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Australian Government  
Department of Employment  
and Workplace Relations

# CONFERENCE GUIDE



# Supporting Students with Disability in VET

As part of the *Supporting Students with Disability in VET project*, the Australian Disability Clearinghouse on Education and Training has created a toolkit designed to support you and your organisation to implement inclusive practice.



The Supporting Students with Disability in VET Toolkit includes a range of resources that can be used at all stages of the student journey – from enrolment, engagement and student supports, through to reasonable adjustments, teaching and assessment. There are also resources that enable you to continuously improve your practice.



## Introductory Guide

Outlines the key requirements and applications of the DDA and DSE, and how to use the Supporting Students with Disability Toolkit resources.



## Guidelines for Inclusive Enrolment Practices

These guidelines and guidance notes focus on better enrolment practices and highlight the need to allocate resources and responsibilities to address the needs of students with disability.



## Practice Guides and Practice Illustrations

Key information and examples that demonstrate and explain positive approaches to supporting students with disability. The Practice Guides include accessible resources and training to build capability for RTOs staff, trainers & assessors.



## Templates and Supporting Resources

Templates to illustrate how you can evidence your practice, Self-Checks for RTOs, trainers and assessors and a handy glossary.



## Access Plans for Educators

A comprehensive and adaptable suite of professional development resources about what to do when you receive a student's Access Plan.

To find out more visit us at our stall







# WELCOME

On behalf of NCVER and our co-host RMIT University, welcome to the 32nd National Vocational Education and Training Research Conference 'No Frills'.

'No Frills' is a key part of NCVER's commitment to engage the VET community in research and strengthen research capacity and capability across the sector.

This year's theme, 'Skilling Australia's current and future workforce', will explore how the VET sector can foster resilience to meet skills demands during challenging times of change, with a focus on digital transformation, agile skill development, and skilling diverse workers and equity groups.

Over the next two days, we are offering over 40 presentations covering topics as varied as artificial intelligence in VET, attracting young women into apprenticeships, VET delivery in regional areas, workforce sustainability and demands, STEM careers, the impact of COVID-19 on the VET sector and young people, and more.

Importantly, it is *your* conference. We encourage you to take the opportunity to connect and share knowledge with this outstanding group of VET researchers and professionals.

We are thrilled to host the conference in-person once again, which has been made possible thanks to the generosity of our co-host and event sponsors. I would like to warmly thank them for their valued contribution.

We hope you enjoy the conference.

**Simon Walker**  
Managing Director  
National Centre for Vocational Education Research

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### STAY CONNECTED WITH FREE WIFI

Wi-Fi will be available during the conference with the following details:

Network: RMIT Guest Password: 656627

Thank you to the following organisations for contributing to the 32nd National Vocational Education and Training Research Conference 'No Frills'.

Conference co-hosts



Supported by



Australian Government  
Department of Employment  
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Conference dinner sponsor



Welcome Reception sponsor



Charles Sturt  
University

Event app sponsor



Conference bag sponsor



Keynote speaker sponsor



Tea break sponsor



Exhibitor sponsors



Promotional insert sponsors



# ABOUT THE CONFERENCE



## SKILLING AUSTRALIA'S CURRENT AND FUTURE WORKFORCE

The 32nd National Vocational Education and Training Research Conference 'No Frills' is co-hosted with RMIT University Melbourne City campus on 19-21 July 2023.

'No Frills' is a well-known annual national conference where researchers, practitioners, providers, government and industry representatives come together and share knowledge, ideas, insights and solutions surrounding Australia's VET sector.

The conference also provides valuable professional development opportunities through a program of hands-on, interactive pre-conference workshops incorporating activities on data and research analytics, and research practice.

The 2023 conference program will focus on *Skilling Australia's current and future workforce*.

### STAY CONNECTED



Follow us on twitter:  
**@NCVER**

Delegates are encouraged to tweet during the conference using the hashtag: **#NoFrills2023**

Please note our PR & Social Media Officer Chantal Deutrom will be taking photos and tweeting during presentations.

### FOR PRESENTERS



Presentations will be uploaded and saved under *surname, first name* on laptops in allocated rooms.

We ask that speakers check their presentation and audio-visual material before presenting. If you have any concerns, please speak with Alice Wilson or June Ingham (NCVER staff members) at the registration desk during the break preceding your presentation or at the beginning of each day.

### MOBILE CONFERENCE APP

proudly sponsored by COVE Training

This year we're bringing back the mobile conference app. Packed with features such as timetables, session reminders, maps, networking functions and more! The app will be your essential conference partner.

The app is available on the App Store and Google Play. Scan the QR code to the right or click the button to download to your device.

Event code: **nofrills2023**



# GENERAL INFORMATION

## Conference venue

Co-hosted with RMIT University, Melbourne City campus, the conference will be held in Melbourne at RMIT University Melbourne City campus (Storey Hall), 336-348 Swanston Street, Melbourne.

## Registration desk

The registration desk will be in the Foyer, Level 5, Building 16 (Storey Hall) RMIT University Melbourne City campus, 336-348 Swanston Street, Melbourne.

Opening times each day are:

Wednesday 19 July – 12:30pm

Thursday 20 July – 8:00am

Friday 21 July – 8:30am

## Pre-conference workshops

Professional development workshops will run concurrently on Wednesday 19 July. The workshops start at 1:30pm and will be held at RMIT University Melbourne City campus on level 7. Delegates who have pre-paid for the workshops will have their allocated workshop details on the back of their name badge.

## Drop-in data hub

Delegates interested in accessing data can speak to an NCVER data expert, one-on-one. This personalised service will provide delegates with data information from a basic introduction to VOCSTATS, to constructing tables for specific data, or exploring NCVER's range of data products and tools, we'll be happy to point you in the right direction.

We will also have a knowledgeable NCVER staff member on hand to help you navigate NCVER's free international research database, VOCEDplus, which contains over 95,000 Australian and international tertiary education research and statistical publications. The drop-in data hub will be located above the auditorium on level 5.

Time slots for these 'drop-in' sessions can be booked at the registration desk.

## Toilets

Toilets are located on levels 3, 4 & 6 of the Storey Hall Building. Access via stairs and lift.

## Delegate identification and security

All delegates will be given a name badge at registration. For security reasons, we ask that you wear your name badge at all times, which identifies you as a conference delegate. This name badge is also the official entrance pass to all conference sessions, morning and afternoon teas, lunches, the Welcome Reception and Conference Dinner (if pre-paid).

## NCVER team

The NCVER team is here to make your conference time rewarding and educational. If you have any questions, please go to the conference registration desk. See page 14 for photos of the NCVER team!

## Mobile phones

As a matter of courtesy, please turn off or silence your mobile phone during all sessions.

## Climate

Temperatures in Melbourne will be around 14°C, going down to 6°C at night.

Coat racks in the level 5 foyer will be available to store jackets/coats while sessions are running.

We strongly recommend you bring warm (layered) clothing and a coat, especially if you are coming to the Conference Dinner, as the heating in the dinner venue is minimal.

## Dress

Delegates may choose to wear comfortable smart casual clothing during the conference and social events.



## Parking

Car parking is available at [RMIT's commercial car park](#) in Building 91 (110 Victoria Street) and is independently managed by Care Park. The car park is open daily 6:30am to 10:00pm and is only a 4 minute walk to the Conference Dinner at the Old Melbourne Gaol.

If you prefer the flexibility of street parking, the City of Melbourne offers more than 3,000 parking bays throughout the central business district. Please be aware that these parking bays are subject to enforced parking restrictions.

Melbourne Central Train Station is only a 2 minute walk to RMIT University (Storey Hall).

## Taxi

Suburban Taxis: 13 10 08

13Cabs: 13 22 27

## Conference evaluation

We would appreciate your feedback. A survey will be emailed to you after the conference.

## Post-conference

Following the conference, presentation slides and papers (if supplied) will be available from VOCEDplus [voced.edu.au](http://voced.edu.au), the international tertiary education research database produced by NCVET.

An email notification will be sent to conference delegates once all presentations are uploaded.



# SOCIAL PROGRAM

## Welcome Reception

Delegates are invited to attend the Welcome Reception on Wednesday 19 July at 5:00pm-6:45pm in the Auditorium at RMIT University Melbourne City campus (Storey Hall), Building 16, 342 Swanston Street, Melbourne – Level 5. This provides a great opportunity for you to meet and network with other delegates. Drinks, canapes and light entertainment will be provided.

Attendance at the Welcome Reception is included in your conference registration fee. If you indicated you would not be attending during the registration process and now wish to attend, you must inform the conference organisers as soon as possible.

The Welcome Reception is proudly sponsored by **Charles Sturt University**.



## Conference Dinner

The Conference Dinner will be held at the Old Melbourne Gaol, 377 Russell Street, Melbourne on Thursday 20 July at 6.30pm. The night will kick off with pre-dinner drinks and light entertainment on the upper level. Delegates will then be treated to a delicious three-course dinner (alternate drop). The Conference Dinner provides the perfect opportunity to network with colleagues in a relaxed setting.

Completed in the mid 1800's, the Old Melbourne Gaol is constructed in bluestone and still contains the original cells and historic features. In these cells some of Australia's most notorious criminals were held, including the infamous bushranger Ned Kelly.

We are thrilled to have John Silvester, Victoria's most experienced crime reporter as our guest speaker.

John has covered the beat since the late 1970s. His work was adapted into the top rating *Underbelly* television series shown on Channel Nine and he has acted as presenter in a series of critically acclaimed television crime documentaries.

The Conference Dinner is available to delegates who booked and paid for the dinner with their conference registration. The **green** dot on your name tag denotes your registration for the dinner.

The dinner will have unallocated seating, with a few seats reserved for our co-host, sponsors and special guests. Kindly inform us of any dietary requirements, if not already provided.

Dress is smart casual. Please ensure you dress warmly as heating at the Old Melbourne Gaol is minimal.

The Conference Dinner is proudly sponsored by **Construction Training Fund**.



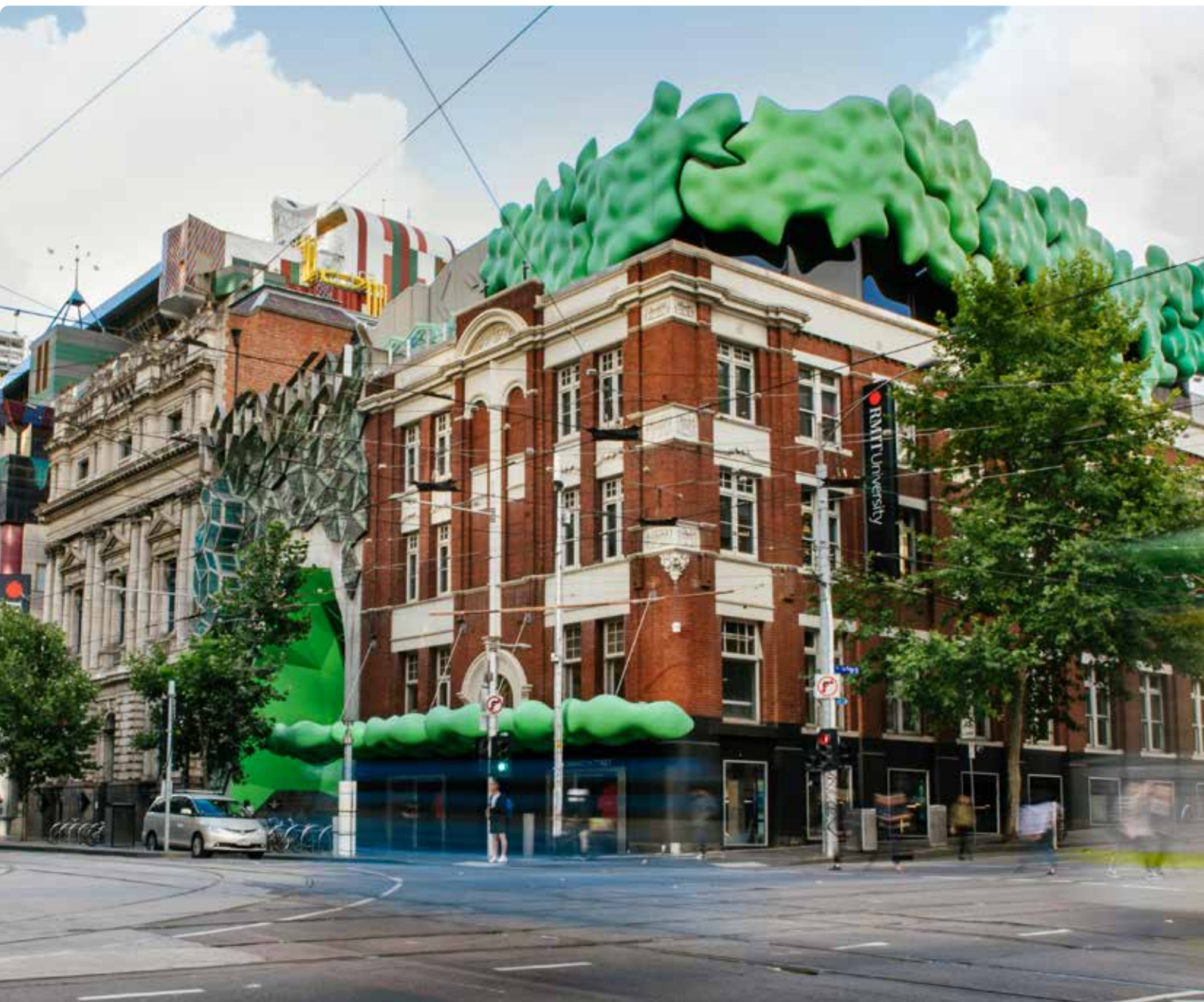
# ABOUT OUR CO-HOST



RMIT University is the proud co-host of the 32nd National Vocational Education and Training Research Conference 'No Frills'.

