



RMIT Sustainability Committee

Sustainability Annual Report 2015



Table of Contents

1.	About this report	1
2.	Highlights	1
3.	Vice Chancellor's statement	2
4.	About RMIT	3
5.	Engaging our stakeholders	6
6.	Engaging students and staff in sustainability	8
7.	Shaping future leaders	14
8.	Sustainable Urban Precincts Program (SUPP)	18
9.	Sustainability research and innovation	23
10.	Empowering our people	26
11.	Scaling up our impacts	30
12.	Sustaining the value of our resources	33
13.	Greening our supply chain	36
14.	GRI Content Index	38
15.	Material issues and aspect boundaries	46

1. About this report

This is RMIT University's first annual Sustainability Report, which covers the calendar year from 1 January to 31 December 2015. It reflects our commitment to being a sustainable organisation that listens to our stakeholders and contributes to local and global social, economic and digital transformation.

This report shows the impact that our teaching and learning, research and operations has on society and the environment. The data presented in this report covers the three RMIT campuses in Melbourne. We are working to improve data collection at our international campuses and centres in Vietnam and Barcelona. We will report on their performance in the coming years.

This report aligns with the Core requirements of the Global Reporting Initiative G4 sustainability reporting framework and the United Nations Global Compact.

2. Highlights

- RMIT University adopted a new Strategic Plan to 2020, Ready for Life and Work.
- Over \$30 million invested in sustainability staff and projects.
- The Sustainable Urban Precincts Program (SUPP) funded five Learning and Teaching projects, six research projects and ten PhD scholarships.
- Three academics awarded Learning and Teaching for Sustainability (LTfS) Fellowships.
- Seven Seedlings Grants funded by the RMIT Sustainability Committee
- A balance of 51% female to 49% male employees at RMIT.
- Over \$41 million in research funding for sustainability – 26.2% of the University's total grant income.
- Joined United Nations Global Compact Network in Australia in 2015, signatory to UNGC since 2003.
- 44% international students enrolled in Higher Education.



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“Our Sustainable Urban Precincts Program will commit \$98 million over the next two years, with \$28.4 million invested in 2015.”

Martin Bean CBE

3. Vice Chancellor's statement

RMIT University is proud to present our first sustainability report, which marks an important step following the launch of RMIT's new Strategic Plan to 2020. It showcases some of the great work happening across the University and openly reports on our progress to advance sustainability.

The University has a longstanding commitment to sustainability. This was internationally recognised when RMIT won the Green Gown award for continuous improvement and institutional change in 2014. Our Sustainable Urban Precincts Program will commit \$98 million over the next two years, with \$28.4 million invested in 2015 to reduce the University's carbon footprint and deliver sustainable learning and research outcomes.

Our vision is to be a global university of technology, design and enterprise. As our society faces deep and transformative change, RMIT is in a unique position to make a positive impact on urban communities.

RMIT is located in some of the most dynamic and creative cities in the world. We are connected to our local communities and industries, impacting them through applied research and innovation.

The big sustainability issues and challenges of our time will shift the way we as a global community live and work. As an urban university, we take a leading role to develop solutions, reform energy systems, adapt to climate change, and improve access and opportunities. Our creative-edge comes from our close industry engagements. This ensures our graduates leave with the practical skills they need to apply sustainable thinking to the jobs and industries of the future.

At RMIT, we champion innovation and inclusion. We work with our partners in the community to drive sustainable prosperity, and embrace the diversity in our workforce and our student body.

Our ultimate goal is to offer our students life-changing experiences that shape the world. Their voices have raised issues of how the University effectively tackles sustainability, social justice and climate change. We commend this energy and enthusiasm. These complex problems inform our operational decisions and inspire our research and teaching agendas.

This report is prepared in accordance with the 'core' level of the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) sustainability-reporting framework and demonstrates our ongoing commitment to the initiative and principles of the UN Global Compact.

The RMIT Sustainability Report will be released annually as an open account of our social and environmental performance. It is an opportunity for us to continue the conversation with our community about how we can further work together to support and drive sustainable outcomes.

We invite you all to join the conversation

Martin Bean CBE
Vice-Chancellor and President

Prof Paul Gough
Pro Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President
Chair of the RMIT Sustainability Committee

4. About RMIT

4.1 Organisational profile information

RMIT is a global university of technology, design and enterprise. We make positive impacts and create life-changing experiences for our students through our core activities of teaching, research and engagement. RMIT was founded in 1887 as the Working Men's College. Our mission is to create transformative experiences for our students, getting them ready for life and work, and to help shape the world.

