

Building
sustainable
communities
through
learning



Australian Learning
Communities Network Inc.
(ALCN)



Incorporated in NSW.

No: 9883167

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Annual Report
2022-2023

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION:	2
EXECUTIVE APPOINTMENTS.....	3
THANK YOU!	4
WELCOME:	5
ADVOCACY	5
INFORMATION CLEARING HOUSE ON LEARNING CITIES AND LEARNING COMMUNITIES	5
COMMUNICATION.....	6
RESEARCH/PUBLICATIONS/WEBINARS.....	6
NETWORKS	7
GLOBAL LEARNING FESTIVAL.....	9
MEMBERSHIP FUNDS	9
APPENDIX: A SNAPSHOT SAMPLE OF MEMBER ACHIEVEMENTS 2022/2023.....	10
1. BRIMBANK, VICTORIA	10
2. THE CITY OF CANNING, WESTERN AUSTRALIA	12
3. MELTON, VICTORIA	12
4. PORT ADELAIDE ENFIELD, SOUTH AUSTRALIA	14
5. TAMWORTH REGION, NEW SOUTH WALES	19
6. TOWNSVILLE CITY COUNCIL: CITYLIBRARIES, QUEENSLAND.....	22
7. WOLLONGONG CITY COUNCIL, NSW.....	22
8. WYNDHAM, VICTORIA	24

Introduction:

This Annual Report summarizes the work of the ALCN Inc. and our place-based learning cities and learning communities over the period May 2022 until May 2023.

My role is to support our current and next generation of learning city and learning community practitioners and leaders. Our five Ripples newsletters, seven Friday Forums, three Webinars, two discussion papers, a book chapter and support of a conference presentation provided opportunities for our practitioners to learn from one another and showcases their work. A highlight for 2022 was that the City of Canning was accepted into the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities – the first Western Australian city to do so and the fourth Australian Learning City. The Appendix also demonstrates very clearly how our members are contributing to inclusive and sustainable learning cities and communities. The work done is extensive – everything from learning festivals, Libraries after Dark, bi-lingual storytelling, learning for all ages; entrepreneurial learning, partnering with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people; social infrastructure planning and new libraries. Congratulations to all our members for the work done to advance lifelong learning in their communities!

ALCN Inc. welcomes feedback on this Final Report, and please continue to send further contributions highlighting your incredible work which we will include in our newsletters. Please contact alcn@bigpond.com.

Dr. Leone Wheeler, Hon. CEO, ALCN

Executive Appointments

In accordance with decisions of the 2022 AGM held on 17 May 2022, the following members were appointed for a two-year appointment from June 2022 until June 2024.

- Dr Leone Wheeler
- Dr Donna Goldie, City of Townsville, Queensland
- Caroline Jones, City of Canning, Western Australia
- Benita Parsons, Port Adelaide Enfield, South Australia
- Peter Kearns, AM, as expert advisor on the Executive

Other appointments were:

- Leone Wheeler reappointed as Hon. CEO for the period 2022-2024.
- Diane Tabbagh continued as Chair being appointed for a 2-year period in 2021.
- The duty of Secretary is the responsibility of the Hon. CEO assisted by Wyndham City Council.
- Jim Saleeba continued as Treasurer.

The Executive and roles for the period June 2022 until June 2023:

Name	Executive position	Additional responsibilities
Dr Leone Wheeler	Hon. CEO and Secretary	Overall coordination responsibilities and Public officer. Newsletters. Mentoring student intern. Coordinating Webinars.
Diane Tabbagh (Wyndham City Council, Victoria)	Chair, Victorian Metropolitan contact. UNESCO GNLC member	Chairing ALCN Executive meetings, mentoring student intern, Global Learning Festivals, promoting ALCN. Assisting with secretarial duties and Friday Forums.
Jim Saleeba	Treasurer	Reconciling accounts and organising the audit.
Adam Josifovski – Melton City Council (Victoria)	Member, Victorian Metropolitan contact. UNESCO GNLC member.	Global Learning Festival, contributing to Friday Forums and newsletters
Laura Pugh – Wollongong City Council, NSW.	Member, NSW Metropolitan contact	Coordination of Friday Forums, contributing to Webinars and newsletters.
Dr Donna Goldie, Townsville City Council, Queensland	Queensland contact.	Contributions to Friday Forums, Webinars, and newsletters.

Caroline Jones, City of Canning, Western Australia	Western Australian contact. UNESCO GNLC member	Contributions to Friday Forums, Webinars, and newsletters.
Benita Parsons, Port Adelaide Enfield (PAE), South Australia	South Australia contact	Contributions to Friday Forums, Webinars, and newsletters.
Max Eastcott, Gwydir Shire Council	NSW rural contact	Local government contact
Jan Simmons, Ballarat	Victorian regional contact	Regional Victorian activities
Peter Kearns, AM		National and International Learning City Advocate

Two long-standing members of the ALCN Executive – Jan Simmons from Ballarat representing regional Victoria and Max Eastcott, CEO of Gwydir Shire, representing regional New South Wales resigned from the Executive in November 2023 but remain as members. Lara Pugh resigned from her position at Wollongong City Council while Dr Jenny Thompson attended Executive meetings on behalf of Wollongong.

Leone Wheeler was reappointed to position of Hon. CEO/public officer until 2024, while Jim Saleeba, former Hon. CEO/public officer, continued as treasurer and information resource person. The Manager, Corporate Services at the Albury-Wodonga Community College (an organizational member), generously agreed to continue to act as the second signature for ease of payment of accounts.

The Executive now meets via online video (Microsoft Teams) regularly and communicates through email or by phone on a constant basis as issues emerge or to membership demands. Also, thank you to Sharyn Wheatcroft, Wyndham for secretarial support to the Executive Committee.

Privacy

The Executive is conscious of the privacy issues affecting members. So, to avoid confusion that can arise with ease of electronic communication, circulation to and the point of contact for members is restricted to:

- Leone Wheeler – for issues affecting the membership.
- Those Executive members listed above.

Members' details are distributed only after expressed consent of members.

Thank you!

We farewell Lara Pugh, Wollongong City Council and thank her for the many innovations including the popular Friday Forum – an informal session for members about topics of interest.

Max Eastcott, Gwydir Shire Council, and Jan Simmons, Ballarat, stepped down in October 2022, as long-standing members of the Executive of the ALCN. Both are founding members and have significantly contributed to the ALCN over the years. Max has been members of ALCN Executive since he joined the ALCN in 2004 and Jan was a founding

member in 2001. Max was Vice Chair in 2009 and appointed Chair in 2010. A position he held for 6 years. Both Max and Jan remain active members of the Network and make vital contributions and have been always willing to share what they have learnt from their vast experience.

Welcome:

We welcome Kay Delahunt, Manager Culture and Community Services, Tamworth City Council and Dr Jenny Thompson, Manager Library and Community Services, Wollongong City Council.

Advocacy

ALCN Inc. will meet with or make representations to parliamentarians, State Authorities, or key agencies to argue for recognition of and support for the work of learning communities and learning cities throughout Australia and internationally. In 2022/2023 members of our Executive were involved in promoting learning communities and learning cities locally, nationally, and internationally (Refer to the Appendix).

In 2021/2022 Executive Members:

- Led the successful running of a third Global Learning Festival (Wyndham and Melton City Council).
- Coordinated three professional development Webinars – 1) *Sharing Insights – Australian Learning Cities: global to local – local to global – May 4.* 2) *Evaluation of Learning Cities and Regions – Case studies from Northern Ireland and Australia* (November 7). Also, 3) *Inclusion and innovation in Flexible Learning in and for the Workplace: Stories from Australian Learning Cities – 9 November 2023.* (Refer to Research and Publication section for details on partners and topics)
- Coordinated the LearnWest *Learning for Earning Festival – May 2022* (Wyndham City Council, Melton City Council with ALCN sponsorship).
- Continued as active members of UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities (GNLC).
- Liaised with Adult Learning Australia on two of the Webinars.
- Facilitated the Urban and Rural Learning Initiative as a Learning City Network (LCN) as part of the PASCAL International Observatory (Dr Leone Wheeler).
- Played an important role in contributing significant content and Webinars for PASCAL International Observatory and the UNESCO GNLC.

Information Clearing House on Learning Cities and Learning Communities

The ALCN website (alcn.com.au) and Facebook page (@aus.alcn) are the organisation's main clearing house with information about learning cities, links to the learning community strategies, stories, evaluation tools and research of our partners. The site also links to international partners - the PASCAL International Observatory and UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities (GNLC).

We thank Andrew Williamson, our web and host manager, for continued generous assistance with the site.

Communication

The main method of communication is through our newsletter entitled “Ripples” which is sent to our members, posted on Facebook, and the PASCAL International Observatory Website.

The newsletter is the main way we communicate with our membership. Five Ripple Newsletters were sent out in the past year (May 2022-May 2023). The newsletters contain stories about our learning communities; notices of events; reviews; articles of interest; updates from UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities; Adult Learning Australia and PASCAL International Observatory. Archived copies of these newsletters can be accessed [here](#).

Research/Publications/Webinars

Members undertook the following research, discussion papers, webinars during the period:

Book chapter:

Eastcott, M. and L. Wheeler, *A lifelong learning approach drives economic development in Gwydir Shire*, in *Promoting Local Economic Development Initiatives: Case Studies*, M. Venter, Editor. 2022, AOSIS: Johannesburg, South Africa. <https://books.aosis.co.za/index.php/ob/catalog/book/368>

Discussion papers:

Goldie, Donna, 2022, *Why do you want this job? Transferring learning, transforming learning and lifelong learning*. Available from <https://alcn.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Goldie-D-ALCN-Article-26-08-2022-Edited.pdf>

Kearns, Peter, AM. 2022. Report of the UNESCO International Commission on the Futures of Education Paper: Reimagining our Futures Together: A New Social Contract for Education. Some perspectives and questions for discussion. Available from <https://alcn.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Goldie-D-ALCN-Article-26-08-2022-Edited.pdf>

Conference Presentation:

Pugh, L. and J. Torres-Gomez, Libraries and Learning Cities. Exploring varying roles of engagement across the globe, in 16th PASCAL International Observatory Conference. 2022, Tampere University: Tampere, Finland and Virtually. Available from [here](#). (NOTE: This paper was presented online by Lara Pugh and Diane Tabbagh representing Jac Torres-Gomez)

Webinars:

Sharing Insights – Australian Learning Cities: global to local – local to global – May 4, 2022.