RMIT is a multi-sector university of technology, design and enterprise, with 96,277 students and close to 10,000 staff globally. The University's mission is to help shape the world through research, innovation and engagement, and to create transformative experiences for students to prepare them for life and work.

Postgraduate, undergraduate, vocational education, foundation studies and online programs offer students a variety of work relevant pathways.



# OUR KEYNOTES



## **The Hon Brendan O'Connor MP Minister for Skills and Training, Federal Member for Gordon**

The Hon Brendan O'Connor MP is the Minister for Skills and Training, a Cabinet position in the Albanese Labor Government.

A belief in the benefits of secure employment and quality education and training, as well as a commitment to fairness and equal opportunity, led Mr O'Connor to commence his career in a union.

He represented the interests of Victorian workers before becoming Assistant National Secretary of the Australian Services Union (ASU).

He was elected to parliament in 2001 and has since headed several portfolios.

As Minister for Employment Participation, he overhauled the employment services system, streamlining the process to provide a personalised service called Job Services Australia.

As Minister for Home Affairs, one of his many noteworthy achievements includes reforming Australia's anti-dumping regime to encourage fairer and equitable business practices.

Mr O'Connor went on to serve as Minister for Small Business at Cabinet level, the first time in over ten years that the portfolio had been elevated to such a level. Mr O'Connor worked to cut red tape and support growth and jobs through tax reform, including the \$6500 Instant Asset Write-off to assist Australia's 2.7 million small businesses to improve their cash flows and the introduction of Australia's first Small Business Commissioner.

In 2013, Mr O'Connor was elevated to Minister for Immigration and Citizenship and finished the term as Minister for Employment, Skills and Training.

From 2013 – 2019, Mr O'Connor was appointed Shadow Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations. In 2019, he was appointed Shadow Minister for Employment and Industry, Science, and Small and Family Business as a member of Anthony Albanese's Labor frontbench team and served as Shadow Minister for Defence from January 2021 until Labor won the 2022 election.



## **Professor Peter Dawkins AO Interim Director, Jobs and Skills Australia**

Professor Peter Dawkins AO was appointed the interim Director of Jobs and Skills Australia in December 2022. In this role he is directly accountable to the Minister for Skills and Training, the Hon Brendan O'Connor MP.

Peter is an Emeritus Professor of Economics at the Mitchell Institute for Education and Health Policy at Victoria University, where he was the Vice-Chancellor and President from 2011 until 2020.

His career has spanned academia and the public service. His central area of expertise as an economist is in labour market economics, with his policy research and advice especially focussed on labour markets, education and training.

Peter has a passion for the power of education and training to transform lives and for evidence-based economic and social policy.



**Ms Danielle Wood**  
**Chief Executive Officer, Grattan Institute**

Danielle Wood heads a team of leading policy thinkers, researching and advocating policy to improve the lives of Australians.

Danielle also leads Grattan's Budgets and Government Program and has published extensively on economic reform priorities, budgets, tax reform, women's workforce participation, generational inequality and reforming political institutions. She is a sought-after media commentator and speaker on policy issues.

Danielle was previously Principal Economist and Director of Merger investigations at the ACCC, a Senior Economist at NERA Economic Consulting and Senior Research Economist the Productivity Commission. She holds an Honours degree in Economics from the University of Adelaide

and two Masters degrees, one in Economics and one in Competition Law, from the University of Melbourne.

Danielle is a member of the Australian Government's Women's Economic Equality Taskforce, the Parliamentary Budget Office Expert Advisory Committee and the Commonwealth Bank CEO Advisory Council.

Danielle is an Honorary Fellow and former President of the Economic Society of Australia and a Research Fellow of the Women's Leadership Institute. She is also a passionate advocate for women in economics and was the co-founder and first Chair of the Women in Economics Network.



**Mr John Silvester**  
**Award-winning crime journalist**

John Silvester is Victoria's most experienced crime reporter and has covered the beat since the late 1970s.

He has written, edited and published crime books that have sold more than 1 million copies in Australia and has won industry awards for print, radio, television and on-line reporting.

His work was adapted into the top rating Underbelly television series shown on Channel Nine and he has acted as presenter in a series of critically acclaimed television crime documentaries.

He won the 2007 Graham Perkin Australian Journalist of the Year and was highly commended in the same award in 1998 and 2014.

In 2008 he was judged the Victoria Law Foundation Legal Reporter of the Year.

He has won nine Melbourne Press Club Quill awards, ten Victorian Law Foundation Awards, four Walkley Awards, a Ned Kelly Award for true crime writing and a Ned Kelly lifetime achievement award.

He presented the ABC documentary *Trigger Point*, an in depth examination of police shootings in Victoria and *Conviction*, the Logie winning ABC special on the murder of Jill Meagher.

In 2018 he was elevated to the Australian Journalism Hall of Fame.

He is the senior crime reporter for The Age and writes the Walkley Award winning Naked City column. He appears weekly on 3AW as crime commentator Sly of the Underworld. He has given evidence in Royal Commissions on crime and corruption.



# OUR PANELISTS



## **Moderator**

### **Dr Joy de Leo**

#### **Research and Data Analytics Manager, NCVET**

Joy has worked in education for over 40 years in both public and private sectors, involved in policy, curriculum development, research, management, advocacy, and teaching in the school and tertiary education sector.

She manages a team of NCVET researchers and data analysts to deliver the National VET research and advanced analytics programs, which integrate quantitative with qualitative research with advanced analytics and data linkages with other agencies, to inform policy development for Senior Skills Officials.



## **Mr Craig Robertson**

### **Chief Executive Officer, Victorian Skills Authority**

Craig Robertson is the CEO of the Victorian Skills Authority. The authority is tasked by the Victorian Government to plan for post school education and training to support a growing economy and good jobs for Victorians.

Previously, Craig was the CEO of TAFE Directors Australia, representing the TAFE model nationally and internationally. Craig has worked for over 30 years with the Commonwealth Government in areas of school funding, employment policy and most aspects of tertiary education and in 2015 and 2016 worked in the Victorian Government.

Craig holds an Executive Masters in Public Administration and Bachelor of Education (Primary).



## **Ms Megan Lilly**

### **Executive Director, Centre for Education & Training, Australian Industry Group**

Megan has an enduring commitment to research, policy and advocacy in education and training, especially in relation to work. In leading the work of the Centre, Megan represents member companies on a diverse number of international, national, and state based committees, councils and boards.

Megan is a strong advocate for reform and has been involved in key national skills reforms over many years. Megan is firm in the belief of the capacity of education and training to transform lives.



**Ms Mish Eastman**  
**Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Vocational Education)**  
**and Vice President, RMIT University**

Mish Eastman is responsible for developing and leading a renewed vision and strategic direction for Vocational Education as Deputy Vice-Chancellor Vocational Education at RMIT. Since joining RMIT, this has included establishing the new College of Vocational Education and the development of a 5-year strategic roadmap for vocational and applied learning.

She is passionate about gender diversity in all aspects of education and creating space for women in non-traditional roles, continuously providing diverse opportunities and support as part of her leadership style. An advocate for creating a safe and respectful community, Mish is also co-chair of RMIT's Vice-Chancellor's Advisory Group on Gender-based Violence Prevention.

An experienced education and health leader, Mish has strong expertise in identifying and creating new models of education and training in collaboration with industry, enhancing tertiary pathways, and understanding how to create educational and employment success for learners. Beginning her career as a Registered Nurse before moving into educational leadership roles, has given Mish a deep knowledge and passion for Vocational Education.

She has previously held positions with TAFE Tasmania, Tasmanian Polytechnic and Swinburne University of Technology, providing strategic and operational leadership of teaching and learning programs in pathways and Vocational Education.



**Simon Walker**  
**Managing Director, NCVET**

Simon began his career in the public sector as a financial analyst for Central TAFE in Western Australia after starting his career in the private sector. Simon joined the WA Department of Training in 1997 and has since worked in a variety of senior executive roles with a focus on VET sector planning, policy and resourcing.

Simon represented Western Australia on the national Senior Skills Officials Network (SSON) and the national Ministerial Advisory Council on Skilled Migration (MACSM) and was an ex-officio representative on the Western Australian State Training Board. Simon was also the state and territory government representative on the inaugural Australian Industry Skills Committee (AISC).

Simon joined the NCVET board as a director in 2015 and took up the position of Managing Director of the NCVET in October 2018.

# NCVER STAFF



**Upekha Andrahannadi**  
Research Officer



**Michelle Circelli**  
Team Leader, Research  
and Data Analytics



**Joy de Leo**  
Manager, Research  
and Data Analytics



**Chantal Deutrom**  
Public Relations and  
Social Media Officer



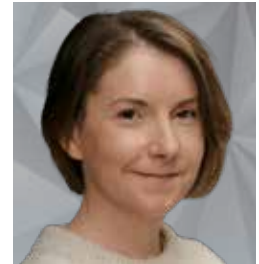
**Cameron Forrest**  
Research Officer



**Tracy Gamlin**  
Research Librarian



**Tabatha Griffin**  
Senior Research  
Officer



**Michelle Hall**  
Senior Data Analyst



**June Ingham**  
Team Leader,  
Communications and Events



**Melinda Lees**  
Team Leader, Research  
and Data Analytics



**Deanne Loan**  
Manager, Digital Publishing  
and Communications



**Nicole O'Malley**  
Manager, Data Services  
and Reporting



**Ronnie Semo**  
Senior Research  
Officer



**Martin Smolka**  
Team Leader, Data  
Services and Reporting



**Daniella Trimboli**  
Research Officer



**Joanne Waugh**  
Senior Research  
Officer



**Alice Wilson**  
Events and Marketing  
Officer



## NCVER Board



**Ruth Shean AO**  
Chair



**Lynne Austin**  
Director



**Kevin Bates**  
Director



**Bec Curtain**  
Director



**Peter Daly**  
Director



**Suresh Rao**  
Director



**Chloe Read**  
Director



**Barry Sandison**  
Director



**Simon Walker**  
Managing Director

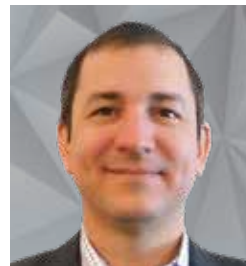
## NCVER Executive



**Simon Walker**  
Managing Director



**Dr Mette Creaser**  
General Manager, Research,  
Analytics and Reporting



**Mark Williams**  
General Manager, Data  
Transformation and  
Technology (CIO)



**Phil Loveder**  
Executive Manager,  
Inform and Engage



**Peter Brass**  
Finance and Governance  
Manager



**Ms Linda Eldridge**  
HR and Business  
Services Manager

# THE EXHIBITORS



The Australian Disability Clearinghouse on Education and Training (ADCET) is Australia's leading resource on disability in tertiary education for disability practitioners, educators and students. ADCET leads systemic change through sector-led and evidence-based collaborations which provide strategic and practical supports to improve outcomes for students with disability in post-secondary education.



Audit Express is an audit and advisory firm that provides solutions for assurance, compliance, governance, and risk management to a range of industry sectors.

We focus on building the capability within teams we work with. We achieve this by building systems for continuous improvement, helping organisations to recognise good governance, and implementing controls in their business.

We are an Australian-owned and operated firm with a global reach. Our head office is located in Melbourne, with a distributed workforce, our team and partners located across the globe.



With 25 years of experience in digital learning within vocational education, Didasko Learning Resources is passionate about making a difference to students' lives. With a combination of interactive multimedia, simulated activities, compliant assessments, and a purpose-built Learning Management System, Didasko is focused on delivering the best possible online learning experience.



Australia's Complete RTO Management & Training Solution. Streamline your training systems with our integrated LMS and SMS, automating the student journey from enrolment to completion. Access a vast catalogue of training materials and e-Learning resources to elevate your RTO training delivery and management—everything you need in one solution.



The VET Development Centre (VDC) specialises in providing continuing professional learning for the VET workforce across Australia. There is no membership fee to utilise VDC's services, and highly competitive fees for enrolment in individual training events that are not government funded or sponsored by VDC.

