food Group.

It offers food start-ups and hospitality entrepreneurs a dedicated space and support network for their businesses to flourish. FoodInc removes barriers to accessing commercial-grade facilities and the expert support needed to turn passion projects into long-term, sustainable ventures

Arboriculture tower architectural drawing



Vibrant precincts and thriving communities

A revitalised campus in the heart of Collingwood

We're on track to open our redeveloped Collingwood campus in autumn 2024. The transformational project is a \$40 mil investment by the Victorian Government.

It will:

- ▶ create a revitalised place precinct in Melbourne's vibrant inner north
- ▶ establish a contemporary space that fosters strong connections to industry and community
- ▶ include modern teaching and learning spaces, collaboration and library spaces, and a front-of-house café
- ▶ purpose-built Cyber Security Operations Centre to meet workforce shortages
- ▶ purpose-built Auslan teaching and learning spaces



Wollert Community Farm

The Wollert Community Farm is an initiative developed in partnership between Melbourne Polytechnic, Whittlesea Community Connections and Yarra Valley Water and supported by the City of Whittlesea. Located in Melbourne's outer northern suburbs, the initiative creates a place for the local community to connect, learn and prosper through environmental and agricultural activities including:

- ▶ First Nations initiatives
- ▶ Indigenous plant nursery
- ▶ Biodiversity and restoration activities
- ▶ Sustainable land management practices
- ▶ Community food growing and seedling propagation
- ▶ Circular economy systems

Wollert Community Farm offers a unique learning experience to help students better understand and prepare for challenges related to climate change with activities including soil restoration and rebuilding habitat and restoration of landscapes.

Students will also have the opportunity to learn more about local First Nations knowledge including 6 seasons and cool burning.



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