The University has an international reputation for excellence in professional and vocational education and outcome-oriented research. We offer doctoral, postgraduate, undergraduate and vocational programs that enables life-changing and career defining experiences for our students. RMIT researchers work with industry partners and the urban communities where we operate and their governments to solve practical problems through applied research and innovation.

RMIT is recognised as an educational leader in architecture and design, creative arts, communication, information technology, business and engineering. RMIT prides itself on the strong industry links it has forged in the University's 128-year history. Working with industry is integral to our leadership in applied research and education. It's also key to developing skilled and globally-focused graduates.

As a result, employers value our graduates for their leadership skills and work readiness.

The University has three campuses in Victoria, Australia, two campuses in Vietnam and a centre in Spain. The City campus occupies a key location within the heart of Melbourne. RMIT also offers programs through partners in Asia and Europe. We form strategic alignments with research and industry partners on every continent to inform the design and delivery of our educational and research programs.

RMIT is Australia's largest and most global tertiary institution. Globally we educate over 83,000 students (44% international) and employed over 5,000 staff. The consolidated 2015 net operating result for RMIT University and its subsidiaries was \$67.7 million. The University is also a significant landholder in the City of Melbourne, owning approximately six percent of Melbourne's central business district. RMIT's property portfolio comprises over 130 buildings of in excess of 460,000 m² gross floor area in Melbourne and a further nine buildings on overseas campuses with a total floor area of 54,000m².

4.2 Strategic Plan to 2020

In 2015 Ready for Life and Work, the new University Strategic Plan to 2020, was developed through a series of open conversations with students, staff and our community.

The strategy drives RMIT's mission to create transformative experiences for our students and get them ready for life and work.

Sustainability is embedded in this strategy, which harnesses RMIT's capabilities in research, teaching and innovation to create an impact on individual lives and broader society.

The Strategic Plan aims to:

1. Create life-changing educational experiences. This is sparked by changes in perspective and ambition in our students and the pathways and connections opened up by these experiences. Our work is life-changing in its focus on designing better solutions in the wider world. This includes work like building a more innovative and sustainable economy, improving energy and water systems, building safer, more resilient cities, and redesigning justice and youth services.
2. Support, develop and empower our staff to achieve greater impact and learning, and manage our financial, physical, and environmental resources sustainably.
3. Develop knowledge, skills and experience so our people can shape their own lives and help find solutions to pressing shared challenges. This is enabled by applying our expertise through collaborative innovation, and our global group of students, staff, digital networks, facilities and partnerships.

4.3 Governance

University Council

The Council is the University's governing authority that is responsible for RMIT's direction. The Council's role is set out in the RMIT Act 2010. The Act defines the University's objectives and the Council's statutory responsibilities. The Chancellor, Dr Ziggy Switkowski AO, chairs the Council.

Council Committees

The following Council committees have specific powers and responsibilities:

- Audit and Risk Management Committee
- Nominations, Remuneration and People Committee
- Infrastructure and Information Technology Committee
- Trusts and Philanthropy Committee

Academic Board

The Academic Board is responsible for higher and vocational education. It establishes procedures and recommends new policy, regulations and programs to the Council.

The Vice-Chancellor's Executive

The Vice-Chancellor and President Martin Bean CBE is responsible for ensures that the University has strong, effective leadership and a clear direction through its vision and strategic plan.

The Vice-Chancellor's Executive (VCE) gives strategic advice to the Vice-Chancellor across the University's portfolios. VCE advises on the strategic position of the University to ensure responsible and effective resource management. It also enhances the University's performance and culture by modelling and reviewing the implementation of behaviours in line with RMIT's values.