**Additional promotion:**

VDC-Learn offers VET focussed professional learning on demand through eLearns and webinar recordings. See VDC website for further details: <https://vdc.edu.au/vdc-learn>



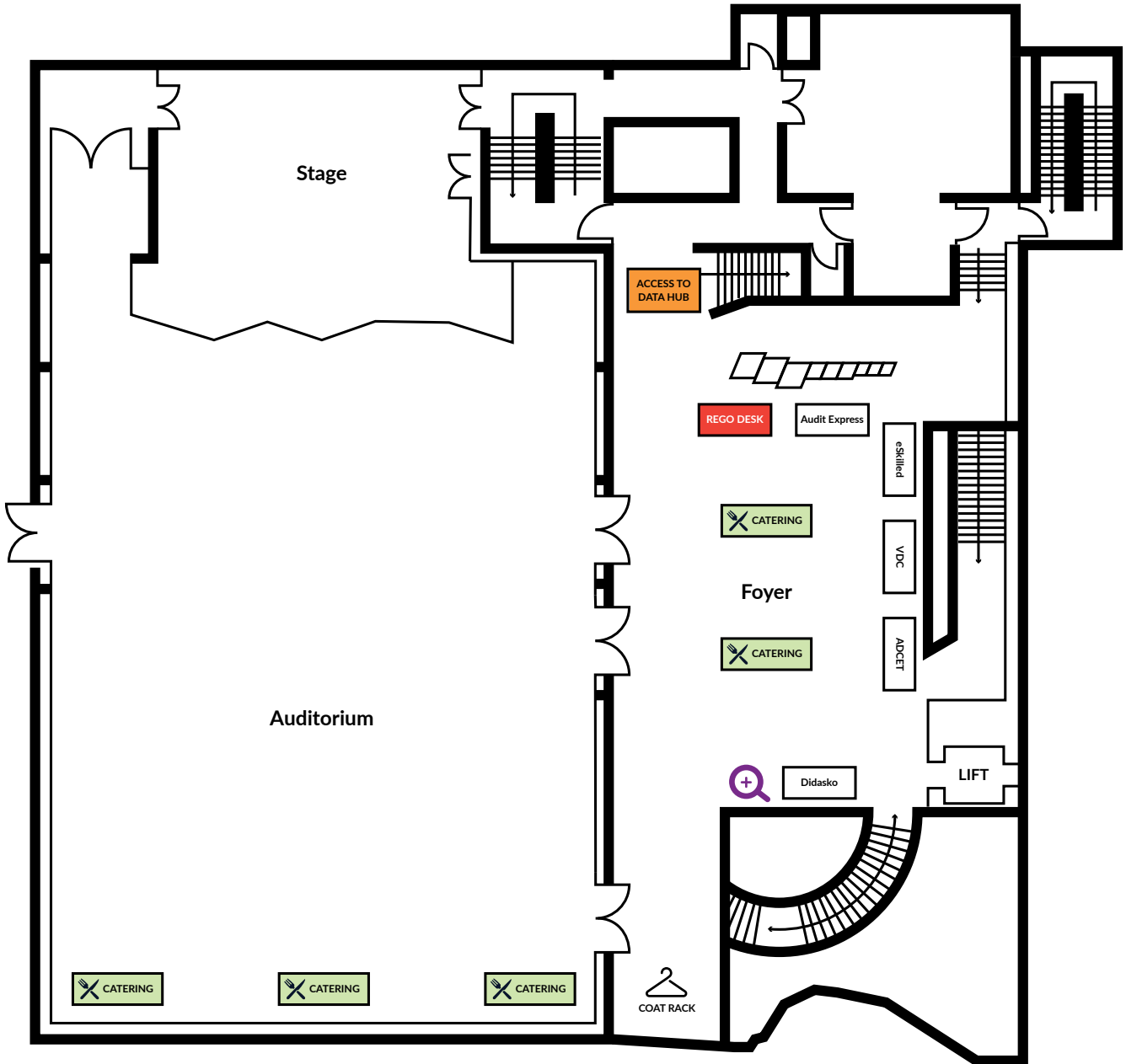
Come and meet the team behind VOCEDplus and find out what VOCEDplus has to offer, including a database of over 95,000 Australian and international tertiary education research publications and value added products such as the VET Knowledge Bank, the Pod Network, the Glossary of VET, 'Focus on' special topic pages and the new VET Practitioner Resource. If you have any information needs, ask about the expert research and reference services on offer.



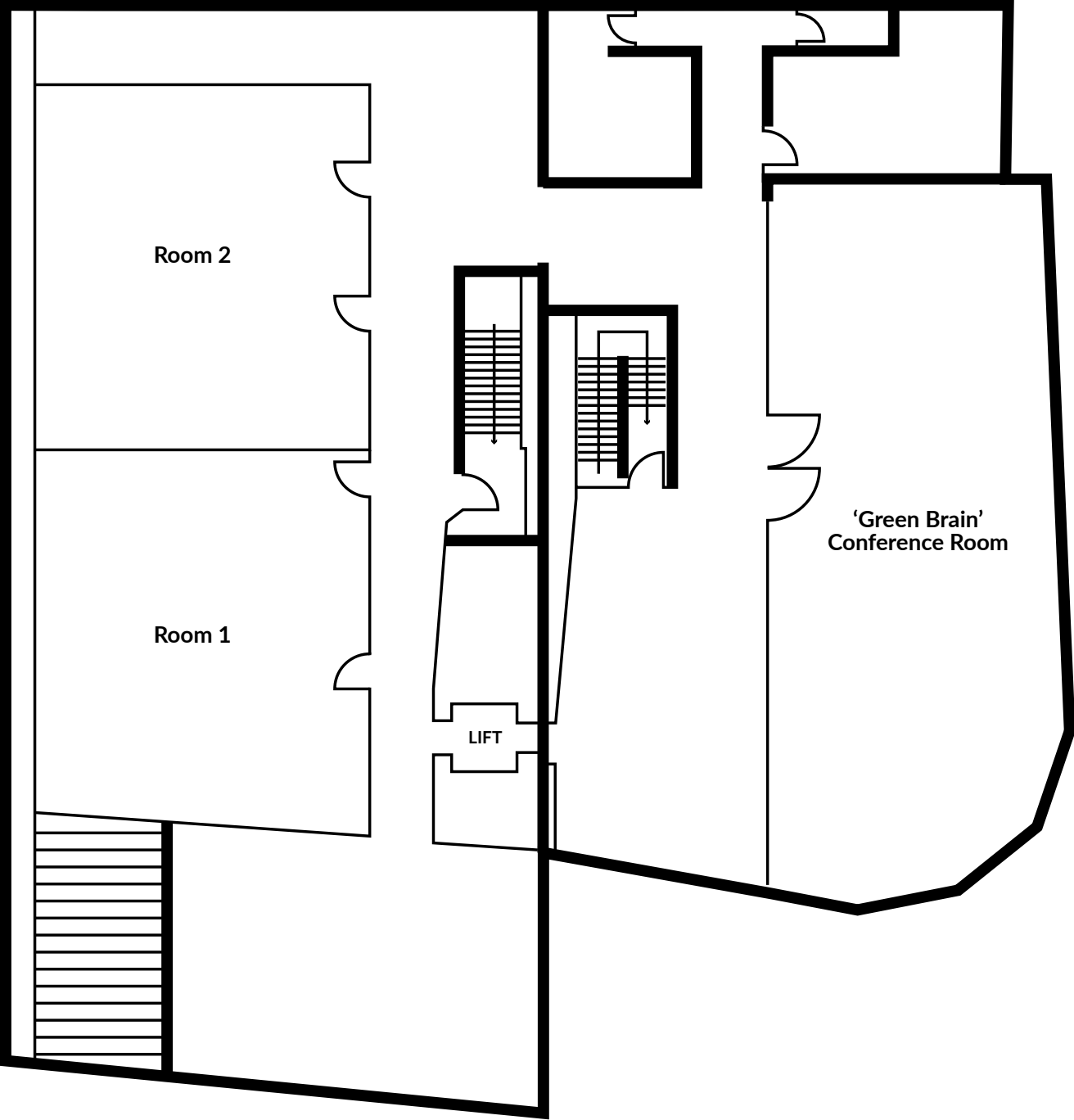


# RMIT UNIVERSITY MAPS

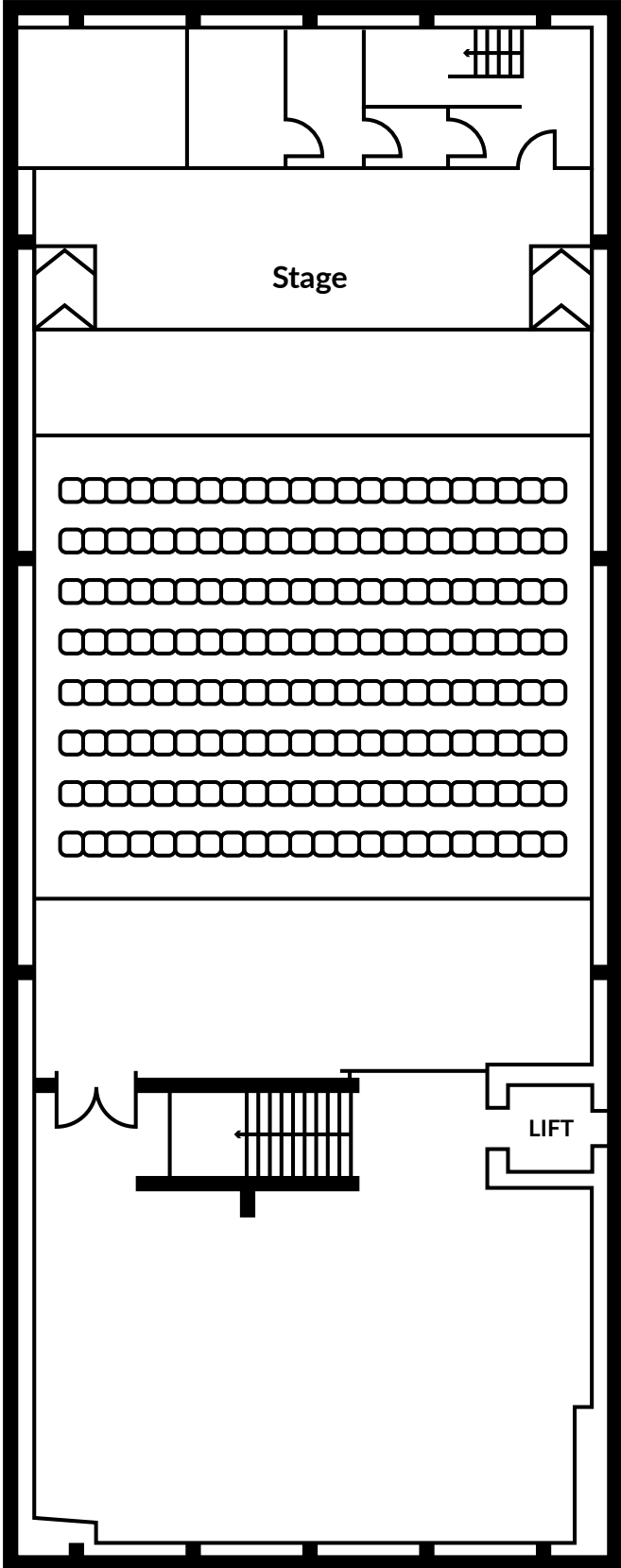
## Level 5 Foyer and Auditorium



**Level 7 'Green Brain' and Rooms 1 and 2**



# Level 1 Lecture Theatre (Underground)

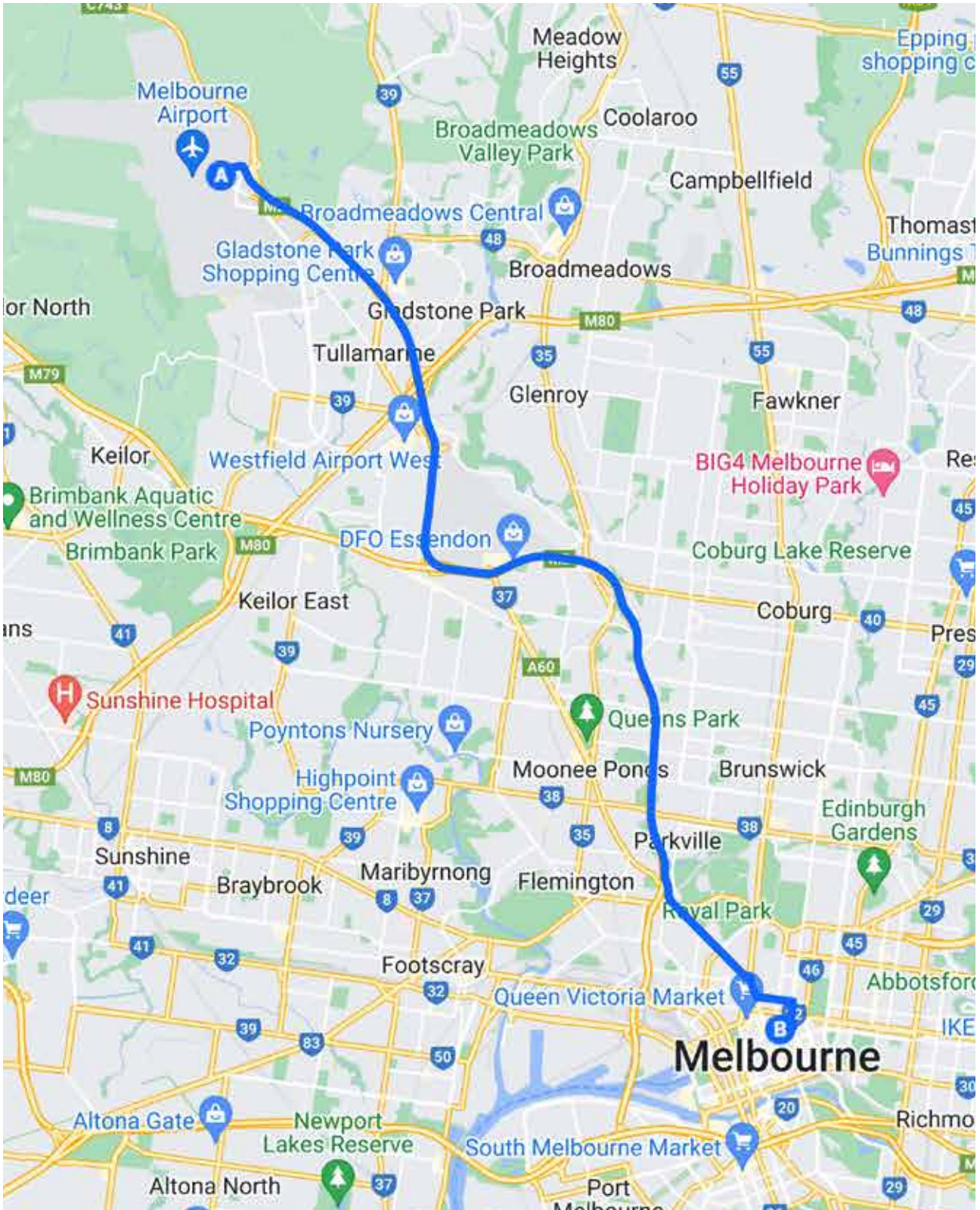




# GETTING THERE

The conference will be held at **RMIT University Melbourne City campus** (Storey Hall), Building 16, 342 Swanston Street, Melbourne - Level 5.