Coordinated by Adult Learning Australia and ALCN. Australian Learning Cities and Regions Wyndham City Council, Melton City council; Circular Head Council, City of Canning and Wollongong City Council shared their experiences and insights on building healthy and resilient communities through learning and how they share knowledge and good practices on a local, national, and global scale.

The webinar featured a keynote speech by David Atchoarena, Director, UNESCO Institute of Lifelong Learning (UIL) and a presentation by Peter Kearns, AM, ‘Reimagining Australian Learning Cities’. View the webinar [recording here](#).

Global Learning Festival Events 2022 supported by ALCN

Evaluation of Learning Cities and Regions – Case studies from Northern Ireland and Australia. Coordinated by Australian Learning Communities Network and Wyndham City Council with case studies from the City of Canning, Western Australia and Derry & Strabane Learning Region, Northern Ireland – 7 November 2022. Viewed at https://youtu.be/1PM8_BwkcVU

Inclusion and innovation in Flexible Learning in and for the Workplace: Stories from Australian Learning Cities. Australian Learning Communities Network, Adult Learning Australia, PASCAL International Observatory, Hume City Council, Melton City Council – 9 November 2022. Viewed at <https://ala.asn.au/inclusion-and-innovation-in-flexible-learning-in-and-for-the-workplace-stories-from-australian-learning-cities/>

Story Template

The ALCN, has developed a story template to guide our practitioners in the writing of stories for the network. See the following city profiles.

- Learning City Profile (following on from the example of Wyndham Learning City – see <http://lcn.pascalobservatory.org/participants/wyndham-city-council>).
- Learning City Profile - the City of Canning - <http://lcn.pascalobservatory.org/participants/canning>
- Learning City Profile – Port Adelaide Enfield, South Australia <https://alcn.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/PAE-Profile-for-Learning-Cities.pdf>
- Learning Region Profile - [Tamworth Region](https://alcn.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/ALCN-Tamworth-Profile20_2_2023.pdf) - https://alcn.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/ALCN-Tamworth-Profile20_2_2023.pdf

If you are interested in submitting a story using one of the about methods, please contact Leone Wheeler.

Student Placement

The Australian Learning Communities Network (ALCN), RMIT University and Wyndham City Council partnered to host an RMIT International Development student, Isabelle Incham, as a Virtual Learning Festival Project Assistant in Semester Two, 2022, to assist with the facilitation of the Global and Wyndham Learning Festivals, the evaluation of the Festivals, and the collection of stories and the writing of a final report.

Heartfelt thanks to Isabelle for her work and to the Wyndham team Diane Tabbagh and Sharyn Wheatcroft for their mentorship. Also, to RMIT University for their continued support of our programmes.

Networks

Virtual Network – ALCN Friday Forums

In 2022, Lara Pugh, Learning City Project Officer, Wollongong City Council established **Friday Forums** which is an informal online Community of Practice for ALCN practitioners. Members decide on topics of interest where information, ideas and resources are shared. Summaries of the forums are shared in the ALCN newsletters.

The following topics were covered in the period:

- Friday 6 May 3-4 pm:
What do learning cities do? Exploring learning city initiatives
- Friday 3 June 3-4 pm:
Mapping lifelong learning assets in your organisation and city
- Friday 1 July 3-4 pm:
Evaluating the efforts, outcomes, and impact of learning city/lifelong learning initiatives.
- Friday 5 August 3-4 pm: *Localising the Sustainable development Goals for your learning city*
- Friday 11 November 3 - 4pm. *Becoming a UNESCO learning city with Caroline Jones (and colleagues) from the City of Canning, WA*
- **Friday 9 December 3-4pm**
ALCN Christmas Special: Share and reflect on key achievements in 2022 in learning cities across Australia. *What have you achieved in your learning city/community in 2022?* Let's share and learn from each other to round off a great year of learning for all
- *Friday 3 March 2023, 3-4 pm. Tamworth Learning Region*

In 2023 the Friday Forums are organised jointly by Silvia Velez, Melton City Council and Sharyn Wheatcroft, Wyndham City Council with Leone Wheeler assisting with topics and speakers.

Regional Networks

The ALCN encourages the formation of regional learning networks. These networks can support and share ideas and resources locally.

A good example of a cross Council Network is *Learn West* which meets regularly to share knowledge. Its membership includes Maribyrnong; Wyndham; Brimbank; Melton; Hobsons Bay; Darebin; Maribyrnong; and Hume. Their Learning for Earning Festival was held in hybrid form from 25-26 May 2022.

An example of a rural learning community network is Gwydir Learning Region, and I worked with Max Eastcott, CEO of Gwydir Shire to produce a book chapter on the development of GLR. See Research and Publications above.

Adult Learning Australia

ALCN Inc. and ALA continue to collaborate on matters to do with the promotion of lifelong learning throughout Australia. This year we jointly coordinated two Webinars - ***Sharing Insights – Australian Learning Cities: global to local – local to global*** (May 4, 2022) and ***Inclusion and innovation in Flexible Learning in and for the Workplace: Stories from Australian Learning Cities. (7 November 2022).***

UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities

ALCN Inc. supports the **UNESCO's Global Network of Learning Cities** and promotes UNESCO's GNLC newsletters and webinars to our members. Australia has four local government areas that are members of the GNLC, including the City of Melton, and the City of Wyndham in Victoria, Circular Heads in Tasmania, and the City of Canning in Western Australia.

The City of Canning became a member of UNESCO's GNLCs in 2022 and is the first Western Australian city to do so. See more [here](#).

David Atchoarena, former Director of UNESCO UIL, was a keynote speaker for the Australian Learning Cities Webinar in May 2022 noted that the Australian members of UNESCO's GNLC were a constant source of inspiration for other member cities!

PASCAL International Observatory

ALCN Inc. is a member of this international network, and this has enabled, as well, individual members, upon registering, to keep abreast of developments in other parts of the world.

Leone Wheeler is a member of the Board of PASCAL International Observatory. Our members play an active role in the work of PASCAL. Canning, Wyndham, Gwydir, and Wollongong are featured on the PASCAL Learning City Network (LCN). Wyndham regularly participates in Webinars and is an active participant of the group *Reimagining Economic Futures*, while Gwydir Learning Region is contributing to the *Urban-Rural Learning Initiatives* group.

Global Learning Festival

From 6-9 November 2022, the City of Melton and the City of Wyndham co-led the third Global Learning Festival (GLF). The Festival is an opportunity to promote lifelong learning to a global audience. It provides a central place for learners to come together to share their knowledge, skills, culture, and traditions. In 2022 the GLF featured 47 free online events, there was something for everyone, to suit all ages and interests and all time zones. To view an analysis of the 2022 event read more [here](#).

The ALCN Inc contributed directly by being a member of the Working Group and partnering with the City of Wyndham, the City of Canning in Australia and Derry and Strabane Learning Region in Northern Ireland to coordinate the Webinar *Evaluation of Learning Cities and Regions – Case studies from Northern Ireland and Australia*. The ALCN also partnered with ALA, RMIT University, PASCAL International Observatory, Hume City Council and Melton City Council on the Webinar *Inclusion and innovation in Flexible Learning in and for the Workplace: Stories from Australian Learning Cities*.

Wyndham and Melton co-hosts have taken the difficult decision to pause the Global Learning Festival for 2023 as they determine what future opportunities can be taken that will meet the changing needs of our global learning community.

As a measure of connections made, and the value of work achieved to date, Learning Cities and Communities are invited to share with each other their own online events and Festivals across the year as a way of sharing learning opportunities. They invite you to share an image and any promotional material with the GLF team and they will post on the [GLF landing page](#). Email details of your events that you wish to share to wynlearn@wyndham.vic.gov.au

Membership Funds

These funds were audited through the certificated auditor. This financial statement is recommended by the Executive for approval by members at the Annual General Meeting. The statement is then circulated to members.

The previous requirement for forwarding the audited financial details to the NSW Office of Fair Trading has been changed and overall funds of the ALCN Inc. are now the prerequisite level for reporting.

This report was compiled by the Executive for circulation prior to a motion of acceptance at the Annual General Meeting of the ALCN. Financial Statements are tabled at the AGM and are available to members upon request.

Appendix: A Snapshot Sample of Member Achievements 2022/2023

The following is a snapshot of some of our learning cities and communities report on their activities for the 2022/2023 year. This information will also feature in our Ripples Newsletters for 2023.

1. Brimbank, Victoria

- Written by Danielle Marie, Learning and Partnership Coordinator, Brimbank City Council

The following initiatives support the implementation of the **Brimbank Lifelong Learning Strategy 2018-2023**, a framework for building better learning outcomes. 2022 saw a return to full services after two years of disruptions following the 2020 global pandemic. Much of 2022/2023 saw the evaluation and development of the next iteration of the Brimbank learning strategy, with Brimbank running a series of six consultations with community, partners, and council teams to evaluate the current strategy to inform the development of the 2024-2029 iteration. The draft strategy is expected to go out for public comment in October 2023.