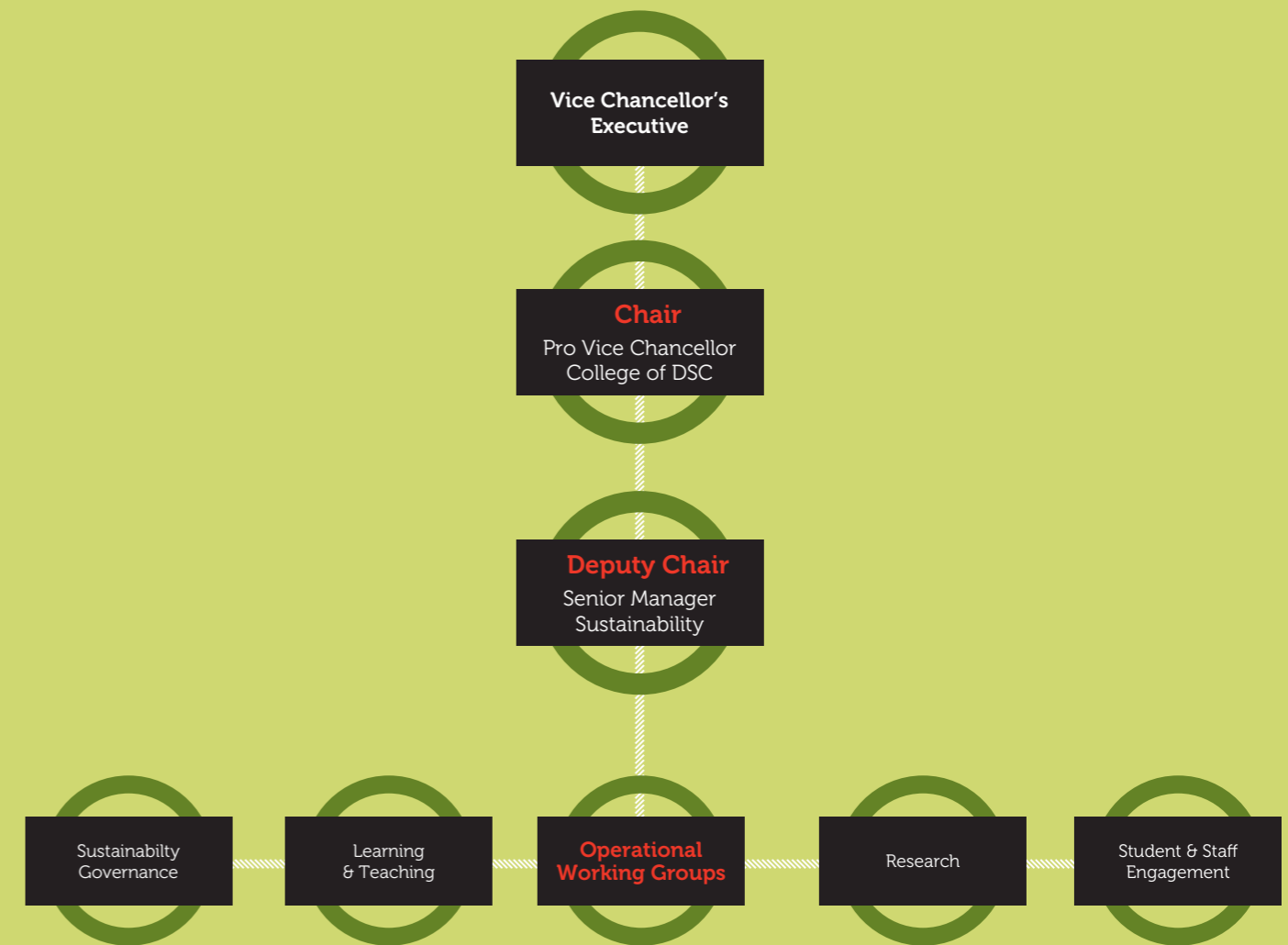
The Sustainability Committee

The Sustainability Committee is a sub-committee of the VCE. It gives advice on how to lead, coordinate and integrate sustainability principles and practices in core learning and teaching, research and operational activities.

The Sustainability Committee reports to VCE on the status of the University's sustainability performance. It also develops sustainability-related commitments, policies and initiatives. The Sustainability Committee coordinates its responsibilities through focus areas, as shown in Figure 1.



Figure 1.
RMIT Sustainability
Committee Structure



The Sustainability Committee has operational working groups for specific sustainability areas. These include infrastructure, procurement, carbon management, climate change adaptation, Information Technology and sustainability at the Vietnam campus. The operational working groups bring together operational staff and academic experts in the relevant fields.

The Sustainability Policy outlines the model for institution-wide sustainability excellence. It responds to national and international calls for tertiary education to play an influential role in helping to shape a sustainable future. The Policy focuses on the areas of organisational culture, tertiary education, research, community and partnerships, and infrastructure and operations.

5. Engaging our stakeholders

5.1 How we listen

We are an educational institution with a global presence. This means we take an international view when designing our courses, managing our impacts and listening to our stakeholders. Our stakeholders include students, staff, employees, suppliers, industry partners, alumni, governments and communities around all our worldwide campuses. These are the groups who make up our global University community. We impact them and they have the ability to impact us in return.

We listen to stakeholders in many ways. This helps us realise our mission, and create maximum impact through research, teaching, innovation and engagement activities. In developing the new RMIT Strategic Plan to 2020, we engaged thousands of students, staff members and alumni in open conversation through workshops, online discussions, presentations and forums to shape the University's future direction.