The venue is approximately 30 minutes' drive from Melbourne Tullamarine Airport.



# CONFERENCE PROGRAM

## CONFERENCE DAY ONE Wednesday 19 July 2023

12:30 **Registration open** RMIT University Melbourne City campus (Storey Hall), Building 16, 342 Swanston Street, Melbourne - Level 5

### PRE-CONFERENCE PD WORKSHOPS

13:30

1

#### 'GREEN BRAIN'

##### Introduction to qualitative research methodologies in VET

What value can qualitative research add in VET? This workshop is for people curious about using qualitative research to answer VET research questions.

The presenters will provide an introduction to qualitative research designs, data collection methods, and analysis. The workshop will also cover reliability and validity strategies and how to communicate qualitative research findings.

The value of qualitative research will be discussed, including ideas for promoting the benefits of qualitative research in a world where quantitative methods and results dominate.

Participants will be guided through a practical activity using thematic analysis.

*Joanne Waugh, Upekha Andrahannadi, NCVER  
& Jason Skues, Swinburne University of Technology*

2

#### ROOM 1

##### An introduction to the Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth: data user workshop

For close to 30 years the Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth (LSAY) has provided researchers, policy makers and education practitioners with a valuable resource for capturing the pathways of young people as they make their way from school to post-school education and training and into the workforce. To date, more than 60,000 young people have participated in LSAY across six distinct cohorts providing a vast evidence base for exploring youth transitions over the decades.

LSAY covers topics relating to education, employment, living arrangements and wellbeing. The surveys also include information that isn't captured by administrative data sources, for example attitudes to school, barriers to study and work, life satisfaction and soft skills.

This workshop will introduce participants to LSAY and the many resources available to help use and understand the data and will include:

- an introduction to the LSAY cohorts
- survey design and methodology
- major topics and questionnaire content
- data tools and resources
- how to access the data.

The workshop will be run by members of the LSAY team from the NCVER and will include a combination of presentations and demonstrations.

*Ronnie Semo, NCVER*

15:00

BREAK

15:30

3

#### ROOM 2

##### VOCEDplus: same great content, great new look

VOCEDplus, NCVER's international VET research database, has recently had a refresh.

Join us for this virtual tour to see what looks different, learn about new ways to search, and refine your searches to find what you need.

Get the lowdown on all the new resource types in our latest continuous improvement project to make finding the information you need easier and quicker.

If you have never heard of VOCEDplus, this is a must-do workshop. And if you have used VOCEDplus, this is an excellent opportunity to learn more about what it has to offer.

*Tracy Gamlin, NCVER*

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#### 'GREEN BRAIN'

##### Maximising value from NCVER's VET data

Are you interested in learning how to access and use our data tools? Then come join our interactive workshop! We'll guide you on how to find and access our resources, and most importantly, how to utilise them to support your data needs.

Last year, NCVER amassed 3.8 billion student and training data records, both current and historical. These records are interrogated, analysed, and utilised for reporting purposes across our 17 statistical publications.

Our goal is to help you get the most out of our vast collection of valuable information.

We're also excited to hear from you! During the workshop, we'll dedicate time to an interactive Q&A session where we'll answer your questions about NCVER data.

Don't miss out on this fantastic opportunity! After you register, we'll contact you to invite your questions so that we can ensure your topic of interest is covered.

If you have any questions about our data or statistics and where to find them, then this is the workshop for you!

*Nicole O'Malley & Martin Smolka, NCVER*

17:00

WORKSHOPS CONCLUDE

17:00

**WELCOME RECEPTION:** Auditorium, RMIT University Melbourne City campus (Storey Hall), Building 16, 342 Swanston Street, Melbourne - Level 5

18:45

WELCOME RECEPTION CONCLUDES

## CONFERENCE DAY TWO Thursday 20 July 2023

8:00	<b>Registration &amp; exhibition open</b> RMIT University Melbourne City campus (Storey Hall), Building 16, 342 Swanston Street, Melbourne - Level 5
9:00	<b>Welcome to country:</b> Wurundjeri Elder Tony Garvey
9:05	<b>Ministerial address:</b> The Hon Brendan O'Connor MP, Minister for Skills and Training (pre-recorded address)
9:20	<b>NCVER welcome address:</b> Simon Walker, Managing Director, NCVER
9:30	<b>Co-host welcome address:</b> Mish Eastman, Deputy Vice Chancellor (Vocational Education) & Vice-President, RMIT
9:45	<b>OPENING KEYNOTE ADDRESS, SPONSORED BY ITECA:</b> Professor Peter Dawkins AO, Interim Director, Jobs and Skills Australia <b>Jobs and Skills Australia and the VET sector</b> Jobs and Skills Australia (JSA) advises on Australia's skills needs and the adequacy of the skills system. This presentation will outline JSA's role and progress, emphasising the importance of engagement with partners. It will discuss current VET system pressures, future trends, and initiatives such as the National Jobs and Skills Roadmap, the Clean Energy Capacity Study and the VET National Data Asset.
10:30	<b>MORNING TEA, SPONSORED BY AVETRA</b>
11:00	<b>DISCUSSION PANEL: <i>Skilling Australia's current and future workforce</i></b> Moderator: Joy de Leo, <i>Research &amp; Data Analytics Manager, NCVER</i> Simon Walker, <i>NCVER</i> ; Craig Robertson, <i>Victorian Skills Authority</i> ; Megan Lilly, <i>Centre for Education &amp; Training, The Australian Industry Group</i> & Mish Eastman, <i>RMIT University</i>
12:30	<b>LUNCH</b>

### CONCURRENT SESSIONS - DAY 1

	ROOM 1 (LEVEL 7)	AUDITORIUM (LEVEL 5)	'GREEN BRAIN' (LEVEL 7)	ROOM 2 (LEVEL 7)	LECTURE THEATRE (LEVEL 1)
13:30	<b>WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT</b> <b>Respect &amp; equality: working with TAFE to prevent violence against women</b> Sehar Gupta, <i>Our Watch</i>	<b>SKILLS</b> <b>Measuring the benefits of foundation skills training in adult community education: evidence, gaps, challenges</b> Anne Walstab & Esther Doecke, <i>Victoria University</i>	<b>PRACTICE</b> <b>Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on VET</b> Melinda Lees & Daniella Trimboli, <i>NCVER</i>	<b>APPRENTICES &amp; TRAINEES</b> <b>Attracting more young women into apprenticeships: listening to their own voices</b> Christina Scott-Young, <i>RMIT University</i>	<b>TEACHING &amp; LEARNING</b> <b>Bringing the learning journey to life</b> Carolyn Smith & Jessica Askew, <i>RMIT University</i>
14:15	<b>WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT</b> <b>Planning for the future sustainability of the health workforce through VET education to employment pathways</b> Vicky Meyer, <i>CheckUP Australia</i> & Toni Kely-Brown, <i>Queensland Health</i>	<b>SKILLS</b> <b>So many frameworks, so little time: a cross-sector approach to understanding digital capability frameworks</b> Anitza Geneve, <i>TAFE Queensland</i>	<b>PRACTICE</b> <b>Social and emotional learning for VET (in the Australian context)</b> Joe Pagnoccolo, <i>Holmesglen Institute</i>	<b>APPRENTICES &amp; TRAINEES</b> <b>Wellbeing, diversity, and decent work: skilling young people in traineeships for Australia's construction industry</b> Seth Brown, <i>RMIT University</i>	<b>TEACHING &amp; LEARNING</b> <b>Structuring lessons to engage learners in different modalities of teaching and learning</b> Fiona Wahr, <i>Melbourne Polytechnic</i>
15:00	<b>AFTERNOON TEA</b>				
15:30	<b>INDUSTRY</b> <b>Partnering with industry to skill the agricultural workforce of the future</b> Julie White, <i>Tocal College, NSW Department of Primary Industries</i>	<b>ACCESS &amp; EQUITY</b> <b>Supporting students with disability in VET</b> Darlene McLennan & Gabrielle O'Brien, <i>ADCET</i>	<b>POLICY</b> <b>Training of VET teachers and trainers: an absence of governance?</b> Erica Smith, <i>Federation University</i>	<b>YOUTH</b> <b>Treading water: effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on youth transitions</b> Cameron Forrest, <i>NCVER</i>	<b>EMPLOYMENT</b> <b>Putting the spotlight on educational and industry currency to support and deliver future skill needs</b> Julia Makin, <i>RMIT University</i>
16:15	<b>INDUSTRY</b> <b>TAFE NSW Industry Innovation: cultivating effective skilling ecosystems in healthcare and manufacturing industries</b> Peter Schreiner, Alison McDonald & Nerida Volker, <i>TAFE NSW</i>	<b>ACCESS &amp; EQUITY</b> <b>Outreach in action: adult and community education learner outreach following COVID-19 and natural disasters</b> Evelyn Goodwin, <i>Community Colleges Australia</i>	<b>POLICY</b> <b>Beyond the standard: motivators of high performing RTOs</b> Joanne Waugh, <i>NCVER</i>	<b>YOUTH</b> <b>Where's the front door? An investigation into workforce entry points within the construction and infrastructure sector</b> Kylie Taffard, <i>ConCOVE</i>	<b>EMPLOYMENT</b> <b>Why don't young people want to pursue careers in retail and hospitality?</b> Darryn Snell, <i>RMIT University</i>

### 17:00 CONCURRENT SESSIONS CONCLUDE

18:30 **CONFERENCE DINNER:** Old Melbourne Gaol, 377 Russell Street, Melbourne  
Dinner speaker: John Silvester, *Award-winning crime journalist*

### 22:30 CONFERENCE DINNER CONCLUDES



## CONFERENCE DAY THREE Friday 21 July 2023

8:30 **Registration & exhibition open** RMIT University Melbourne City campus (Storey Hall), Building 16, 342 Swanston Street, Melbourne - Level 5

9:00 **Welcome**

9:05 **KEYNOTE ADDRESS: Danielle Wood, Chief Executive Officer, Grattan Institute**

### The changing world of work: challenges and opportunities for the VET sector

The Australian economy and the world of work is changing. In this presentation, Danielle will get behind the big economic and labour market trends. She will talk about what the VET sector can do to set Australia up for success through training future workers in growth areas like digital, care and the clean economy.

## CONCURRENT SESSIONS - DAY 2

	ROOM 2 (LEVEL 7)	AUDITORIUM (LEVEL 5)	ROOM 1 (LEVEL 7)	'GREEN BRAIN' (LEVEL 7)
10:00	<b>SKILLS</b> <b>Future skills: advancing understanding of skill needs in the Victorian economy</b> Hiba Molaeb & Simon Parker, Victorian Skills Authority	<b>PATHWAYS</b> <b>Longitudinal analysis of student training activity in VET</b> Michelle Hall & Melinda Lees, NCVET	<b>INDIGENOUS</b> <b>Deadly health training</b> Janine Oldfield, Flinders University	<b>TEACHING &amp; LEARNING</b> <b>TED and TEL at TAFE SA</b> Marina Borrello, TAFE SA
10:45	<b>MORNING TEA</b>			
11:15	<b>INTERNATIONAL</b> <b>International VET students: the COVID-19 recovery</b> Steve Nerlich, Australian Government Department of Education	<b>PATHWAYS</b> <b>Accelerating veteran pathways with VET</b> Michael Bassham & Julie Pisano, TAFE SA, Eric Parnis, Veterans SA, & Garry Hargreaves, TAFE Queensland	<b>INDIGENOUS</b> <b>Contextualisation of VET to pathway disadvantaged groups into employment</b> Hinemoa Priest and Susan Luke, Te Runanganui o Te Ati Awa/Te Pukenga trading as Whitireia and WeTeC	<b>TEACHING &amp; LEARNING</b> <b>Best practice blended learning for disadvantaged VET learners</b> Melanie Kyle, RMIT University
12:00	<b>INTERNATIONAL</b> <b>Forging dynamic capabilities of training providers for the development of a resilient workforce (pre-recorded session)</b> Zan Chen, Institute for Adult Learning, Singapore University of Social Sciences	<b>PATHWAYS</b> <b>School career development practitioners and the future of VET STEM careers</b> Melanie Evangelista, RMIT University	<b>INDIGENOUS</b> <b>Client diversity and educational practitioner pedagogical choices</b> Rachel Leigh Taylor, NT Government	<b>TEACHING &amp; LEARNING</b> <b>Harnessing symbiotic relationships between the adult learner, the LMS, and the VET practitioner</b> Sarah Sabell, The College for Adult Learning
12:45	<b>LUNCH</b>			
13:45	<b>INTERNATIONAL</b> <b>He Hunga Hanga Matou - building people through work-based learning</b> Greg Durkin, BCITO Pukenga	<b>DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY</b> <b>The modernisation of building construction: the future of work and training in the 'digital age'</b> Henry Pook, Holmesglen Institute	<b>ACCESS &amp; EQUITY</b> <b>VET delivery in regional, rural and remote Australia: barriers and enablers</b> Tabatha Griffin, NCVET	<b>WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT</b> <b>Skilling for the green transition: reframing the role of Australia's VET system for climate and environmental action</b> David Longley, Brotherhood of St Laurence
14:30	<b>POLICY</b> <b>Queensland Workforce Strategy 2022-2032: a holistic approach to strengthening Queensland's current and future workforce</b> Brett Hall, Department of Employment, Small Business and Training (Qld)	<b>DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY</b> <b>Artificial intelligence ChatGPT in VET education</b> Olivija Komadina, TAFE Queensland	<b>ACCESS &amp; EQUITY</b> <b>Impact of stereotyping on the advice given to young women interested in the construction trades</b> Kylie Taffard, ConCOVE	<b>WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT</b> <b>How can we build a workforce of teacher-qualified VET practitioners for Australian secondary schools?</b> Karen O'Reilly-Briggs, Box Hill Institute
15:15	<b>CLOSING REMARKS</b>			
15:30	<b>CONFERENCE CONCLUDES</b>			

\*Speakers and presentations are subject to change

# ABSTRACTS

Listed in alphabetical order of presenter surname



## SKILLING AUSTRALIA'S CURRENT AND FUTURE WORKFORCE

## Accelerating veteran pathways with VET

**Michael Bassham and Julie Pisano, TAFE SA**

**Eric Parnis, Veterans SA**

**Garry Hargreaves, TAFE Queensland**

Did you know each year across Australia over 7,500 veterans transition out of the ADF? Are veterans a 'hidden workforce' being overlooked for jobs due to difficulties in translating their military skills?