The Strategy guided Council actions to improve learning outcomes in Brimbank through a life stage approach with a focus on the following life stages:

- i) Early Years (birth to compulsory school age)
- ii) School Years (compulsory school age 6-16 years)
- iii) Young People (post-compulsory school age, 17 to early adulthood)
- iv) Adults (25 – 60 years)
- v) Later Life (60 years and beyond)

Early Years

- Burmese bilingual story-teller appointed to deliver weekly bilingual story times to support young families with early literacy and introduce them to wider services
- To support newly arrived residents from Ukraine, Brimbank Libraries expanded its offering of bilingual children's picture books to include a selection of titles in the Ukrainian language. The initial selection includes over a dozen titles which support early year's literacy and bilingualism for children, and English learning for their parents.
- Launched *Learn Through Play*, an educational program for vulnerable pre-schoolers that is play-based learning to increase school readiness. Families are referred through Maternal & Child health services, Smith Family, playgroup facilitators and other community early years services.
- Supported Afghan women to be trained in story time delivery to support literacy development in both home languages and English.

School Years

- Hosted Schools and Community Organisations Exchange Network event focused on looking at ways to support young people who are emotionally immature and facing issues with social skills.

- Partnering with Ardoch foundation to deliver Literacy Buddies, a program to support grade 4 students at Ardeer Primary School with literacy, writing and social skills.
- Homework and learning support was delivered through programs to primary and secondary students to support continued engagement in learning. These included several homework groups run in partnership with Equal Ed.
- An online school outreach portal was developed to enable schools in Brimbank to book library incursions based on current curriculum topics, to enhance classroom learning and provide real life experiences and connections.
- Brimbank Council continued its \$30,000 scholarship grant to Western Chances to enable more Brimbank students to be supported to stay at school and continue to tertiary education. Western Chances support students to stay at school with practical assistance such as transportation costs, IT, textbooks and stationery.

Young People

- Targeted career workshops co-designed by young people for young people across four schools (Keilor Downs, Brookside, Braybrook and Sunshine College), for students between years 8 and 11.
- In collaboration with West Justice developed two workshops to support readiness for work and to Increase employment, social and education outcomes for people in the LGBTQIA+ community.
- Outreach was delivered by Jobs Victoria Advocates across libraries, schools, shopping centres, markets, and community centres. The Jobs Victoria Advocates have had 1532 interactions with community members offering advice, information or referral support relating to education and employment for the period of July 1 2022- May 17 2023
- Collaborated with Lively.org to facilitate intergenerational digital literacy workshops for seniors in the CALD community, giving young people work experience and employment readiness.
- Young community members engaged to deliver workshops on writing, motivation, and Study Skills, resulting in confidence building, work readiness and speaking and presenting skills.

Adults

- Supporting Afghan women to be trained in story time delivery to support literacy development in both languages within the emerging Afghan community in Brimbank.
- Outreach was delivered by Jobs Victoria Advocates across Brimbank libraries, schools, shopping centres, markets and community centres.
- Promoting the *World of Work* project to women in Brimbank aiming to support women to return to the workforce after a long absence.
- Co- designed with local Afghani women, a program of workshops for social engagement and awareness regarding local support services and organisations on social, financial, education and health needs was delivered.

Older adults

- Developed *iPad Learning*, an interactive program for seniors with limited digital literacy skills. The program runs for six weeks with a different topic covered each week. Participants take home an iPad with data to consolidate their learning between classes. Providing the data and hardware removes barriers to participation by seniors in the digital space.
- Received State Government Digital Literacy funding for older adults to enable increased learning participation online throughout 2023.

- Procured additional brain training kits to support seniors and people with disabilities.
- Collaborated with council business units to deliver nine community mental health and wellbeing sessions during Mental Health week in October 2022.

Broader initiatives that supported the community across all life stages included:

- **Libraries After Dark**, a local government initiative to prevent and reduce harm from gambling. It supports at-risk communities by providing fun and free evening activities as an alternative to gambling. The program seeks to increase social connections and reduce social isolation, a well-established risk factor for gambling harm.
- **Brimbank Writers & Readers Festival**, delivered in partnership with Victoria University, community and community organisations delivered a diverse program, supporting literacy and creativity through workshops and talks for all ages. Highlights included the opening event featuring First Nations women sharing their knowledge, a First Nations language workshop for children, writing on lived experience workshop, and a People of Brimbank podcast that featured community stories from Brimbank locals.
- Twenty council staff were trained in Auslan to better support members of the Deaf community to access services, participate in programs, and build positive relationships..

2. Canning City Council

In September 2022, the City of Canning became the first city in Western Australia and fourth city in Australia to be part of the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities (GNLC) an initiative aimed at facilitating lifelong learning through enhancing individual empowerment and social inclusion, economic development and cultural prosperity, and sustainable development.

The City is one of 292 cities from 76 countries to join the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities (GNLC) in recognition of their outstanding efforts to make lifelong learning a reality for all at the local level.

At a Friday Forum on 11 November 2022, Caroline Jones and her colleagues reflected on the journey to become a UNESCO Learning City. Sarah McQuade, Director Customer & Community, City of Canning, said that the UNESCO framework for learning cities was investigated and it was thought that it was not prescriptive and could be adapted to suit a local context. Her advice was to ensure you have a robust community development model in place before you apply to become a member of the UNESCO GNLC.

For further information and resources go to the [Ripples newsletter for December November 2022](#).

3. Melton, Victoria

- *Written by Silvia Velez, Lifelong Learning Projects Officer, City of Melton*

Melton City Council – ALCN Annual Report 2022-2023

Melton City Council continues to deliver enhanced outcomes for the community in engagement, empowerment, activity, and community learning objectives through online and face-to-face programming and events as well as learning policy and strategy development.

The highlights of the year included:

1. 2022 Lifelong Learning Festival

The aim of the Melton Lifelong Learning Festival is to continue to engage the City of Melton community in meaningful ways to foster a culture of inclusive learning regardless of age, ability, interest, or other potential barriers. After having to change the scope and approach to the annual Lifelong Learning festival due to the pandemic, this year we were able to successfully deliver a week-long learning festival across our Community Centres and Libraries.

- The opening day celebrations were planned in conjunction with the Melton Revitalisation project to activate the pandemic-impacted city centre. The atmosphere was vibrant and celebratory, with over 500 community members assisting and engaging with a variety of free activities and food. The opening keynote speech was delivered by Jenny McAffer from Adult Learning Australia.
- During the week, 43 events were delivered across the Community Centres and Libraries, and all centres reported increased activation and engagement due to the festival events. The overall participant satisfaction was 92% and 69% of attendees reported this being the first time they attended an event at a Community Centre.
- The events were designed across seven themes:
 - Learning for Sustainability
 - Learning for Taste
 - Learning for Earning
 - Learning for Health
 - Learning for Creativity
 - Learning for Tech Skills
 - Learning for Fun

The most popular event category, measured by the speed of bookings and attendance rate was 'Learning for Fun', followed by 'Learning for Sustainability'.

- We also had an online event in collaboration with Wyndham City Council titled *A Healthy and Sustainable Future – YOU Can Make a Difference!* Linh Do – Director of Leaders for Global Sustainability at the University of Melbourne, and advisor to the United Nations Environment Program, led the event with the participation of Sustainability officers from both councils.
- The festival closed with a keynote speaker and workshop event addressing the prevention of family violence. Tarang Chawla shared his passion for prevention of family violence, and we invited service providers to engage with the community and promote their programs.

2. Global Learning Festival

The Global Learning Festival (GLF) was again successfully co-hosted with Wyndham City Council, with the support of an international working group. This year was the third online delivery of the festival which included 47 free online events with the involvement of over 50 organisations throughout 15 countries. The 2022 GLF strengthened collaborations with the PASCAL International Observatory, the Australian Learning Communities Network (ALCN), the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities and RMIT University, amongst others. The topics of the events were diverse, including addressing the climate crisis, Reconciliation, Resilience and Cultural and Recreational programs across communities.

3. Learn West Network

As part of Learn West, the Melton Community Activation and Learning team also contributed to the online festival called “Learning for Earning”, including two very successful online events:

- *Meet the Major Employers in the West*, where employers shared current vacancies and suggestions on how to best present individual skill sets for successful hiring outcomes;
- *Want to Work for Local Government?* Invited representatives of each of the Learn West councils talked about the current local employment opportunities and answered questions from community members.

As a UNESCO Learning City, Melton has continued its active participation in both local and global events, including online webinars and advocacy campaigns. We also participated in the “Localising SDGs” delivered by the City of Melbourne to better understand approaches to making SDGs relevant to our community.

4. Evaluation Framework

We have also been involved in specialised Impact evaluation training and have delivered evaluation sessions with the Community Development Officers as part of the ongoing development of impact evaluation procedures.

5. Growth of Community Centres

Finally, our Community and Children’s Centres continue to expand their programs and given the rapid growth of the municipality we opened a new centre this year at Mt Atkinson, with two more in development. The Community Action and Learning Officers delivered over **400 programs** across a range of themes and inclusive of all abilities, ages, and cultural backgrounds. The programs are promoted via [Melton Learning](#). The Community Action and Learning programs continue to strengthen partnerships with both internal and external providers.

Currently, there are over 3,400 active community members on the website.

There are over 3800 subscribers to our Melton Learning Directory newsletter.

Since its launch there have been just under 180,000 users visit the website and over one million page views.

4 City of Port Adelaide Enfield, South Australia

Written by Belinda Parsons, Community and Cultural Development Leader, City of Port Adelaide Enfield.

Key Highlights 2022-2023

1) Lit for Life

The City of PAE was one of six Councils in the Adelaide Metro Area who collaborated on a grant funded series of live children’s theatre performances, linked to stories and literature. Tickets were free with their library card, encouraging new members and lapsed members to start using their library membership again. Many attendees said it was their first experience of live theatre.

