

Building
sustainable
communities
through
learning



ALCN Learning Forum

Climate Resilience, Sustainability and Regeneration - Community Education and Action

Date: Thursday, 24th October 2024

Start Time: 3:45 PM (VIC,NSW,TAS); 3:15 PM (SA); 12:15 PM (WA); 2:45 PM (QLD); 2:15 PM (NT)

Duration: 1 hour 15 minutes.

Aim:

The forum will showcase the practical Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) work of the UNESCO learning city of Melton, Victoria, alongside initiatives from Port Adelaide Enfield (PAE) and the *Living Lightly Locally* project in South Australia, which partnered with the Burnside and Mount Barker Councils.

Background:

This online Forum is timely in the context of the Sixth international conference on Learning Cities (ICLC 6) taking place in the UNESCO learning city of Jubail, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on 3-5 December. The theme is '*Learning cities at the forefront of climate action*' and UNESCO learning cities from around the world will discuss strategies for promoting climate action through lifelong learning.

The ALCN online forum will showcase the practical work of the UNESCO learning city of Melton, Victoria and South Australian local government areas from across Adelaide.

This forum is centred on hope and action. As the team from Melton shared during their recent, successful Learning Festival on sustainability: "*Sustainability is about hope, and the practical steps we can take to improve both our finances and the planet.*"

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Times	Speaker	Topic
3:45-3:50	Sharyn Wheatcroft, Learning Community Officer, Wyndham City Council	Technical housekeeping
	Dr Leone Wheeler, Hon. CEO, ALCN	Welcome and introduction to the topic
3:50-4:05	Silvia Velez, Lifelong Learning Projects Officer, Melton City Council	The role of libraries in promoting environmental literacy – reflections on the 2024 Melton Learning Festival
4:07-4:22	Dr Keri Hopeward, University of South Australia Researcher	Living Lightly Locally: Smarter and Stronger through Citizen Science
4:25-4:35	Benita Parsons, Community Learning Leader (Libraries) PAE	Climate resilience projects at PAE Libraries - Gen Green and Council collaborations.
4:35-4:55	Benita Parsons, Community Learning Leader (Libraries), PAE	Q and A and discussion
4:55-5:00	Dr Leone Wheeler	Summary, wrap up and thank you

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GUEST SPEAKERS



Silvia Velez, Lifelong Learning Projects Officer, Melton City Council

Silvia Velez serves as the Lifelong Learning Projects Officer at Melton City Council, where she leads the annual Learning Festival. Her professional journey spans multiple disciplines: she began as a systems designer working on large federal government projects, later retrained as a visual artist and teacher, and spent a decade running her own business. Silvia now integrates these varied experiences into her community learning role within local government. Across all her roles, she has been driven by a passion for sustainability and climate justice, promoting these values through creative and inclusive practices.



Dr Keri Hopeward, Uni SA researcher, educator specialising in regenerative living beyond sustainability

Keri is a Senior Research Fellow on 'Living Lightly Locally: Smarter and Stronger through Citizen Science' and the Course Coordinator for Sustainable Engineering Practice with An De College in China and Sustainable Development: A Global Perspective at the University of South Australia (UniSA). She founded Dream Awake: Research Education and Design (DARED), a regenerative research and education consultancy dedicated to inspiring people to create change for a better world. Prior to this she coordinated Sustainable Development: A Global Perspective at UniSA. She holds a doctorate in Anthropology/Social Inquiry from the University of Adelaide. Keri has been working with the international 52 Climate Actions project since it was founded in 2018. She is a qualified 'Green Educator', 'Water Sensitive SA', 'Living Smart', 'Retrosurbia' and permaculture facilitator, as well as an experienced tertiary educator and community activist. She is also an Australian Red Cross 'Climate Ready Champion' and has been involved with organising large events in this space including the 'Climate Ready Forum' in 2019 and the inaugural 'Festival of Climate Action' in 2021.



Benita Parsons, Community Learning Leader, Libraries, City of Port Adelaide Enfield

Benita has worked in local government public libraries in Adelaide for 15+ years, much of that time coordinating programs for children, youth and adults. She sees public libraries as places that provide equitable access to information, learning opportunities, technology and social connection. Literacy skills and access to lifelong learning opportunities are vital for personal growth, professional skill development, entrepreneurship and active citizenship. Benita holds a Bachelor of Arts (Library & Information Management), and a certificate in Project Management. Her current role includes marketing and STEM and Makerspace programs. She is passionate about sustainability and supporting Reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

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