Australia faces a significant challenge in assisting Defence Force members transition from military to civilian life. While the Australian Defence Force (ADF) and national organisations provide ample support, it is widely acknowledged that such a transition can be problematic for members. For instance, with over 200 job roles in the ADF, the translation of military skills and qualifications into a civilian context presents a barrier to civilian engagement. Additionally, partners and families of ADF members face their own unique workforce and skilling challenges associated with frequent postings and career breaks.

TAFE institutes nationally, hold important roles to accelerate pathways within Vocational Education and Training (VET) for veterans seeking to upskill and reskill, get recognition of prior learning or start a new career.

TAFE SA has recently launched its Veterans Program (STEP), educated and supported by TAFE Queensland who have longer experience working with this cohort, and underpinned by significant engagement with government (such as Veterans SA), ex-service organisations. A feature of the TAFE SA veteran offering is of capacity building – upskilling staff to understand the unique needs of the veteran community and providing targeted wrap-around services to support their skilling opportunities.

Lessons have been learnt along the way, but what has been consistent, is the meaningful engagement and commitment by those supporting this important initiative for veterans and their families who are directly impacted. We will discuss the development of the program, share our experiences with strategies currently being implemented to support veterans and their families.



## TED and TEL at TAFE SA

**Marina Borrello**

TAFE SA

TAFE SA has applied learnings from the COVID pandemic and responded to rapid shifts in technology and the desire to attract, engage and retain learners, to develop an intertwined response of technology enhanced learning (TEL) and technology enhanced delivery (TED).

The presentation will demonstrate how educators use and apply resources from the TAFE SA Digital Toolkit to plan, design and develop TEL and TED at levels that best suit the generational diversity represented in their student cohorts.

Six (6) TED levels provide step-by-step instruction to building contemporary learning experiences in the TAFE SA LMS, 'LEARN'. TED levels provide a wide range of TEL options from virtual/ augmented reality to online presentations.

The Digital Toolkit and all resources in it are developed based on research and constructivist learning theories. Pedagogy and pedagogical applications are embedded with universal design for learning practices and approaches that support the development of 21st century skills.

The presentation will share comparative data between courses developed with and without the Digital Toolkit. Findings based on the data show higher student participation and satisfaction rates and decreased attrition rates for TEL and TED-designed courses.

TAFE SA has changed, not only because of the pandemic, but because we recognise that learners need to be ready and skilled for a world where technology is changing at a rapid pace. Technical skills need to sit alongside digital skills. Learners need to be fluent and competent in both the real and the digitally enabled worlds.

Technology enhanced learning is the new reality. Educators need to be supported and resourced in technology enhanced delivery to ensure graduates have established foundations for success at both working and learning.

## Wellbeing, diversity, and decent work: skilling young people in traineeships for Australia's construction industry

**Seth Brown**, *RMIT University*

**Peter Rushbrook**, *Charles Sturt University*

Australia's construction industry accounts for almost 1.1 million workers ranging from unskilled to professional positions and 16.6% (394,575) of all businesses. Apart from economic benefits, the industry also contributes to mitigating social inequality through targeted training programs, the direct employment of disadvantaged people, and the engagement of workers from social and First Nations enterprises.

Significant challenges have recently arisen that threaten the industry's future viability, based particularly on the effects of an industry-wide boom and bust building cycle causing long-term unsustainable financial outcomes and consequent business failures. The continuation of the historical male predominance in the industry workforce has additionally acted as a constraint on attracting women to the sector, further threatening its social diversity objectives. Sections of the industry acknowledge that excessive working hours and ongoing dangerous working conditions, together with such factors as the stress of unreliable non-permanent work, contribute to an above-average incidence of mental health issues across all sections of the construction workforce.

In this paper, we first outline the industry-recognised need for broad cultural change to address historical and contemporary workplace conditions that threaten the ongoing business success and overall worker productivity and job fulfilment and how these issues impact young people who may choose construction as a career option. Second, we contextualise the efficacy of traineeships as a relatively recent innovation in the VET sector and outline their place within the Australian Apprenticeships and Traineeships Program (AAITP) and how they are designed to cater for the educational needs of young school leavers with a focus on 'at risk' students.

## Forging dynamic capabilities of training providers for the development of a resilient workforce (pre-recorded session)

**Zan Chen**

*Institute for Adult Learning, Singapore University of Social Sciences*

This paper draws on data from a nationwide study on the training and adult education landscape in Singapore. The presentation focuses on a case study of how an air service provider (Evergreen, pseudonym) in Singapore develops dynamic capabilities and builds an adult education ecosystem with strong partnerships to promote the wellbeing of its badly-hit aviation workforce during the Covid-19 pandemic. Dynamic capabilities are the organisation's integration and building of internal and external resources to see new opportunities for development, to identify the changes needed, and to implement them.

This case illustrates how Evergreen envisions changes and pushes the boundaries by actively using its internal and external resources in establishing partnerships with the institutes of high learning, the government agencies, industry associations, and training partners, and at the same time building a learning culture for a resilient workforce. Evergreen turns Covid-19 from a risk into opportunities to strengthen partnerships with high levels of trust, commitment, and open participation. This is accomplished in part by co-creation of learning materials, experiences, and environments with partners with a focus on resilience and sustainability.

The findings provide a useful reference for training providers, higher education institutions and adult educators who are working in learning and leadership programmes to support organisational transformation and innovation. It also identifies important qualities that can be established as best practices for organisations and policy makers in other VET/TVET settings beyond Singapore to further improve their adult education provision and promote the wellbeing of their workforce.



## Jobs and Skills Australia and the VET Sector

**Professor Peter Dawkins AO**

*Jobs and Skills Australia*

Jobs and Skills Australia (JSA) was established in the aftermath of the Jobs and Skills Summit to provide evidence-based advice on Australia's skills needs and the adequacy of the skills system in meeting those needs.

This presentation will outline the role of JSA, and provide an update on its progress in its establishment phase, noting the importance of deep two-way engagement with key partners in the national skills system, and how that will improve our analysis based on on-the-ground intelligence. It will also describe what our existing data and research is telling us about some of the current pressures and future trends facing the VET system, including skills shortages and the 'five Cs' that represent future skills needs – care, cognitive ability, computing, communication, and climate.

Finally, it will outline how our current and upcoming work responds to these pressures and trends, with a view to the development of a National Jobs and Skills Roadmap. This includes through our Clean Energy Capacity Study examining the workforce Australia needs to transition to a clean energy economy, and our development of the VET National Data Asset which links data on the employment, income and future study outcomes of VET graduates.

## He Hunga Hanga Matou - building people through work-based learning

**Greg Durkin**

*BCITO Pūkenga*

Aotearoa New Zealand's building and construction industry makes a significant investment in educating its workforce each year, including both the actual cost of programmes and the in-kind expenses involved in informal learning, mentoring, and productivity impacts. BCITO Te Pukenga (formerly the Building and Construction Industry Training Organisation) is acutely aware of the commitment that employers make when they engage in staff education and is in turn committed to ensuring that learners succeed, not only to achieve their qualification, but to become confident and competent employees.

To support success, BCITO Te Pukenga has developed a Learner Success Framework, which markedly increases the organisation's approach to supporting learners. The Framework is based on the concepts of lifelong learning and learner agency, where learners develop the skills, knowledge and enabling beliefs to be self-motivated learners, and to manage their own learning. Becoming a lifelong learner can be a challenging process and there are many barriers to the development of learner agency. These challenges include learner's self-identity and beliefs about their ability to learn; their literacy and numeracy skill levels; the learning environment; and/or broader issues, such as neurodiversity, or financial pressures. In this paper, we explore these concepts more fully and provide case study examples that illustrates the power of building a learner's agency and the benefits to both the learner and their employer.

Placing the learner at centre of our activities and working to develop their levels of learner agency has the potential to result in qualified building and construction employees who are more confident, resilient, communicate more clearly, take responsibility for their actions, and who are prepared to put their hand up for more senior roles. There are clear benefits to the industry: better health and safety outcomes; increased productivity; and a happier workforce.

## School career development practitioners and the future of VET STEM careers

**Melanie Evangelista**

*RMIT University*

This research focused on the School Career Development Practitioner (SCDP) (Guidance Counsellor, Pathways Advisor) to provide career guidance to school students. When school students are planning their careers, their SCDP provides career guidance to enable the development of agency for the student. The academic literature and government policy have identified current and future skills shortages, and the requirement for STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) careers have been identified as a priority. Undertaking trade qualifications in the vocational education and training (VET) sector is also a priority for students pursuing STEM careers where there is a skills shortage (Smith, 2022).

The research participants' (SCDP's) own career adaptability was investigated to determine how the SCDP is equipped to provide career guidance, to investigate how their role can address the STEM career shortage. Australian SCDPs were recruited to participate in a survey to determine how their career adaptability influences the career guidance provided, and to support this quantitative data, interviews were conducted (n=9) to allow the SCDPs to provide a narrative for developing their personal career. In this convergent parallel mixed methods study, qualitative data was collected, determining the requirements for a SCDP position, and how their career adaptability influences the provision of career guidance. By focusing on the School Career Development Practitioner, their postgraduate training in Career Education and Development provides an employability-focused education to the students. SCDPs have a requirement to maintain their vocational currency and competency through maintaining contemporary labour market information, for example. By maintaining a current knowledge of the labour market, SCDPs provide targeted career guidance to students pursuing STEM careers through a VET pathway. The SCDPs' links to industry provide for work-integrated learning for students.

## Treading water: effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on youth transitions

**Cameron Forrest and Chelsea Dyer**

*National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER)*

As with all economic downturns, the COVID-19 pandemic exposed young people in particular to economic hardship, including unemployment, lost earnings, and reduced opportunities for education and social wellbeing. This presentation draws on a recent NCVER report that used data from the Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth (LSAY) to assess the possible effects of the pandemic on young Australians, in the context of 'typical' youth transitions. The study found that the pandemic appeared to prevent many young Australians from making the same transitions as previous cohorts at the same age. Relative to historical baselines, young people were more likely to retreat into higher education, more likely to be underemployed, more likely to move in with parents, relatives, friends or a partner, and substantially more likely to report psychological distress.

This presentation extends that analysis by including two additional waves of LSAY data – 2021 and 2022 – to determine whether these effects persisted beyond 2020, or whether young Australians' circumstances have improved in line with historical comparisons. We examine possible effects of several policy initiatives, as well as the traditional role of VET in facilitating swift transitions from unemployment into the work force.



# So many frameworks, so little time: a cross-sector approach to understanding digital capability frameworks

**Anitza Geneve**

*TAFE Queensland*

The importance of equipping Australian citizens, learners and workers with digital skills has been communicated for well over a decade at all levels of government, across all education sectors and a wide range of industries. Yet, until the last few years Australia has had no common, national framework for digital capability. This has hindered our ability to foster and recognise digital skills; both the digital skills needed for the future of work and the skills currently in shortage across sectors.

Frameworks have been proposed, including those that focus on foundation skills e.g., Digital Literacy Skills Framework 2020 through to those focusing on employer requirements with the proposed - DSO Digital Skills Pathways Model 2021. With the release of the Australian Digital Capability Framework in 2023, Australia has its newest framework.

This presentation shows that many existing digital capability frameworks, both national and international, have similarities. A mapping exercise to identify commonalities was recently undertaken by a Queensland based cross-sector group comprised of high school, higher education and VET representatives. Frameworks from each sector were mapped for alignment. Furthermore, several international frameworks were also mapped including the European Digital Competence Framework for Citizens (DigComp), which underpins the proposed Australian Digital Capability Framework.

The driver for the mapping activity has been to develop Rich Skill Descriptors (RSD) that could be used in the development of a micro-credential for entry level Digital Capability. This ongoing body of work aims to develop a product that can be delivered across sectors.

Regardless of what framework is used, a key challenge for all sectors, including VET, is to find a common understanding. This presentation proposes that the mapping activity can support this understanding and ultimately inform the development of a micro-credential that fosters pathways for learners.

## Outreach in action: adult and community education learner outreach following COVID-19 and natural disasters

**Evelyn Goodwin and Don Perlgut**  
*Community Colleges Australia*

This presentation outlines approaches and models undertaken by Australian adult and community education (ACE) providers following significant periods of adult learner disengagement from training and education. During the last three years, this has happened due to COVID-19 and natural disasters. The presentation examines how VET students have withdrawn from training since the commencement of COVID-19 and when faced by natural disasters such as the Lismore/northeast NSW floods in early 2022 and the far west NSW floods in late 2022. The lack of ACE student engagement in VET is most acute for disadvantaged groups and learners, many of whom are unable or unwilling to move to online learning and are more vulnerable to economic, personal, living and health shocks.