The performances available as part this free Festival includes:

- Grug and the Rainbow (Windmill Theatre)
- In this Place (Adelaide Symphony Orchestra performance based on a book by Phil Cummings)
- Once Upon a Jar (Patch Theatre)
- Sea of Light (Patch Theatre)



2) Ngaityu Muiyu Tantu – My Feelings Bag in Kurna

City of Port Adelaide Enfield, City of Onkaparinga and Kalaya Children’s Centre have received grant funding to create 620 backpacks for 3–5-year old’s that are now being distributed through Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander focused Children’s Centres and other libraries and community centres in Port Adelaide Enfield and Onkaparinga.

The project aims to improve emotional and social outcomes for children as these are highlighted as areas of concern in the Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) data for the City of Onkaparinga and City of Port Adelaide Enfield and increase children and their family’s access to books and reading in their homes.

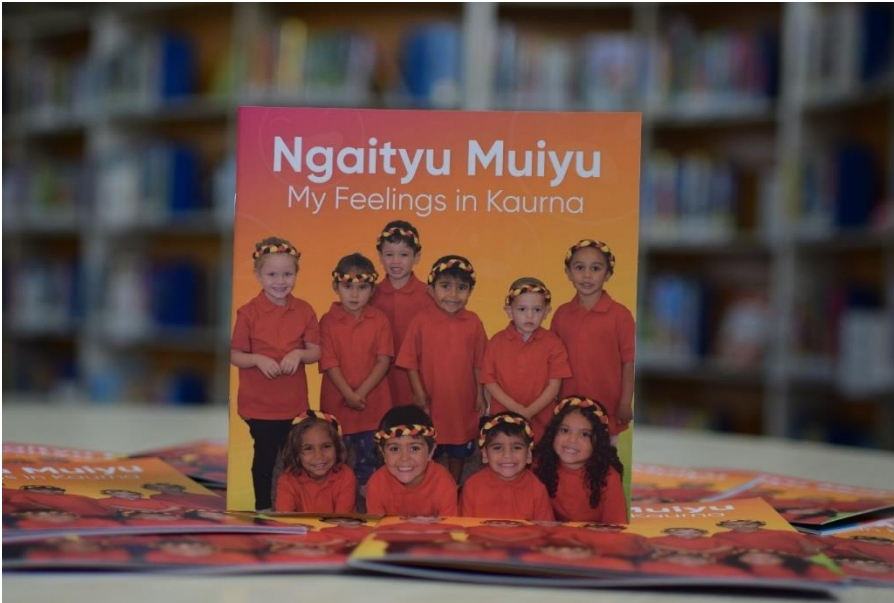
Each pack contains:

- A book written in Kurna (*Ngaityu Muiyu*) & a book written by a First Nations author in English.
- Finger puppets as a tool for storytelling
- Clapping sticks for storytelling
- Information from Parenting SA

There are videos to go alongside *Ngaityu Muiyu* that include the Kurna pronunciation.

See @cityofpaelibraries You Tube channel

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mYGj7pclWN4&list=PLvPw86QI6RgzgwbCDAjqOOunzUIOcJfTL>



3) Social Infrastructure Project (SIP)

The progress on the SIP project was reported in [Ripples September October 2022 edition](#). The update is that the plan is progressing with a current emphasis on the Eastern end of PAE.

4) Aboriginal Cultural Centre – Yitpi Yartapuultiku

The naming of the new Aboriginal Cultural Centre was also reported in [Ripples September October 2022 edition](#). It is an exciting project and an introduction to **Yitpi Yartapuultiku – Soul of Port Adelaide** is repeated below.

The Aboriginal Cultural Centre to be built at the Western Region Park (where Old Port Road meets Bower Road, northwest corner) has been officially named. The project group met with local Elders to discuss ideas and concepts, and together decided on the Kurna name **Yitpi Yartapuultiku**. This means ‘Soul of Port Adelaide’: Yitpi meaning Soul, Yartapuulti being the name that the Kurna people gave to the land around the Port River and ku means ‘of’, a Kurna joining word. On Tuesday 16 August we held a naming ceremony at the site, which included a Welcome to Country by Senior Kurna Elder Lewis O’Brien, a Smoking Ceremony by Michael O’Brien and three ceremonial fires.

Yitpi Yartapuultiku will be a community place providing a range of activities and opportunities for both First Nations and non-First Nations people. It will be an authentic place to be immersed in local culture and will have indoor and outdoor activity and performance spaces, public amenities, office and meeting rooms, extensive landscaping, artwork and entry statements and areas with access to the water.

5) Makerspace Market 2022

Parks Library, in the centre of City of PAE, has a Makerspace and Media Room.

In 2022 participants of Makerspace workshops could apply to be a first-time stall holder at a Christmas Market. Over 8 months, community members learned how to make a product, how to run a stall and how to promote their product, with support from the Council’s Economic Development Advisor.

Fifteen stall holders participated in the Market, with over 600 people attending the event.



5 Tamworth Region, New South Wales (Kamilargo Country)

Written by Kay Delahunt, Manager Culture and Community Services, Tamworth City Council.

Tamworth Regional Council (TRC) is the local government authority (LGA) located in the state's Central North. It spans the vibrant regional city of Tamworth and includes the towns of Manilla, Barraba, Nundle and Kootingal and 17 hamlets, villages and rural areas. Strategically located between Sydney and Brisbane, Tamworth is a dynamic and progressive city, bursting with infrastructure and activity.

The first ever Tamworth Country Music Festival took place in 1973 and is now an internationally renowned event attracting over 300,000 visitors yearly.

The LGA is on Kamilaroi Country. The Kamilaroi Nation is one of the four largest Indigenous nations in Australia; a unique culture that has contributed greatly to Tamworth's history and community.

The Tamworth Region is now a thriving economic and cultural hub of Central Northern NSW, home to over 60,000 people and thousands of businesses spanning health care, social assistance, manufacturing, construction, accommodation, food services and agriculture.

Key challenges

The key challenges for this community, as identified by "Tamworth Regional Council Blueprint 100", are those external drivers that many communities are facing – increased urbanization; health and ageing population; global connectedness; the digital economy; emerging sharing economy; pressure on biodiversity; climate change and disaster resilience.

Formal and Non-formal Learning Infrastructure

Formal

- 15 Multiple preschools and childcare centres. (private and public)
- 16 8 high schools
- 17 20+ primary schools.
- 18 Farrer Memorial Agricultural College (State-run secondary school – for boys – offers boarding)
- 19 Bulimbal School (*Education from K to 12 for students with moderate or severe intellectual disabilities.*)
- 20 [Tamworth Regional Conservatorium of Music](#)
- 21 [Gomeri Culture Academy](#)
- 22 TAFE NSW – New England Institute
- 23 [Tamworth Community College](#)
- 24 [University of Newcastle – Department of Rural Health – Tamworth Education Centre](#)
- 25 [UNE Tamworth Central](#)

Non-formal

- Six Library Branches
- Men's Shed
- Playgroups
- University of the Third Age

- Craft Shed
- Innovation Studio (Library Makerspace)
- [Tamworth Regional Astronomy and Science Centre](#)
- [UNE Smart Region Incubator](#)
- ADFAS (Australian Decorative and Fine Arts Society)
- Contemporary Literature Book Groups
- ESL help

Learning Region Developments

The learning region concept is partly driven by the Tamworth Region Inclusive Community Advisory Committee (TRICAC). The broad purpose and aim of the TRICAC is to provide strategic advice to the Council in relation to diversity and other specific cultural matters, within the region and make recommendations regarding priority areas for development and/or support. One of the main roles is to advise on and monitor the implementation of actions in the Tamworth Region Cultural Plan related to cultural diversity.

Tamworth Region Cultural Plan 2018-2023

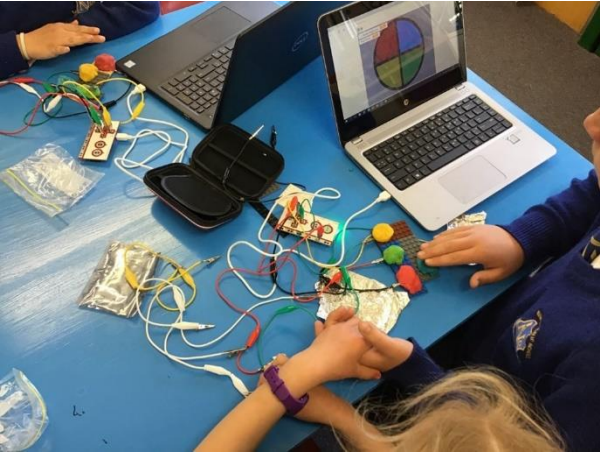
Action 1.7 Seek out partnerships with tertiary education providers to expand the range of educational opportunities in the region.

Action 1.8 Develop a community learning plan to promote health, creative ageing, and positive youth and child development.

Learning region progress to date:

While identifying the development of a learning region is a recent concept for Tamworth, and the path and plan are still in development, there has been a great deal of work behind the scenes to support increased learning opportunities in the region.

- negotiations with government and universities to increase tertiary education opportunities and explore new models for delivery
- collaboration across Council departments to deliver effective community training sessions and maximize reach
- makerspace and innovation studio programs in libraries, including coding and robotics
- volunteers providing language help for migrants (in libraries)
- tech savvy seniors, 10-week programs at various libraries throughout the region
- baby book time, toddler time, storytime, book clubs, scrabble, author talks and guest speakers form part of library programming.
- all libraries have a vegetable and flower “seed library” and Nundle Library has its own community garden.



A whole of community approach

In 2019, Tamworth Regional Council partnered with United Way Australia to launch Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library (DPIL) Tamworth. Adopting a whole of community approach, Council, businesses, philanthropic organisations and the community have joined together to ensure that all children born since 2019 in the Tamworth local government area (LGA) are enrolled in the Imagination Library, giving them the best chance to start school ready to learn.