These include Indigenous (First Nations) learners; people with a disability; migrants, who are vulnerable because they often undertake essential and insecure work and there were government failures to engage migrant communities in pandemic planning; and people from lower-socio-economic backgrounds. These groups have often been “left behind” during the pandemic or natural disaster planning and recovery. Natural disasters – bushfires and floods – often cause whole communities to spend their energies on simple survival and rebuilding.

This presentation examines how NSW ACE providers in the northeast and far west of the state responded when funded to undertake learner and community outreach. The presentation considers these measures with the successful past outreach models – previously by TAFE New South Wales and currently with the Victorian Reconnect Program. Prior to the pandemic, disadvantaged VET students already faced many barriers to learning participation, including mental health issues. Most unemployed Australians have two or more major barriers to employment.

The paper concludes with recommendations for future research and VET learner outreach program development.

## VET delivery in regional, rural and remote Australia: barriers and enablers

**Tabatha Griffin**

*National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER)*

Australia is a large, diverse country, and ensuring that training is suited to individual locations, which are unique in their landscapes, economies, industries and cultures, is challenging. This research aimed to investigate how the training sector could better meet the needs of regional, rural and remote Australia. It explored how various stakeholders in the vocational education and training (VET) system understand local skills needs, along with the barriers faced by registered training organisations (RTOs) when delivering training in such locations.

These issues were examined through interviews with RTOs, industry peak bodies, state training authorities (STAs), regional development bodies and employment service providers in eight case study locations across the country.

The research showed that an understanding of local skills needs, especially in regional, rural and remote Australia, cannot be gained through quantitative data alone. Local intelligence is required, gathered through informal relationships, formal partnership arrangements and other targeted activities.

RTOs face many barriers in delivering training in regional, rural and remote locations. These include RTO and/or market-based, location-based and student-based challenges. Increased costs associated with delivering in regional, rural and remote Australia, further challenge the viability of training in such locations, especially in areas of thin markets.

RTOs who deliver in regional, rural and remote Australia display a determination to assist individuals in these locations to succeed in their training, as well as to provide good service to local industry. RTOs also demonstrate the importance of the right mindset and a flexible approach; characteristics that allow them to adapt to overcome the challenges in regional, rural and remote VET delivery.

# Respect & equality: working with TAFE to prevent violence against women

**Sehar Gupta and Katie Yates**

*Our Watch*

Our Watch is a national leader in the prevention of violence against women (PVAW). We work to prevent violence and embed gender equality where Australians live, learn, work and socialise.

Our evidence-based framework, Change the Story, identified the VET sector as a key setting for PVAW because of its reach as educators, workplaces, and community hubs where attitudes and norms are produced and reproduced. In this presentation Our Watch will demonstrate how VET institutions can show national leadership in PVAW using the Respect and Equality model.

Evidence shows that gender equality reduces violence against women and improves quality of life indicators for all people. Respect and Equality takes a whole-of-institution approach to PVAW by implementing gender equality strategies through an intersectional lens. An intersectional lens recognises that women hold multiple identities based on disability, religion, class, ethnicity, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander status amongst others. Implementing initiatives through an intersectional lens results in safer and more inclusive institutions, increased student retention, and businesses that reflect their communities.

The Respect and Equality model was piloted in consultation with 5 Victorian TAFEs from 2019-2021. The second phase implements the model in institutions in Australian Capital Territory, Northern Territory, South Australia and Tasmania, followed by a national rollout.

Attendees will learn about the success of the model to date, and how to implement and sustain Respect and Equality work by collaborating with students, staff, industry partners, community organisations and other VET institutions to develop policy, programs, and skills for primary prevention. Attendees will also learn about the business case for this work, successful case studies, engaging men and boys, and the suite of available resources. This will support the VET sector to make gender equality and violence prevention business-as-usual.



## Queensland Workforce Strategy 2022-2032: a holistic approach to strengthening Queensland's current and future workforce

### Brett Hall

*Department of Employment, Small Business and Training (Qld)*

This presentation will explore Good people. Good jobs: Queensland Workforce Strategy 2022-2032, a multi-faceted, holistic approach to tackling current and future workforce challenges and opportunities in Queensland.

It will chart the journey to develop this whole-of-government strategy that is guiding the development and growth of Queensland's workforce across industry sectors and regions – the first of its kind in Queensland. Findings will be shared from significant research on Queensland's current and future workforce pressures and extensive stakeholder consultation, including through the Queensland Workforce Summit held in March 2022.

The strategy's five focus areas will be explored – workforce participation, local solutions, school to work transitions, workforce attraction and retention, and skilling Queenslanders now and into the future – with particular focus on how the strategy's actions are skilling Queensland's current and future workforce in priority areas. This includes through key actions such as:

- development of a Queensland VET Strategy to ensure that investment in skills and training is tailored to current and future workforce needs
- increased support for Micro-credentials and Pre-apprenticeships
- additional support for apprentices and trainees to complete their training
- developing the skills pathways for the growing clean energy economy.

The presentation will outline how the strategy is providing a framework for considering and responding to complex, multifaceted workforce issues that cut across policy areas and levels of government. It will also unpack how the strategy is driving partnerships, collaboration and shared responsibility to progress skills and workforce solutions that are industry-led, community-centred and government-enabled.

For more information on the Queensland Workforce Strategy visit [www.qld.gov.au/workforcestategy](http://www.qld.gov.au/workforcestategy)

## Longitudinal analysis of student training activity in VET

**Michelle Hall and Melinda Lees**

*National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER)*

Until recently, analysis of Vocational Education and Training (VET) administrative data has been largely constrained to looking at program and stand-alone subject enrolments and completions within a single collection year, for example 2021. While such analysis can provide some valuable insights, it is limited with respect to understanding student pathways within the VET sector, particularly in relation to student progression, re-skilling of students in new occupational areas, and student re-engagement after an interruption to their study.

The inclusion of the unique student identifier (USI) in the National VET Provider collection since 2015 presents an opportunity to investigate these broader aspects of student engagement with VET, as enrolments and completions in different VET programs and stand-alone subjects can be attributed to the same student, regardless of the number of times they enroll or the training provider they choose.

This presentation will introduce recent work undertaken at NCVER to develop a Master Student Longitudinal data construct that enables student-centric analysis of VET administrative data. We will present examples of analysis that we have undertaken to better understand student pathways using this data construct, as well as examples of analysis that could be undertaken in the future.

## Artificial intelligence ChatGPT in VET education

**Olivija Komadina**

*TAFE Queensland*

ChatGPT, a form of an advanced ChatBot, is a generative pre-trained transformer AI language model developed by OpenAI. It is trained on an enormous dataset of text from the internet using unsupervised learning, allowing it to learn patterns in language and generate coherent and contextually appropriate responses to a wide range of prompts. ChatGPT is continuously updated and improved upon by OpenAI, making it a powerful tool for natural language processing.

This literature review provides critical insight into recent publications about ChatGPT, its rapid development, and impact on education. It focuses on four main areas relevant to teaching, training, and learning: explicit teaching using ChatGPT, explicit teaching of ChatGPT, feedback using ChatGPT, and assessment. In the context of education, it is important to use ChatGPT as a tool rather than attempting to control it. This means acknowledging its limitations and potential biases, and using it in ways that promote inclusivity and fairness. Therefore, it is crucial to use it in conjunction with other assessment methods and to interpret its results with caution.

Since it is pivotal for VET teachers/trainers to develop a comprehensive understanding of AI, they are prepared for a confident and inclusive approach to future practices. It is important to contextualize the application of ChatGPT in the VET classroom and other learning venues to ensure that it is used in ways that benefit all students and support their educational goals.

## Best practice blended learning for disadvantaged VET learners

**Melanie Kyle**

*RMIT University*

The aim of this presentation is to share findings from a recently completed ISSI Fellowship which has identified examples of international best practice in blended learning for disadvantaged VET learners. The research has revealed strategies and tools to improve engagement and participation using the blended learning approach. This presentation focuses on what good practice looks like and how to support the changing needs of students and the VET sector following the rapid shift to online and blended learning. In addition, examples of real-world classroom practice and LMS design will be provided.

The presentation will conclude with a set of recommendations based on the research such as accessible teacher professional development, supporting student digital literacy, use of the blended learning continuum and interactive digital tools.



## Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on VET

**Melinda Lees and Daniella Trimboli**

*National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER)*

There are both documented and anecdotal reports of the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on specific student cohorts and aspects of the VET sector. The aim of this research was to identify these impacts and examine how the sector responded in a rapidly changing and uncertain environment.

A comparison of 2019 quantitative data with those of 2020 and 2021, cross-analysed with qualitative interviews with training providers, illustrates the challenges faced by training providers and students and the impact of the pandemic with respect to student enrolments, completions, and satisfaction with training – with a focus on specific student cohorts and different types of training.

We will discuss the impact of the pandemic on training providers' business practices at four key levels – financial, operational, people, and infrastructure, and the extent to which the impact varied depending on the type of provider and where the training was delivered. The effects of a significant increase in government support and a rapid transition to online delivery will also be examined and some recommendations for mitigating the effects of an ongoing pandemic and/or future crises explored.

## Skilling for the green transition: reframing the role of Australia's VET system for climate and environmental action

**David Longley**

*Brotherhood of St Laurence*

The success of Australia's response to the challenges of a rapidly changing climate and environmental damage will be measured in two ways. Firstly, by whether Australia slows, prevents, and alleviates the effects of climatic and environmental change. Secondly, by the long-term career growth and security of those who undertake the work of the response.

The VET system will play an essential role in achieving this, and a window of opportunity to better support this role has opened. Commonwealth, state and territory governments are all looking to revitalise education and industry with the aim of more efficient, innovative, and equitable workforce development policy. There is an opportunity to reshape existing systems to enable the skills response to better play its role in mitigation and adaptation efforts.

This paper critiques the existing policy focus of the skills response to the climatic and environmental crises, and proposes a new roadmap which can harness current skills reform agendas. It draws on an on-going program of research undertaken by the Brotherhood of St Laurence's Social Policy and Research Centre as part of its mission to address systemic and structural barriers to education and employment. It includes analysis of academic and grey literature, intentional scans of the reports of key organisations, and thorough consultation with diverse education, industry, government and academic stakeholders.

Initial findings from this research have identified that current framing and approaches by policymakers are insufficient to support the VET system to enable both a meaningful and just response to the climate and environmental crises. These findings have informed the development of a case for reframing of the role of the skills and training. With these early findings in mind, the paper argues for current reform VET efforts to align with the climatic and environmental crises, taking on a longer horizon for planning and implementation, and a wider scope for action.

# Putting the spotlight on educational and industry currency to support and deliver future skill needs

**Julia Makin**

*RMIT University*

RMIT's College of Vocational Education (CoVE) has changed the way it manages industry and educational currency requirements with its Currency & Competency (C2) App and Reporting Tool. This purpose-built tool allows CoVE to track the currency of its trainers and assessors across the whole college, allowing for better allocation of trainers across different discipline areas.

The app and reporting tool also provides data-driven insights into how many trainers and assessors RMIT has, how up to date their currency is in relation to training package requirements, and which areas require professional development to ensure RMIT is able to meet student demand. This app has been designed with automation in mind to ensure that educational and industry currency requirements are kept up to date.

Attendees of this session will have the opportunity to gain a firsthand look at the Currency & Competency (C2) App and Reporting Tool. Attendees will be able to hear from a Program Manager about the benefits of this app for their program team and how it has helped to enhance the learner and teacher experience.

Since RMIT implemented its Currency & Competency (C2) App and Reporting Tool, the College of Vocational Education (CoVE) has witnessed an improvement in the number of teachers completing professional development. This has led to a greater understanding of its importance in maintaining up-to-date industry and educational currency requirements.

This information is invaluable for helping RMIT understand the future skill needs of the broader workforce, allowing them to better allocate resources accordingly for strengthened delivery of skills for tomorrow's workforce.

# Supporting students with disability in VET

**Darlene McLennan and Gabrielle O'Brien**

*Australian Disability Clearinghouse on Education and Training (ADCET)*

Research shows that attaining a higher level of education leads to better employment outcomes and a higher income. Both factors are integral to attaining economic security, better health outcomes, social participation and independence for people with disability. Around 1 in 6 (4.4 million) people in Australia have a disability and while over time people with disability participating in tertiary education has risen; this level of participation is still much lower than those without disability, especially in VET.

According to the National Skills Commission 'more than nine out of ten new jobs created in the next five years will require post-secondary qualifications' so fostering equitable participation for people with disability is essential. VET is a highly accessible option for people with disability as it caters for a diverse group of learners, has a wide range of course offerings, has strong industry connections to address skills shortages, and is relatively low cost.

As Australia's leading resource on disability in tertiary education for disability practitioners, educators, and students ADCET was funded by the Australian Government to address recommendations from the 2020 Disability Standards for Education 2005 (DSE). The outcomes of these projects are about building capacity within the VET workforce to support students with disability. The three integrated projects included developing resources to build Registered Training Organisation (RTO) capability and awareness to support students with disability; developing resources to support course designers to create inclusive training packages and accredited courses; and reviewing enrolment practices in VET as they impact on students with disability.

This presentation will showcase how these practical resources such as practice illustrations, case studies and templates will assist RTOs to build and enhance their activities to be more inclusive of people with disability, as well as meeting regulatory obligations.

# Planning for the future sustainability of the health workforce through VET education to employment pathways

**Vicky Meyer**, *CheckUP Australia*

**Toni Kely-Brown**, *Queensland Health*

Since 2017, CheckUP and the Workforce Strategy Branch, Queensland Health have worked in collaboration to undertake a longitudinal study “Health Education to Employment Pathways Program” (HEEP), to better understand and integrate Vocational Education and Training (VET) into workforce planning and design.

This presentation will share the findings and lessons learned from the project and provide examples of how it has influenced change and elevated the VET sector in the industry’s approaches to planning for future workforce.

HEEP includes researching, driving and supporting internal and external partnerships, influencing policy and using targeted funding and data to help build, scale and sustain quality education to employment pathways.

To date this project has included:

Phase 1 – Grow Your Own Workforce Feasibility Report and Resource Hub (GYO) - The impetus for this study and development of the Resource Hub arose from a recognition that as anchors in communities, the health industry is often the largest employer in regions and have the opportunity to support place-based workforce initiatives via VET pathways and provide real job outcomes in areas of locational disadvantage.

Phase 2 and 3 – Choose Your Own Health Career Website (CYO) - The CYO website illustrates the range of study and job opportunities available within the health sector that can be achieved through a VET pathway. Launched in Queensland Parliament in 2019, CYO is changing understandings of the diversity of occupations in the health industry and value of VET as not only a pathway for entry-level roles, but also for career development for existing employees.

HEEP Phase 4 - Undertaken by CheckUP has examined the current state-of-play in the VET sector and highlighted the areas in which the Department can focus in order to better engage with, lead, inform and leverage the VET sector to build and sustain the future health workforce.



## Future skills: advancing understanding of skill needs in the Victorian economy

**Hiba Molaeb and Simon Parker**

*Victorian Skills Authority*

Shifts in the economic, environmental, and social landscape have been reshaping Australia's labour market, driven by a range of factors (including technology changes, changes in social preferences and environmental challenges). These changes are shifting the way we think about occupations and the skills required to perform the tasks within them.

The Victorian Skills Authority (VSA)'s current approach to forecasting demand focusses on occupations. However, it is recognised that skills required within occupations are changing, even if the occupation title does not.

The VSA is working towards an improved articulation of skills, exploring skills taxonomies such as the Australian Skills Classification and Lightcast to advance its ability to describe and monitor changing skills requirements and enable timely detection of new and emerging skills. This presentation will:

- showcase the innovative analysis VSA is undertaking to advance our understanding of changing skills requirements within the Victorian economy.
- present insights on skills most requested across and within Victorian occupations.
- discuss implications of changing skills requirements on future training delivery.

## International VET students: the COVID-19 recovery

**Steve Nerlich**

*Australian Government Department of Education*

The presentation will draw on public data sources available from the Australian Government and NCVER to demonstrate the current recovery in student numbers and activity from the COVID-19 pandemic. Following the closure of Australia's borders in March 2020, international student numbers dropped substantially, but not precipitously due to education providers promptly pivoting to offer online study opportunities for students on and offshore.

Following the reopening of Australia's borders in December 2021, international student numbers have been rising steadily, though still lag behind pre-pandemic numbers in some cases. NCVER data on international VET student satisfaction and graduate outcomes in the midst of the pandemic (from 2020-2022) will also be presented.

## Deadly health training

**Janine Oldfield**

*Flinders University*

The Northern Territory experiences very high health inequalities in remote and very remote communities. There is a desperate need for more Aboriginal health and allied health workers and professionals to service this need which is set to rise with increasing morbidity and chronic diseases in these areas as well as technological changes in remote health delivery. Despite this situation, there are currently no or few training or professional pathways available and none readily available for Indigenous Youth.

This paper outlines a case study, using existing research and statistical literature and educational prospecti, that examines these issues. The paper will initially discuss the growing need for qualified young Indigenous health and allied health workers as a consequence of demographic factors and the changing technological landscape of health in remote areas. It also discusses the role of health and allied health VET training in equipping remote and very remote NT regions with a sustainable professional Indigenous health workforce. It then examines the current educational and policy context that is making this problematic and suggests changes to enable professional development through VET pathways.

## How can we build a workforce of teacher-qualified VET practitioners for Australian secondary schools?

**Karen O'Reilly-Briggs**

*Box Hill Institute*

Australian governments and industry leaders are increasingly depending on VET in schools or VET Delivered to Secondary School Students (VETDSSS) programs to generate a pipeline of skilled workers to address the nation's economic challenges following the Covid-19 pandemic. However, there is a severe shortage of teacher-qualified VET school teachers, and Australia is yet to find a sustainable way of upskilling industry experts to produce the quantity of industry experienced VET teachers it needs to resource the nations' secondary schools. Without appropriate Initial Teacher Education (ITE) degree courses to generate a workforce of pedagogically proficient VET teachers, schools will struggle to provide high-quality provision and meet government visions for a skills-led economic recovery.

This presentation reports findings of a Victorian Department of Education and International Specialised Skills Institute Fellowship that sought to understand how Finland and Norway, countries with strong and successful VET secondary school sectors, produce a supply of high-quality teacher-qualified VET practitioners to teach VET programs to young people in schools so that Australia might learn from (what is arguably) world best practice.

The study was conducted as a pragmatic multi-method applied research investigation. Data was sourced from literature and interviews with VET teachers in upper secondary schools and lecturers of ITE VET programs in Finland and Norway. The findings of the study reveal how these countries support the ITE of tradespeople and industry experts to become teacher-qualified VET school teachers. It further considers these findings against the Australian situation, and discusses the study's recommendations for improving the supply, quantity and quality of VET teachers available to resource Australia's school based VETDSSS programs. The findings of this study provide valuable information for governments and policy makers contending with VET teacher shortages.

## Social and emotional learning for VET (in the Australian context)

**Joe Pagnoccolo**

*Holmesglen Institute*

Social and emotional learning (SEL) is a new framework in educational research that has appeared in academic literature to help students to learn and practice social skills that promote resilience and control emotions, behaviour, and relationships with others. The importance of SEL to vocational education is based on the notion that teaching students to learn and practice social skills will assist them to meet challenges in dynamic work environments including other areas of their life.

This presentation examines a research project on the nature of SEL, outlining its approach to research, methods adopted, research outcomes, and its potential application to apprenticeship training both now and in the future. It investigates best practices in social and emotional learning in various settings to learn how it can be applied to vocational education and training (VET) programs in Australia. The research sample in this study was taken from indentured apprentices enrolled in various courses in several traditional trades at an Australian public training college.

The study was completed in two stages, from July 2021 to September 2022. The first step was to administer an online survey to 144 apprentices, followed by in-depth phone interviews with 31 apprentices in Melbourne, Australia. The second stage included an overseas field trip to Europe, which included visits to vocational colleges in Singapore and Italy, as well as presenting at a conference and participating in an SEL teacher training workshop. According to the quantitative findings, apprentices valued SEL skills like teamwork and communication in their training because it helped them cooperate with others and improve their technical and work skills. The qualitative findings revealed that apprentices' narratives reflected SEL competencies such as self-awareness and self-control, social awareness, and relationship skills, which made their training more effective and enabled them to use strategies to interact with others.



## The modernisation of building construction: the future of work and training in the 'digital age'

**Henry Pook**

*Holmesglen Institute*

This research examines the emergence of pre-construction technologies and industrialised construction (off-site construction), the potential effect of these changes on the structure of the building construction industry, and the development of 'leading edge' VET programmes to equip an emerging workforce for the 'digital age'.

Despite its significance and economic impact, building construction has remained relatively unaffected by the digital revolution and advances in technologies that have modernised other industry sectors. Nevertheless, pressures are mounting to adopt new technologies, modernise existing systems of production, and re-shape workforce training.

The research examines the diverse nature of the building construction sector, its current project-based approach to production, and associated education and training practices. As industry practice evolves, innovations in building technology have the potential to change the face of the industry, with effective prefabrication and modular assemblies increasing speed, safety, productivity, and quality across the entire construction process, creating a product-based approach with a standardised unit production.

Consequently, the research project aims to explore the role and application of skills, training, and education in supporting the transition of a workforce from long established industry practices to new ways of working. Areas to be investigated include: the suitability of existing qualifications, the development of new qualifications to meet the needs of new roles in an emerging industry, whether there is a need for a competency framework that focuses on both technical and 'softer' skills, and the potential role of the 'trades' and building educators in the development of future skills and training needs.

The presentation concludes with a review of career prospects in this 'new world' of off-site construction: its appeal as a career option for new industry entrants, and the traditional trades.

## Contextualisation of VET to pathway disadvantaged groups into employment

**Hinemoa Priest, Susan Luke and Amanda Torr**

*Te Runanganui o Te Ati Awa/Te Pukenga trading as Whitireia and WelTec*

One of the learner groups that has been traditionally disadvantaged in tertiary education in New Zealand is Maori, particularly young tane (Maori men). This group experiences many barriers to success in tertiary education including:

- Low achievement in school which may result in inability to meet course entry requirements – particularly academic requirements
- Poor literacy and numeracy
- Fear of attending an inhospitable/alien/culturally challenging learning environment
- Unintended bias from teachers and institutional racism
- Lack of funds to pay course fees
- Lack of funding or transport options to attend classes
- Need to combine work with study so that family needs can be met
- Lack of support particularly for those who are “first in family” to attend tertiary study.
- Impact of cultural and family demands on student time for study.

This paper will present two case studies illustrating some of the tools used to reduce these barriers and support students to engage and succeed in tertiary education using culturally contextualised learning and mentoring practices.

The first case study will describe the person-centred approaches taken by the Tamaiti Whangai team at WelTec that have resulted in Maori pass-rates in trade courses exceeding those for non-Maori. It will describe how cultural contextualisation of the VET learning environment has been instrumental in achieving this success.

The second case study will illustrate the impact of taking learning into the community to provide culturally rich, relevant and applicable experiential learning that is immediately relevant to employment.

The paper will present the learnings from the Tamaiti Whangai team who have been working with young Maori for 15 years and how these have informed the team’s practice to ensure student success in their study, in gaining employment and in developing their life skills.

## **Harnessing symbiotic relationships between the adult learner, the LMS, and the VET practitioner**

**Sarah Sabell**

*The College for Adult Learning*

Effective online learning isn't a matter of uploading face to face materials and hoping the rest will work out. Online learning is about designing online learning tools, materials, assessment, and support structures that produce high quality learning outcomes. Good practice now, and into the future, should combine effective technology; an intuitive, well designed, and adaptable LMS with human skills; support, coaching and mentoring, flexible assessment, real-world experience, and teaching and learning excellence. As education providers it is crucial that we re-evaluate and re-design the symbiotic relationship between the learner, the teacher/trainer, and now more than ever, technology. Cultivating a learning ecosystem that provides seamless on- and off-ramps for learners, using effective technology and employing quality practitioners will allow education providers to continuously diagnose learner needs, construct new learning pathways, and develop new methods of teaching and learning.

This research is exploring how VET practitioners, working with technology, can produce high quality learning outcomes for adult learners. The presentation will synthesize and discuss academic research on adult online learning while at the same time illustrating an adult learning ecosystem that shows a flexible and adaptable approach to learning; demonstrating how engaging in constant and deliberate diagnosis, throughout and during a course of study, can meet the changing needs of adult learners, industry, employers, and the VET sector.

## **TAFE NSW Industry Innovation: cultivating effective skilling eco-systems in healthcare and manufacturing industries**

**Peter Schreiner, Alison McDonald and Nerida Volker**

*TAFE NSW*

Industry Innovation at TAFE NSW connects with NSW industry across a broad range of sectors including healthcare and manufacturing. Connecting points include specialised industry reference groups to identify industry-wide workforce skilling opportunities, informing short-, medium-, and long-term strategies to address skill gaps.

Methods include implementation of tailored programs to compliment, and augment subsidised, accredited training. Progressively, state funding bodies and the training eco-system support alternative approaches to specialised skill development.

Examples include industry wide programs where new skills are required for emerging industries and technologies including in health care, space industries and alternative fuel technologies. Through stakeholder engagement, common themes can be identified and applied in several ways including teacher capability development.

The presentation explores the transformation of VET through dedicated industry innovation specialists at TAFE NSW. Its purpose is to report on how industry engagement at TAFE NSW works within an evolving and competitive ecosystem of connected stakeholders. This is predicated on workforce skilling, underpinning industry capability in an increasingly diversified work environment working with converging technologies.

The study reports on a range of collaborations and partnerships, synthesising key developments and outcomes in the healthcare and manufacturing industry sectors through case studies. The study will also highlight challenges in transforming industry collaborations into industry partnerships. Included are approaches to entrusting responsibilities to internal stakeholders enabling wider scope for industry partnerships. Sources include findings from industry collaborations and reporting of successful examples to date.

# Attracting more young women into apprenticeships: listening to their own voices

**Christina Scott-Young**, *RMIT University*

**Naomi Borg**, *RMIT University*

**Jessica Borg**, *University Melbourne*

Post-COVID growth in large government-funded infrastructure projects has intensified skills shortages and increased the competition for tradespeople in construction. Since women currently occupy only 2% of construction trades roles, it is imperative that more female school-leavers are attracted to both improve their career opportunities and address trades skills shortages. Research on women in trades has focused mainly on the barriers that deter girls from applying (e.g., Struthers & Strachan, 2019; Carnemolla & Galea, 2021), rather than what actually attracts them. This interview-based study explored the lived experiences of 20 young female carpentry, electrical, and plumbing apprentices to identify:

- i) how they made their career choice;
- ii) the type of careers messaging they received as school students; and
- iii) their views on how best to attract more young girls into the trades.