Parents in Tamworth are introduced to the Imagination Library while still in the hospital, shortly after the birth of their child. The nurses who conduct the State-wide Infant Screening – Hearing (SWISH) Program introduce the parents to DPIL. The babies are then enrolled through the Tamworth Library. This coordinated approach has been hugely successful, with a 98% uptake. The ‘from birth’ model also allows families to develop reading habits early, supporting both brain development and the parent-child bond. In 2023, 3,500 children are enrolled in Tamworth. Each child receives a book in the mail every month from birth to five years (60 books), and Tamworth Library provides wrap-around programs and support to families.



Ashleigh Dallas

Key priorities for future development

Some of the aims for 2023 onwards include:

- mapping the community learning opportunities (and gap analysis)
- establishing a “learning region” working group
- developing a community learning plan
- updating the Tamworth Region Cultural Plan
- ongoing promotion of a learning culture
- participation in Australian Learning Cities Network

Updated on 21 February 2023

6 Townsville City Council: City Libraries, Queensland

Written by Dr Donna Goldie, Coordinator Learning and Information Services, Townsville City Council

This year has been a very busy time for Townsville Citylibraries. There are three projects which have taken much of the focus: Our extended hours project at our Aitkenvale branch; our new library at the Riverway Precinct; and our 85th Birthday celebrations.

Our extended hours project started on 7 November 2022 and ended on 28 April 2023 at our Aitkenvale library. During the week, our library was open till 9pm (where it usually closed at 5pm). On Saturday, we opened till 5pm (instead of 3pm) and on Sunday we were there from 10am-4pm (where we were previously closed). During this project, we were able to introduce new programs, such as JPs in the Library, Saturday Storytime, and Pokémon Club on Sunday. While we have not finalised analysis of the project, our initial engagement with the data is showing some positive results in terms of happy customer comments and solid door counts. While the official project has now finished, we have kept our doors open later than usual on two evenings and continued to offer Sunday as a day to visit our library. We have also kept our programs going.

On Saturday 29 April, we celebrated the opening of Citylibraries Riverway. The construction of our library commenced in May 2022 and is co-located with the Pinnacles Gallery, Riverway lagoons, sports facilities, boardwalks and walking tracks around the river. The library includes a creative hub with recording and fabrication studios, meetings rooms and a business lounge, with the option for 24-hour access. There are also family spaces, reservation lockers and a café.

The opening of the Riverway was a highly anticipated event. The community day was headlined by Bluey and Bingo who shared the day with live music, children’s activities, face painting, art activity workshops and food trucks. Also in attendance were the First Nations group, the Wulgurakuba Dancers who performed a welcome to country and smoking ceremony, and the Torres Strait group the Komet Dancers also took to the stage. The official count on the day was 9 000 people (although some have said there could have been up to 12 000 people there on the day). To see a video showcasing of the day, please click this [link](#).

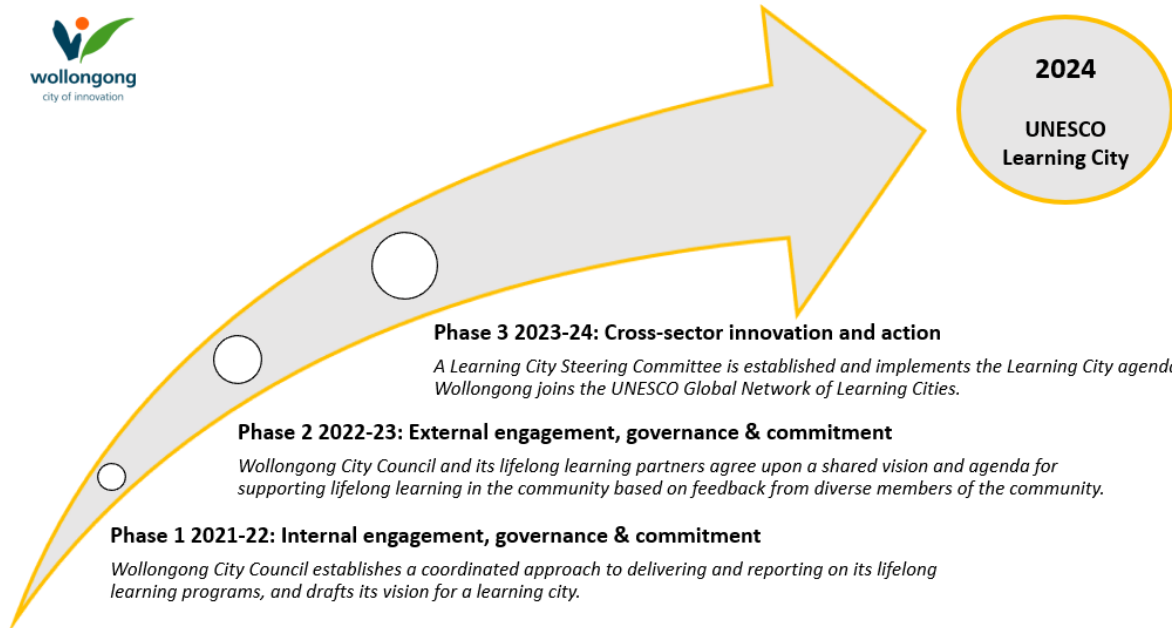
The opening of our Riverway library coincided with Citylibraries 85th Birthday. The Townsville Municipal Library started as a private service in 1866, with Robert Townsend and John Melton Black on the Townsville Library and Reading Room committee. Subscriptions to the Townsville Library and Reading Room cost £1 at a time when the average labourer was paid £38 a year – the equivalent of an average Australian spending \$2500 a year on a book subscription today.

In mid-1938 the Council purchased a building in the city which was occupied by the School of Arts. The building had been devastated by two major cyclones, giving Council the opportunity to fix it and transform it into the Townsville Municipal Library in August that year. This was the first free public book service for Townsville. The library quickly became popular with Townsville residents, with its operation expanding to include a children's library in 1953. This was the first move towards modern library service, with the space becoming a hub for children and families to enjoy. As well as books for children, the library also offered photography clubs, puppet shows and stamp collecting clubs.

In 1971, the first custom-built library space at Aitkenvale Library was opened. The building included the first accessibility ramps for wheelchair users and parents with prams at a Townsville library. Since establishing a free public library service to Townsville, Council has had libraries at the School of Arts, the old Market Reserve City Building, Commonwealth Building on Flinders Street, Northtown on Flinders St, Aitkenvale, Thuringowa, the mobile library, and now at Riverway. To celebrate our 85th Birthday, we hosted workshops for the business community, author talks, children's crafts and family activities, tours of the new library and an invitation event to showcase 85 images for 85 years.

7 Wollongong City Council, NSW

Approved by Dr. Jenny Thompson, Manager Library and Community Services



Wollongong City Libraries is leading a whole-of-Council, city wide project to establish Wollongong as a UNESCO learning city by 2024. The Project Leader Learning City established a three-phase project that first prioritised internal engagement, governance, and commitment at Wollongong City Council from June 2021 to May 2022; the next two phases focus on external engagement, governance and commitment and then cross-sector innovation and action. The aim is to establish the fundamental conditions of a learning city as per the key features of a learning city outlined on page 11 of the [UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities: Guiding Document](#).

The objectives of Phase 1 of the Learning City Project were met in May 2022 and presented to Wollongong City Council’s Executive Management Committee and Councillors. With executive endorsement, Phase 2 of the project commenced, focusing on several key actions, including:

1. **Community engagement** for the Learning City project was conducted in June and July 2022 with the support of many service providers across Wollongong. The Project Leader Learning City attended 52 engagement activities (briefings, conversations, focus groups, community activities and events) and spoke with 620 members of the community. The project webpage had 915 visits, 186 online surveys were completed and 249 members of the community participated in focus groups or conversations.

Community engagement aimed to gather meaningful information from community members and service providers to inform Wollongong’s first Learning City Strategy. Findings from community engagement included:

- Learning matters to our community and happens in many ways and places;
- There are barriers to learning affecting the lives of some members of our community that need to be addressed;
- Learning city themes resonate with our community as they benefit our society, promote personal growth, create inclusion, match personal values and will help the environment;
- Our community would like more learning opportunities made available in Wollongong;
- Proposed learning city actions would support service providers in their work; and
- Our community has a clear vision for Wollongong as a learning city.

2. **Action priorities**, based on the findings of the community engagement program have been drafted for consideration during the next stage of the Learning City journey, which will see Council and local learning stakeholders come together to set the directions and priorities that will inform Wollongong’s Learning City Strategy
3. **A strategy for engaging service providers to join the Learning City Network** was implemented, with the intent to foster partnerships in the community that will support development of the Wollongong Learning Plan
4. Development of a **Framework for Lifelong Learning** commenced. This Framework will support all Wollongong City Council staff to develop a shared understanding of what lifelong learning is, how we talk about it and the principles that drive the planning and implementation of lifelong learning opportunities across our community. It will underpin the development during the coming year of a **Guide for Lifelong Learning**, which will support Lifelong Learning Facilitators to embed the principles for lifelong learning when planning and evaluating lifelong learning assets, in line with Council’s Framework for Lifelong Learning and Council’s broad range of related policies, strategic plans, goals and objectives.

Lara Pugh, who was leading Wollongong City’s Learning City journey on behalf of Wollongong City Libraries, left us to return to a position in the University sector in late 2022 and it has taken us a little while to find our next champion. Dianne Hillier commenced as our Project Leader Learning City in May 2022, and we are looking forward to working with her to move forward on our journey in the coming year.

8 Wyndham, Victoria

Diane Tabbagh, Coordinator Learning Community, Libraries and Community Learning, reports on a summary of highlights for 2022 implementing [Wyndham’s Learning Community Strategy 2018-2023](#).