The findings show that schoolgirls became attracted to the trades through studying woodwork or design at school; exposure to family or friends' homebuilding or renovations; or knowing people who work in trades. YouTube and TikTok trades videos were also influential, while others were attracted by apprenticeship advertising. Schools were mainly a negative influence, with girls often told that trades were for males; or counsellors trying to dissuade them, saying university education was preferable. Some received no trades advice at all at school. Messages from family and friends were sometimes positive; other times discouraging. We used the voices of these young women to develop a set of positive recommendations that include: education for counsellors, teachers and parents; tradeswomen attending careers days; site-visits for schoolgirls; and more social media promotion. VET has an important role to play through apprentice education on inclusion, and by role modelling respect for women in the classroom. It is hoped these targeted interventions will improve gender equity in the trades.

## Bringing the learning journey to life

**Carolyn Smith, Jessica Askew and Megan Chudleigh**

*RMIT University*

Good practice in blended learning means providing learning experiences that are engaging, interactive, and accessible to a diverse range of learners. This includes using a range of multimedia resources, interactive tools, and collaborative learning activities to ensure that students are actively engaged in their learning. Ongoing support for both students and teachers ensure that they have the necessary skills and resources to succeed in an online learning environment.

Additionally, incorporating work-integrated learning opportunities and authentic assessment helps students develop real-world skills and experiences that are essential for success in the workforce.

Through the Higher Apprenticeship and Traineeships (Social Services) Extension Project (HATSSEP), funded by the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions (DJSIR), The Innovation Projects team in RMIT's College of Vocational Education is building these best practice principles into a new training model for workers in the social services sector. Over the past three years, the Innovation Projects team has conducted extensive research and industry consultation to inform the design of an innovative higher apprenticeship model and pedagogical strategies for course design, teaching and support.

This interactive presentation demonstrates how the HATSSEP puts all our research into practice, showing the need to up-level traditional learning and assessment strategies to retain students through high levels of engagement, authentic assessment and add in layers of support provided by workplace mentors, supervisors and peers.



## Training of VET teachers and trainers: an absence of governance?

**Erica Smith**

*Federation University*

This presentation reports on research on the governance of VET teacher-education in Australia. The research was undertaken as a contribution to a European Union project on VET teacher-education. The project, designed to inform the development of policy and practice in Ukraine, focused on governance systems. An Australian case study was requested to set alongside other country case studies.

A governance framework has not previously been used to analyse VET teacher-training in Australia. In the research, four governance factors were analysed for each of the three levels of VET teacher-training: the Certificate IV in Training and Assessment, the Diploma of VET and the courses offered by universities. The analysis was carried out using literature, government documents, a comparison with other education sectors, and the author's first-hand experience in the development of VET teaching qualifications in both sectors over several decades.

Using a governance framework provided an insight into some problematic issues in the Australian system, such as the lack of oversight of quality of VET teacher-training, in both sectors, beyond the normal regulatory mechanisms. The research shows that the sector is less involved with, and less demanding of, the training of its teachers and trainers than other education sectors; training regimes for other education sectors and for many other sectors and industries, tend to require accreditation of providers and stipulations for delivery. Moreover, for VET pedagogy courses at all levels, links between the providers and the 'receivers' of the graduates are not clear nor well documented. The research found that groups of VET teacher-educators, in both sectors, worked to improve quality, but they were acting as volunteers, with no support from either Commonwealth or State governments, and therefore their actions and impact are necessarily limited. Suggestions for an initial plan of action and ideas for further research are proposed.

## Why don't young people want to pursue careers in retail and hospitality?

**Darryn Snell**, *RMIT University*

**Richard Robinson**, *University of Queensland*

**Erica Smith**, *Federation University*

Many young people acquire their first job in retail or hospitality but few seem keen on pursuing a career in these growing industries. Based on a National Careers Institute Partnerships grant project, this paper examines the importance of retail and hospitality for employment and career and occupational opportunities and influences shaping young people's views about these industries.

Drawing on ABS and Victoria's On-Track data of recent student leavers, the importance of retail and hospitality to the working lives of young people is first established. This is followed by analysis of data collected from focus groups with higher education students studying at Federation University, the University of Queensland and RMIT University where we examine student experiences of working in retail and hospitality, their perceptions of career opportunities in these industries and how these perceptions are acquired. We argue that their experiences of working in these industries are both positive and negative but do not fully explain why they are unlikely to pursue career opportunities in these industries. Negative perceptions of these industries are established quite early for young people from a range of influencers whereby these industries come to be entry points into other more desirable industries.

The transferable skills acquired in entry level positions in retail and hospitality jobs are particularly valued by young people for pursuing careers elsewhere. Most students, however, had a limited understanding about the range and diversity of career opportunities and pathways in retail and hospitality further highlighting the workforce development challenges for these industries. The paper concludes with a discussion of the options these industries might pursue to address these challenges and create more meaningful and sustainable career pathways for young people.

## Impact of stereotyping on the advice given to young women interested in the construction trades

**Kylie Taffard**  
*ConCOVE*

Stereotypical beliefs significantly influence young people as they prepare to transition out of compulsory education. This presentation provides insight into the advice provided by Aotearoa New Zealand Career Development Educators (CDEs) that is influenced by stereotypical beliefs and socialisation. The stereotypical beliefs such as occupational, gender stereotypes and perceptions of the construction industry.

The wider research project aimed to investigate the influences on the advice provided to female secondary school students interested in the construction trades by Career Development Educators (CDEs). The research was conducted in two phases and these findings provided an insight into the influences on the conversation between CDEs and young women interested in entering the construction trades.

Using secondary data and interviews with tradeswomen and recruitment specialists within the construction industries, the first phase of research developed an understanding of potential influences on the advice provided by CDEs to female students interested in the construction trades. The second phase of research used Q-methodology to gain an objective understanding of the influences on the advice given when having a career conversation with their female students.

The findings from the overall research can be separated into the two participants of the career conversation – the student and the CDE. This presentation will highlight the beliefs and values that impacts the CDE when speaking with a female student interested in the construction trades. Finally this presentation will look at ways the VET sector can support CDEs to overcome these beliefs and values to encourage more women into the construction trades and other male dominated industries.

## Where's the front door? An investigation into workforce entry points within the construction and infrastructure sector

**Kylie Taffard**  
*ConCOVE*

Recent changes to vocational education and training in Aotearoa New Zealand provide an opportunity to reimagine vocational education to bring providers, employers, learners, and apprentices together to benefit the economy through improved productivity and national pride in 'growing our own'. To gain the benefits of growing our own we need to understand how people enter careers in construction and infrastructure. Careers in these sectors incorporate multiple entry points, however often the focus and support is on entry points from school or for young adults or the unemployed, however more people are transitioning to these sectors from other industries and roles.

The aim of this research is to understand the multiple entry points and their effectiveness to attract and retain people into careers in the construction and infrastructure sector. Using quantitative methods, specifically with Statistics NZ's IDI, this investigation will scope and map the various entry points to the workforce. The research will also scan for interventions being delivered at these entry points and identify possible new interventions. This will include a focus on those that better support disadvantaged groups to successfully enter.

By understanding the factors that encourage successful entry to the construction and infrastructure sector, we can better inform the sector, education providers and other key stakeholders to create clear pathways that support successful entry and retention in the sectors. The findings from this research will inform other ConCOVE projects such as Workforce Journey Indicators.

## Client diversity and educational practitioner pedagogical choices

**Rachel Leigh Taylor**

*NT Government*

It is well documented that disadvantaged groups struggle more with engagement and long-term success in education and employment (Sanderson 2019). Existing research often focuses on one discreet sample of this cohort when making recommendations for classroom adaptation and workplace learning environments. What fails to be addressed is the mechanisms that can be used to support all of these learners, particularly when you have a student cohort made up of clients from exceedingly diverse backgrounds with differing needs and complexities.

Research clearly defines teacher/trainer interaction as a key success parameter for learner outcomes (Richard and Lockhart, 1994), with key attributes for teacher-student interactions focusing on classroom behaviours such as turn-taking, questioning and answering, negotiation of meaning and feedback' (Chaudron, 1988:10) because 'learning is a highly interactive process' (Richard and Lockhart, 1994:138). Ellis (1999:166) believes that exploiting these opportunities for learner control 'may well prove more crucial for creating the optimal conditions for learning ...than any planned decisions teachers make'. The question left to explore, is what facets of teacher-student interaction have the greatest implications for educators when supporting clients with learning, behavioural and cross-cultural needs and how this research and key findings can be applied practically in any type of learning environment.

This paper will explore background research undertaken in the English as a Second Language (ESL) context as the baseline for implementing identified teacher/trainer interaction patterns and methodologies to enhance student engagement and success as applied to other learning and support needs of students.

## Structuring lessons to engage learners in different modalities of teaching and learning

**Fiona Wahr and Md Aftabuzzaman**

*Melbourne Polytechnic*

The world has experienced a shift in the mode of learning and teaching delivery. In the changing pedagogical landscape, online and blended learning has gained significant attention as they can capitalise on evolving technology and provide the flexibility of place or distance. Both online and traditional face-to-face modes of delivery share many fundamental aspects for both students and educators. However, there are significant differences between these modalities. Therefore, carefully considered pedagogical design and well-planned approaches are required to create new opportunities for learners to develop independence in their online learning and to overcome the relevant challenges of designing and delivering learning activities.

The objective of the study is to present the application of the Melbourne Polytechnic Blended Learning Model (MPBLM) in a fully online setting and to compare this online mode of delivery to experiences and outcomes achieved in a face-to-face learning environment. A number of strategies were used to maintain and enhance the learning engagement of engineering students. The success of these strategies was measured by comparing these two modes of delivery with the use of a number of readily available standard indicators such as distribution of student grades, weekly assessment submission rates and student subject evaluation questionnaires. No significant difference in student experience was found between online and traditional classroom students provided that appropriate strategies are used to maintain their learning experience.

The study results show the learner engagement can be maintained in blended learning delivery provided that carefully considered pedagogical design and well-planned approaches are used. However, further research is warranted due to the limitations of the study around the nature of the sample size and single cross-sectional data.



## Measuring the benefits of foundation skills training in adult community education: evidence, gaps, challenges

Anne Walstab and Esther Doecke

*Victoria University*

This presentation sets out the benefits of participation in foundation skills training in Adult Community Education (ACE) providers across Australia, identifying the gaps in the research literature and outlining the measurement challenges. It begins with an outline of the key features of foundation skills training and learners across different Australian jurisdictions, before detailing the evidenced benefits using a framework developed through published national and international literature and analysis of administrative data. The framework groups the benefits into social, educational, economic and additional other benefits, and is considered from the perspective of the individual learner, the community and the nation as a whole.

Learners undertaking foundation skills training in ACE typically face various forms of educational, social and economic disadvantage. This may include a lack of formal qualifications, experience of long-term unemployment, or for those in the workplace, risk of job loss.

As communities recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, there is an even greater impetus for low skilled adults to further develop their foundation skills to secure new and ongoing work. Moreover, the importance of rebuilding social connections following periods of isolation during COVID-19 restrictions in different jurisdictions is also a crucial part of recovery for individuals and the wider community.

These social or non-marketised benefits are more difficult to quantify than other benefits and gaps in the literature are most notable across this domain, as they reach beyond traditional measures of educational and employment attainment, progression or transition, to include increased social engagement, capacity to participate in the community, improved personal skills and digital inclusion. The presentation outlines these measurement challenges and discusses methods for addressing these evidence gaps.

## Beyond the standard: motivators of high performing RTOs

**Joanne Waugh**

*National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER)*

RTO quality remains a topic of great interest to VET users and governments as the VET sector adapts to skill Australia's current and future workforce. All RTOs must adhere to minimum quality standards, but some RTOs deliver above and beyond those standards. This presentation will share the results of research that interrogated what motivates such RTOs to pursue high performance.

High-performing RTOs, those that deliver outstanding outcomes for students and/or industry, were invited to participate in interview to explore: their understanding of high performance, what motivates them to pursue high performance, how that is embedded into business practices and how they determine if they are high performers.

Four motivational themes were found, operationalised through the use of a transformational leadership style and guided by training and delivery values that place students at the centre of learning. Encouraging RTOs to adopt performance-promoting values and building RTO leadership skills may offer policymakers and VET stakeholders another mechanism through which to secure quality and consistency in VET training and delivery.

## Partnering with industry to skill the agricultural workforce of the future

**Julie White, Darren Bayley, Michelle Smith and Simone Harvey**

*Tocal College, NSW Department of Primary Industries*

The primary industries sector is facing simultaneous challenges of addressing acute workforce and skills shortages while seeking to accelerate the adoption of rapidly advancing technology along with research and development, and improve safety, production, and business outcomes in a changing climate. Industry looked to the training sector and posed the question: could it help the industry rise to these challenges?

From this came a unique industry-led accredited training program for agriculture, that's key features are flexible, adaptable, and mobile training tailored to address specific industry needs. This program, AgSkilled, is changing the way these industries approach attracting, retaining and skilling their workforce. It is making significant progress in addressing these challenges in NSW by placing industry at the centre of program design and delivery, a focus on micro-credentials and targeted training, and an outreach approach that takes training to rural and remote communities at select times to minimise disruption in business continuity and production schedules in a tight labour environment.

The AgSkilled program has led to improved participation and completion rates in sectors that have traditionally had a low exposure and engagement with vocational education and training. Evidence from evaluations, case studies, student feedback and on farm practice change demonstrate that it has led to improved practices, the adoption of technology and improved employment outcomes. It has also brought a new focus to workforce planning and development for key sectors in primary industries and has led to vocational training being viewed as an important vehicle for the adoption of improved practices and innovation, connecting industries' investment in research and development with their workforce.

## The changing world of work: challenges and opportunities for the VET sector

**Danielle Wood**  
*Grattan Institute*

The Australian economy and the world of work is changing. In this presentation, Danielle will get behind the big economic and labour market trends.

She will talk about what the VET sector can do to set Australia up for success through training future workers in growth areas like digital, care and the clean economy.