2022 SUMMARY OF ACHIEVEMENTS

Overview Of The Learning Community Strategy 2018-2023

The [Learning Community Strategy 2018-2023](#) (LCS) identifies the driving imperatives behind facilitating lifelong and life-wide learning in Wyndham. The LCS is Wyndham’s driver for innovation and change in learning, and functions as a roadmap for developing an equitable, inclusive, and innovative learning community. Lifelong Learning forms the guiding principle of the Strategy, driving social, economic, environmental, and cultural life in the community. The Strategy includes 18 key actions, which are organised according to 4 themes:

- CELEBRATING living and Learning
- ADVOCATING for equity and quality in service provision
- FACILITATING partnerships and collaboration across sectors
- INNOVATING learning and fostering new entrepreneurial spirit

Key Learning Community Strategy Action Achievements:

ACTION 1: Learning Festival as Wyndham's Signature learning event

The Wyndham Learning Festival (WLF) is Wyndham’s largest annual learning event, focusing on promoting and celebrating learning across the lifespan. Following the challenges of the past two years, it was a relief to return to in-person WLF events, whilst also offering the flexibility and accessibility of some online events.

In its seventh year in 2022, the WLF is led by Wyndham Community and Education Centre (Wyndham CEC) with support from Wyndham City Council (WCC) – both organisations share a passion for learning and recognise the far-reaching social, economic, environmental, and cultural benefits of promoting lifelong learning.

With the theme of “Building a Resilient, Sustainable Wyndham”, the FREE festival offered something for all ages and interests from 1-7 September 2022 and celebrated and encouraged lifelong learning with over 70 activities from across the Arts, the World of Work & S.T.E.M, Environment and Sustainability to Health & Wellbeing, Culture & Diversity, Food & Cooking, and Families and Children! Events were as varied as a Young Scientist of Wyndham Competition; Thai Cooking; a Photography Workshop; Recycling; a Multicultural Sports Expo; Lawn Bowls; Building Resilience in Children; Gardening; Sustainability; a Farm tour; a Werribee River walk; an author talk with Morris

Gleitzman, and many, many more! Each of the curated events provided a fun, engaging, and stimulating learning experience.

The Wyndham Learning Festival's signature 'WynTalk: Building a Resilient, Sustainable Wyndham: Stories from the Heart of Wyndham' featured ABC presenter and The Age Journalist Jon Faine and local Wyndham panellists, Ally Eley, Chevy Lowndes, Dylan Wishart, Lisa Field and Dr Sarifa Alonto-Younes.

With a fortunate overlap with Melton's Lifelong learning festival, Wyndham collaborated on an online event *A Healthy and Sustainable Future – YOU Can Make a Difference!* that featured in both Festivals. Social change advocate Linh Do – Director of Leaders for Global Sustainability at the University of Melbourne, and advisor to the United Nations Environment Program, led the event connecting local stories of climate and environmental issues around the world.

Linh delivered a keynote setting the global scene – what is climate change, what are the risks and issues? Then the audience heard about the Melton/Wyndham emergency services response plan. Our respective Council Sustainability Officers took questions on disposing of waste, composting, electricity, and recycling. The audience were encouraged to take small and big actions to be part of the solution and influence change.

The WLF evaluation report is available here: <https://www.wyndham.vic.gov.au/services/wyndham-learning-city/learning-city-resources>

ACTION 2: Transformative Education Showcase

Wyndham Community & Education Centre's Transformative Education Showcase was held on 7 November as part of the 2022 Global Learning Festival and featured a panel of young people advancing education in their local communities, and organisations providing innovative services to school communities.

The panellists included Dylan Nguyen with his BUGBOX robotic program and promotion of STEM engagement in schools, Thara Brown from Wala Connections showcasing Aboriginal Dance and Wellbeing performing arts programs and connecting in-school and out-of-school activities, Jefferey Lai from EqualEd, a social enterprise supporting young people with tutoring support, career development, mentoring, and Mohamed Semra of Endeavour Youth Australia highlighting mentoring and training programs for young people.

The Showcase highlighted innovative practices in education and learning models and was very well received by an enthusiastic online audience.

ACTION 3: Strong Advocacy to Ensure Learning for All **Schools4Wyndham Campaigns**

Wyndham's schools are under increasing pressure to accommodate a growing number of students. Wyndham City's [schools4wyndham](#) campaign has been advocating for schools to be built in the areas they are needed most since 2017, calling on the State Government to provide Wyndham's growth areas with a fair share of the 100 new schools the state government committed to build by 2026.

Campaign activities (aligned with COVID-19 restrictions) for the schools4wyndham campaign during the 2021-22 year brought wider attention to the issue of a shortage of schools in Wyndham, and included:

- Coordinating an online petition call for the State Government to fund additional schools in Wyndham. The petition, signed by more than 600 residents, was promoted at a series of popup session at local shopping centres and the Children's picnic at Werribee Mansion.

- Growing community support for the campaign online through a regular presence on Facebook, with campaign videos highlighting the needs of Wyndham’s growing suburbs and campaign updates from the Mayor.
- Advocating to local MPs for the construction of schools and school upgrades as part of the State Government’s COVID-19 economic stimulus package.
- Ongoing discussions with the Victorian School Building Authority on the State Government’s plans and presentations of Wyndham’s analysis of the school needs of our community, including plans for specialist schools and mainstream schools.
- Pre-budget briefings to local MPs on Wyndham’s most urgently needed schools in their electorates.
- Advocacy to ensure that planned non-government school sites are used for schools and not other purposes, including correspondence with the former Victorian Education Minister, James Merlino, the former Planning Minister, Richard Wynne, and local MPs.
- Updates on the campaign website on what schools Wyndham needs and when, promoted to local online audiences through Google Ads.
- Email updates to campaign subscribers recruited from the campaign website.
- An online survey of residents’ concerns regarding school availability.
- Advertisements at Village Cinema Werribee providing campaign exposure around Wyndham.

In the 2022/23 State Budget the Victorian Government committed to building six new schools in Wyndham. These include:

- Black Forest East Primary School (Interim Name), opening in 2024
- Tarneit North Primary School (Interim Name), opening in 2024
- Truganina North Primary School (Interim Name), opening in 2024
- Riverdale Secondary School (Interim Name), opening in 2024
- Lollypop Creek Secondary School (Interim Name), opening in 2024
- Lollypop Creek Specialist School (Interim Name), opening in 2024

The budget also allocated funding for an additional stage at Truganina North Secondary School (Interim Name), land acquisition for Riverdale North Primary School (interim name) and a \$14.7m upgrade at Warringa Park School.

State election:

- As candidates announced their candidacy for the November state election, Council shared our advocacy priorities with each in the form of an email or a face-to-face meeting. A key priority was investment in schools to support the fast-growing community. Many commitments on education were made, with the re-elected Andrews Government having committed funding for planning for new schools including:
 - P-9 in Point Cook
 - A specialist school in Point Cook
 - Tarneit Plains Primary School
 - Riverdale North Primary School
 - And funding for an upgrade of Manorvale Primary School.

ACTION 4: Education Roundtable

On 28 July 2022, the Learning Community Team delivered the 2022 Wyndham Education Roundtable. Discussions included updating each other on outcomes from the 2021 Roundtable Action Plan and re-setting collaborative plans for the coming year. The attendee list included over 35 dynamic education and learning leaders from across Wyndham. With a nod to the Education Roundtable experience of 2021, the 2022 Roundtable was moved online,

due to last minute advice from the Chief Health Officer regarding another wave of COVID-19. The team worked hard to adjust the event to remain engaging and interactive, and even gained some registrations with the switch to the online format. By incorporating MURAL as a tool, the participants were able to be fully involved; virtual breakout rooms enabled the educators and community leaders to exchange ideas about their vision for the future of learning in the municipality, in the context of our wider Education and Learning Strategy focused on supporting the community to be lifetime learners.

ACTION 5: Principal's Breakfast

The Principal's Breakfast reaffirms Council's commitment to support and develop collaborative partnerships with Wyndham principals and all local schools. Council recognises the importance of a collaborative approach that builds partnerships that will help to deliver outcomes for all in our community. The intention of the Breakfast was to strengthen partnerships through a willingness to listen, collaborate and work together to promote learning and education in Wyndham.

Over 60 Principals and Assistant Principals gathered on 26 October at the Civic Centre to enjoy a delicious breakfast and networking opportunity. Councillors and Council staff were able to network with the Principals before presentations from various Council units were delivered on a range of key programs and services that Council offers that intersect directly with schools and communities, including Libraries and Learning; Youth Services; Environment; Kindergartens; Service Planning, Partnering and Reform; Service Development & Strategy; Inclusion & Participation; and Social & Economic Inclusion.

ACTION 7: Inclusion and Equity

The Wyndham Integrated Learning Group (WILG2), co-chaired by Council and Deakin's National Disability Coordinator Officer, met bi-monthly in 2022, and featured a different guest speaker to enhance the knowledge of members around inclusion and learning for Wyndham.

With the goal of enhancing inclusion and equity in learning for People with Disability aged 15-30 in Wyndham, WILG2 comprises 15 community and Council leaders from learning sectors, local government, disability action groups and higher education. The group utilises evidence-based approaches to support equitable pathways and outcomes for place-based learning needs for the target cohort in Wyndham, with ambitious goals including:

- Supporting the enhancement of learning providers' organisational culture, structures, systems, processes, and practices to ensure they are designing learning for People with Disability from the target age cohort
- Advocating for learning recruitment and promotion which targets People with Disability
- Advocating that choice and control drives learning opportunities for 15-30-year-olds with disability in Wyndham
- Supporting learning providers in Wyndham to continuously adjust teaching and learning strategies to support learning for People with Disability

In 2022 over 20 VET stakeholders were supported to develop their equitable learning, pathways, and outcomes for students with disability. WILG delivered on a range of topics to improve the culture, structures, processes, and practices to ensure they are designing and delivering learning for people with disability across Wyndham, one of the fastest growing LGA's in Victoria.

Industry experts and representatives from various organisations were invited to speak on topics identified by the VET stakeholders as an area of interest or required learning, some of these sessions included were:

- Monash University who shared insights on the Universal Design for Learning (UDL)
- Deakin University who gave useful advice on developing 'Accessible Documents'
- Special Broadcasting Services (SBS) spoke on graduate employment broadly, including graduate employment opportunities at SBS
- Richmond Football Club, invited Chris Henderson, captain of the Richmond Tigers Wheelchair Football team on his experiences living with MS and his need for self-advocacy
- Wyndham Libraries on making libraries more accessible
- David Tran (WILG co-chair) delivered a session on reasonable adjustments

The Learning Community Unit were invited to take part in the annual Mock Job Interview Program with Warringa Park Specialist School in July. This program provides secondary school students with the experience of being interviewed for an employment opportunity, in a safe environment with support and encouragement. During the mock interview, students are supported to practice and build interview techniques using role play with typical interview questions and scenarios. Students gain confidence to answer questions, connection with an adult role model, engagement with career pathways and awareness of body language. These events are fun and fulfilling for both students and interviewers and are a valuable step in the student's career education.

ACTION 9: Aboriginal Culture Driving New Ways to Learn

Some key highlights from across Council units include:

- Sharing of resources and links with Education networks to support commitments to embedding Aboriginal perspectives across all aspects of learning, including a rich array of materials and opportunities for online professional development such as the 'Making Visible: Aboriginal perspectives in the Victorian Curriculum F-10' from the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Inc (VAEAI).
- National Reconciliation Week (27 May to 3 June) theme this year was 'Be Brave. Make Change' challenging us to tackle the unfinished business of reconciliation. A number of events were organised across Wyndham – both community-facing events and events for staff. Many staff attended the Yarning Circle event held at the Civic Centre, featuring three members of Wyndham's Reconciliation Advisory Committee who generously shared their thoughts on reconciliation and answered questions from the audience.
- Koling wada-ngal, in partnership with Council Youth Services, invited young people, their families and allies to a community healing event held on 17 November at the Wunggurrwil Dhurrung Community Centre. The evening promoted collective healing for community in the West, providing a space for our youth and families to share their voices and reflect on the year, including the significant amount of loss the First Nations community has experienced in 2022.
- Council is advancing the journey towards Reconciliation as work progresses on our second Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) 2023 – 2025, with Reconciliation Australia recently granting conditional endorsement. The RAP draft will now be prepared for public exhibition, followed by formal endorsement from Reconciliation Australia and adoption in May 2023.

Work commenced on the RAP in 2021 with the establishment of the Wyndham Reconciliation Advisory Committee (WRAC). WRAC membership consists of nine First Nations community members and three non-Indigenous community members who meet monthly. The WRAC has been the platform for engagement between

First Nations and non-Indigenous communities with Council across a broad range of issues and in setting a new Reconciliation vision for the 2023-2025 RAP.

The RAP will provide Council with a framework to understand and achieve our vision for Reconciliation with First Nations People. It is a plan that outlines the specific actions that Council will take, over the next 2 years, to not only build relationships, respect, and opportunities with and for First Nations People but also listen to the truth.

Council's 2023-2025 RAP is one of very few in Victoria that has the inclusion of a Truth Telling Pillar. Reconciliation Australia does not include the Truth Telling pillar in their framework and guidelines. In the current climate with Victoria leading the way with a treaty, Council advocated for this important presence in its next RAP.

As a part of the Global Learning Festival in November 2022, WYNTalk keynote speaker Marlee Silva delivered an online webinar – “WYNTalk: Acknowledge, Respect and Value Aboriginal Culture and Identity – Pathway to Reconciliation”, providing a platform for Marlee to guide the audience to foster learning environments that acknowledge, respect and value Aboriginal Culture and Identity.

ACTION 10: Developing Local Leaders in Local Communities

Under the theme ‘Resilient Wyndham, Stronger Together’ the 2022 Wyndham Building Blocks program sought to mobilise and support emerging community leaders to learn, share and work together in creating a Wyndham that is better prepared to respond to future shocks and stresses and emerge stronger. Delivered over fifteen weeks, the program had an enrolment of 20 residents, fifteen of whom successfully completed the program. Three project groups implemented a project each:

- **Trivia Night for Zero Waste** - Family oriented, fun filled trivia event involving residents from Truganina and Tarneit, focussed on raising awareness of waste reduction, recycling and myth busting.
- **Backyard Gardening** - to encourage the local community to think and act on food sustainability and backyard gardening including skill building and growing community networks.
- **Weaving Community Together** - An event to build positive community connection and harness the richness of cultural traditions and wisdom in Wyndham that contribute to collective wellbeing and build resilience with compassion.

With an average community attendance of 40 people at each, the successful implementation of these group projects is a demonstration of community leadership skills in practice and strengthened connections within the participant group and with their local communities.

ACTION 11: Alumni as Leadership Mentors

Over the past year Council's Community Strengthening Unit has continued engaging with building blocks alumnae to participate in various initiatives through a monthly alumnae newsletter, volunteering in community projects, encouraging involvement in committees as well as sharing their community leadership journeys with building blocks participants and at citizenship ceremonies.

- Targeted learning opportunities were offered to Building Blocks alumnae through the Building Blocks Masterclass series. The topics covered included Diversity and Inclusion, Workshop Facilitation, Communication for Collective Action, Building Effective Partnerships, Enhancing Leadership Awareness and Wellbeing, and Advocacy. In addition, Wyndham CEC delivered an online mentoring workshop to a group of Building Block

alumni members, including an overview of mentoring key concepts, as well as presentations from organisations providing leadership and mentoring programs in Wyndham.

- Wyndham CEC, in partnership with local manufacturing company Vertech Hume, piloted a mentor program upskilling workers from refugee backgrounds to transition into leadership roles.

ACTION 12: Engaging, Participating and Leading Globally

Throughout 2022 Wyndham has continued its global engagement and participation. The following is a snapshot of some of Wyndham's global contributions:

The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) Libraries interviewed Wyndham's Learning Community unit and Wollongong City Council's Learning City unit about their roles in the Global Learning Festival and its work driving lifelong learning. This featured in the IFLA Southeast Asia Working Group webinar on Southeast Asian Libraries work on the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in June. The webinar focused on the best practices by Southeast Asian libraries and librarians to support the UN SDGs.

A representative from Wyndham continues to hold a place on the executive of the Australian Learning Communities Network (ALCN), chairing this important network and offering secretariat support enabling the ALCN to continue to offer proactive collegiate support and resources to learning cities and communities across Australia.

In May the Australian Learning Cities Networks *Global to Local - Local to Global* highly engaging and well-received webinar provided the opportunity for Australian Learning Cities to come together for the first time to discuss how their cities and communities address the big issues facing communities around the world. Issues addressed included climate crisis, public health challenges, rapid technological change, changing world of work, inequality, gender equality. Discussions involved solutions tackled at a local level through a commitment to lifelong learning.

Wyndham Learning Community unit's keynote speaker provided the audience with the background to Australian Learning Cities and the context for the panel discussion and showcased Wyndham's own lifelong learning journey to becoming a learning city. The audience followed Wyndham's journey through establishing a Learning Community Strategy in 2006 to being accepted as a member of the UNSECO's Global Network of Learning Cities in 2019 and further recognized in 2021 when Wyndham was the proud recipient of a UNESCO GNLC Learning Cities award and the first Australian City to be inducted into Asia Pacific Learning Cities' Hall of Fame.

A further collaboration between Wyndham & ALCN was the hosting of the *Evaluation of Learning Cities and Regions - Case studies from Northern Ireland and Australia* webinar in November, one of the key Global Learning Festival events. Evaluation plays an important role in learning cities and regions, indicating if we are achieving the intended outcomes of our lifelong learning strategies and initiatives and helping us to communicate the impact of our work to stakeholders. This event featured case studies from two learning city practitioners from the City of Canning in Western Australia and Derry & Strabane in Northern Ireland, showcasing approaches to evaluation at program and strategic levels in both urban and rural contexts.

The Learning for Earning Festival returned for its second year in May 2022. This is a unique cross council collaboration between six councils from Western and Northern Melbourne that form the LearnWest network. Members of LearnWest work together to support their various communities in learning and earning to improve outcomes across the north and west. Councils involved were Wyndham City Council, Melton City Council, Brimbank City Council, Hobson's Bay City Council, Maribyrnong City Council and Darebin City Council. This model of collaboration amongst Councils has meant a greater collective impact amongst our communities.

The Learning for Earning Festival was designed to provide participants with the knowledge and skills they need to upskill and look at different pathways to employment and to gain knowledge about starting or changing careers, learning about leading and emerging industries and discover opportunities for the future, through the three key flagship online forums:

Opportunities in the West: providing an insight into employment opportunities for local communities; **Meet the Major Employers in the West:** featuring a range of major employers who shared their current and varied vacancies and what they look for in candidates, and providing insightful and timely commentary on current vacancies, career paths, and recruitment tips; and **Want to Work in Local Government?:** highlighting the varied employment experiences of representatives of Wyndham, Hobson’s Bay, Melton, and Brimbank Councils, including current vacancies in each of the Council areas, gender equity in recruitment, flexible working arrangements, what recruiters look for in applicants, transferable skills, and tips on searching and applying for vacancies.

The three online forums were scaffolded by a series of live events held in each Council’s library featuring mock interview workshops; resume help; an introduction to online job searching; and social media workshops. All events were free.

The [PASCAL International Observatory](#), a global alliance of researchers, policy analysts, decision makers and locally engaged practitioners from government, higher education, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and the private sector, hosted their 16th Conference in Tampere, Finland via a blended mode of face to face and virtual registration.

The main theme of the conference **Learning and Crises: Future-proofing City Responses** highlighted responses made by cities and regions, and their citizens, in their path to recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. Conference presentations explored the sorts of transformations that cities and regions have made themselves to adapt to the pandemic with a particular focus on education and lifelong learning, social support, health services and environmental services.

Wyndham’s Learning Community unit, along with a representative from Wollongong City Council’s Learning City unit, co-presented a paper entitled *“Libraries and Learning Cities: Exploring varying roles of engagement across the Globe”*. The presentation included an exploration of the varying roles that libraries play in learning regions, cities, communities, and towns; and showcased the ways in which public libraries met the learning needs of residents during the COVID-19 pandemic and are now futureproofing them for future crises through lifelong learning. Case studies from Wyndham; Brimbank; Dunedin, New Zealand; Espoo, Finland; and Wollongong were presented highlighting the different roles libraries have played in the learning community space.

The Global Learning Festival (GLF) co-hosted by Wyndham City Council and Melton City Council, together with members of UNESCO learning cities and learning communities across the globe took place 6-9 November. In its third year, the GLF continues to be a powerful opportunity to promote lifelong learning to a global audience. The GLF brings the world to Wyndham and takes Wyndham to the world. It is a central place for learners to come together to share their knowledge, skills, culture and traditions. Featuring 47 free online events, there was something for everyone in the GLF program, to suit all ages and interests and all time zones. Wyndham’s Learning Community unit was proud to host one of our annual WYNtalks as our contribution to the GLF: ‘WynTalk: Acknowledge, Respect and Value Aboriginal Culture and Identity – Pathway to Reconciliation with Marlee Silva’.

Partnerships and collaborations in the 2022 GLF included the PASCAL International Observatory, the Australian Learning Communities Network (ALCN), Adult Learning Australia, UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities, WISE Qatar Foundation and RMIT University. Each year we are privileged to have new and returning organisations and learning cities from around the world offer their time and expertise in hosting online events during the Festival. We

were honoured to include 51 organisations and cities in 2022. Events registered from 15 countries including Australia, the USA, the U.K, Northern Ireland, China, Kenya, Greece, Palestine, the Netherlands, Turkey, Nigeria, Laos, Canada, Taiwan, and Thailand. Popular themes included 21st Century Education; Reconciliation; Climate Change; Sustainability; Building and Strengthening Learning Cities; Evaluating Learning Cities; Active Citizenship; Peace- and Community-building; Refugee and Migrant stories of resilience; Indigenous Astronomy; Self Care; and Cultural and Recreational pursuits including local history, baking, theatre, craft, cycling and photography.

The Wyndham Learning Community unit were invited to present at the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities International Webinar “2022 UNESCO GNLC Activities” in December. Network member city of Goyang in the Republic of Korea, hosted this international webinar, bringing the network together to reflect on major international developments in lifelong learning in relation to the city level, as well as to look back on the network’s key milestones in 2022 and expected directions for 2023. Raul Valdes Cotera (UNESCO Institute for Lifelong) and Dong Hwan Lee, (Mayor of Goyang) delivered the welcome addresses, followed by an overview of GNLC trends and strategies. Wyndham’s presentation on best practices drawn from case studies and projects supporting the Learning Community Strategy was joined by contributions from other members of the UNESCO GNLC including Marrakech (Morocco) and Larissa (Greece).

ACTION 13: WynTalks

WYNtalk 1: *“Building a Resilient, Sustainable Wyndham – Stories from the Heart of Wyndham”*

Wyndham Learning Festival’s signature event WYNtalk *“Building a Resilient, Sustainable Wyndham – Stories from the Heart of Wyndham”* featured ABC presenter and The Age Journalist Jon Faine and local Wyndham panellists, Ally Eley, Chevy Lowndes, Dylan Wishart, Lisa Field and Dr Sarifa Alonto-Younes. The panel were insightful, informative, and inspiring. Ally Eley, and her guitarist Steve, gave an entertaining performance featuring some of Ally’s original songs; a mini sustainable expo of local stall holders shared their ideas and information with the attendees; and audience members watched a screening of *“Regenerating Australia”*, the latest film from Damon Gameau, director of *“2040”* and *“That Sugar Film”*. Held at Wyndham’s Encore Events Centre, attendees were engaged, informed, moved, and showed displays of spontaneous applause throughout the panellists talk.

WYNtalk 2: *“Acknowledge, Respect and Value Aboriginal Culture and Identity – Pathway to Reconciliation”*

As Wyndham’s signature contribution to the Global Learning Festival, WYNTalk keynote speaker, author, radio presenter and host of her own podcast, Marlee Silva spoke from the heart, sharing her experiences growing up in Australia and generously sharing her ideas on how we can all be better allies to Aboriginal people. She implored us to use this WYNtalk conversation to pause, reflect and make a commitment to learning, growing, and being a changemaker for a better future for us all. On a positive note, Marlee sees many exciting, positive things happening in the Aboriginal community every day and into the future.

Action 14: Enabling Innovation & Entrepreneurship

Out of the initiatives and forums delivered under this action, including WYNNnovation; Innovate to Excelerate and the Annual Training Calendar, a highlight was the Barry Jones Oration, delivered by none other than the Hon. Dr. Barry Jones AC, in November. After a two-year hiatus due to COVID, Wyndham business leaders came together at The Refectory Werribee Park for another inspiring and thought-provoking Oration intended to stimulate critical and innovative thinking among Wyndham Leaders.

Action 15: Future Space

Located within the East Werribee Employment Precinct at 600 Sneydes Road, SPARK has been established as a collaborative space to support and mentor digital, tech start-ups and entrepreneurs, to scale up their concepts and products, to commercialisation. SPARK, an integral part of Wyndham City's Smart City Strategy, focuses on developing an innovative and entrepreneurial based ecosystem within, strengthening of the knowledge economy, and increasing employment in the region.

Action 16: Community "Hackathons"

After trialling traditional "Hackathons" with limited community interest, this Action has been modified to incorporate the Annual Coding Champs Competition held between August – October. Regular coding workshops were held across Tarneit and Point Cook libraries, (including one as part of the Wyndham Learning Festival: *Getting Started with Scratch*). The competition culminates in the annual Wyndham Coding Champs Awards Night at Point Cook Library, inviting all participants and family members to come along and celebrate coding and gaming in all formats, with board games set up to play on the night as well as the OSMO's, PS5 and the Nintendo switch. Shortlisted participants were invited to demonstrate their project on the big screen and to talk about their project. Judges and the audience were impressed to see and hear how these young people came up with their ideas and worked through some difficulties to get their end result. All the impressive entries can be seen at Smart Studio <https://scratch.mit.edu/studios/32157689>.

Action 17: Creative Learning Programs

During the September school holidays, Wyndham Libraries partnered with the Arts, Culture & Events team to deliver a series of special Dancing Story Workshops with the Australian Ballet – The Story of Pomi & Gobba. Eighty-nine preschool and early primary aged children attended across the six free sessions held at Manor Lakes and Werribee Libraries. The children and parents were delighted to learn through dance.

Further highlights of the Arts & Culture team's contribution to the communities learning options and opportunities include:

- Public talks, workshops, and programs to support engagement and learning in the Wyndham Art Collection as well as the visual art program associated with the Wyndham Art Gallery. This included Curator Talks, Artist in Conversations and facilitated workshops to complement the 6 exhibitions across the year. The program attracts and engages diverse community members through centring relevant themes, stories, and unique cultural and diaspora experiences.
- Digital content to meet access needs of community to connect with arts learning. This included the launch of the Go Deeper podcast series as well as continuing to provide video walk throughs of the exhibitions presented at the Wyndham Art Gallery.
- Annual activity of programs included targeted participation and workshop programs in four community centres and hubs. This partnership has been able to foster connection to arts program and skills while drawing new audiences to access services provided by community centres across emerging communities of Wyndham. This has included three residency programs and over sixty in-person workshops in 2022.
- Mentoring and skills building for our local creative community, including professional development workshops and skills building sessions held throughout the year. Highlights include the launch of a new Digital Art workshops series and delivery of a partnership program with Melbourne Fringe and Science Gallery Melbourne to support a cohort of local artists to be mentored by Melbourne Science Gallery curators

to produce a series of new artworks.

Action 18: Civics Learning and Social Cohesion

Under the umbrella of the Wyndham Citizens' Academy, Wyndham CEC continued to deliver a range of civics learning programs in 2022:

- Walk through Education – the partnership with Wyndham Park Primary School continued throughout 2022 providing an opportunity for parents from refugee backgrounds to gain a greater understanding of the Australian education system. A 20-minute documentary, to be launched in 2023, is currently in production and will include VU, the Gordon, Wyndham Park Community Centre and Early Years providers.
- Walk through Health – in partnership with Werribee Mercy Hospital, delivered two men's programs and two women's programs. A 20-minute documentary is currently in production and will be launched in 2023.
- Walk through Justice – a new iteration of the program has been funded by Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (via the Opportunity Wyndham Network) as a pre-employment program for Youth Justice roles at the new Cherry Creek Youth Justice Centre. Delivery of this program will begin in 2023.

Further to these, Wyndham CEC also led additional civics and social cohesion initiatives:

- Living & Working in Australia – across 2022, Wyndham CEC delivered the Living & Working in Australia short course to 80 community members seeking Australian citizenship. The program included support from settlement case workers with clients from both MiCare and Wyndham CEC.
- Wyndham Anti-racism Support Network (WASN) – significant background work has been undertaken in 2022 to refine the WASN model in preparation for its roll out in 2023. Members of the network include MiCare, WEstjustice, Activate Youth and Wyndham City. In addition, Wyndham CEC also supported a range of anti-racism events delivered across the city.

LOOKING FORWARD

As Wyndham emerges from several years of uncertainty due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the work of the Learning Community Strategy will be adaptive, sustainable, and responsive to the learning needs of Wyndham where lifelong and life wide learning drive equity, inclusion, and a healthy and safe environment for all.

We have recently completed an Evaluation of our current Learning Community Strategy 2018-2023, which will inform the development of the next Learning Community Strategy 2024-2029. We have commenced conducting a series of community consultations to ensure we include the priorities for learning of the diversity of the Wyndham community. Please contact us if you would like to be part of this process or be kept up to date wynlearn@wyndham.vic.gov.au.