We engage with our students through biennial surveys, the work of our Students Group, collaboration with the RMIT University Student Union (RUSU) and by consulting with our Student Experience Advisory Committee to find meaningful ways to deliver transformative learning, campus, social and work experiences.

Staff are engaged through annual surveys, annual performance development reviews and university support services to support them in reaching their full potential and achieve greater impact and learning.

5.2 Reporting what matters

In 2015, we undertook a materiality review process involving in-depth conversations with internal and external stakeholders to inform the content of this report. Internal stakeholders included RMIT executives, senior leadership and members of the Sustainability Committee. Suppliers and business partners, industry groups and government stakeholders gave their external views on our impacts and performance. This was an important way to get stakeholder feedback on how we are performing and understand expectations for how we can address emerging challenges and scale up our positive impacts.

Our stakeholders said our most important impacts were how to:

- Shape future leaders with the skills to apply sustainability to real world challenges and evolving industries.
- Deliver socio-economic benefits to communities where we operate.
- Work with industry to translate sustainability research into practice and prepare job-ready graduates.
- Engage students and staff as part of the campus community to provide high quality learning and work places and incubate sustainability research and behaviours.

These issues shape the content of this report and inform our sustainability activities.

5.3 Memberships and external initiatives

We participate in local and global initiatives to scale up our positive impact and promote sustainability in the higher education sector.

RMIT signed the Talloires Declaration in 1995. This is a commitment by higher education institutions to become world leaders in developing, supporting and maintaining sustainability. We are also a signatory to the Australian Technology Network (ATN) Declaration of Commitment to Local, National and Global Sustainability. This is a pledge to make sustainability a focus in teaching and learning programs, research, infrastructure and operations and to reduce our emissions by 25% by 2020 (2007 baseline).

RMIT became a signatory to the United Nations (UN) Global Compact in September 2003. In 2015, the University joined the UN Global Compact Network in Australia (GCNA). This commitment to universal principles on human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption aligns with the work of the Global Cities Research Institute at RMIT and its work with the UN Global Compact Cities Programme.

RMIT has also joined the United Nations Higher Education for Sustainable Development sustainability initiative. This provides higher education institutions a unique interface between education, science, and policy making.

We have also forged partnerships to advance sustainability performance and demonstrate leadership in our sector and wider communities. Other industry association memberships are:

- Australasian Campuses Towards Sustainability (ACTS) to promote and support change towards best practice sustainability in the Australasian tertiary education sector
- The City of Melbourne's 1200 Buildings Program, which aims to reduce energy, water and carbon emissions by retrofitting commercial buildings
- In partnership with the Green Building Council of Australia (GBCA), RMIT utilises and pilots a number of Green Star rating tools to drive sustainability outcomes through best practice buildings and sustainable precinct-wide infrastructure planning.
- Tertiary Education Facilities Management Association Inc. (TEFMA), RMIT participates in the TEFMA sustainability performance benchmarking study to track performance against the sector.



Case study: University wide consultation to shape our strategy

#shapeRMIT began as way for University leadership to engage with the RMIT community in an open dialogue about the organisation's future direction.

In March 2015, our Vice Chancellor Martin Bean invited the RMIT community to join in an open conversation about RMIT's future. The campaign was launched with an initial online forum that received hundreds of comments.

Engagement statistics with #shapeRMIT

- Total website page views: 82,974
- Individual sessions (unique and returning): 22,782
- Unique users: 13,527
- People registered for online discussions: 1,009
- Comments on 'Five Minutes for Five Years' webpage: 933

By October 2015, thousands of staff members, students and alumni had contributed to online discussions, workshops and presentations. Their ideas helped shape the goals and actions outlined in Ready for Life and Work: RMIT's strategic plan to 2020. The new, overarching strategy aims to create transformative experiences for our students, get them ready for life and work, and to help shape the world with research, innovation, teaching and engagement.

Since its release, the #shapeRMIT website continues to live on as a place for open debate and lively discussion. Its continued purpose is to share success, provide feedback and drive accountability toward achieving RMIT's strategic goals and priorities.



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6. Engaging students and staff in sustainability

6.1 Student led initiatives

RMIT students are passionate and engaged. They dedicate their time, skills and creativity to advance sustainability on campus. On campus sustainability initiatives allow them to co-create innovations for sustainable environments. This enhances the learning experience and develops leadership skills to address complex challenges. The RMIT community is made up of a number of student-led initiatives that promote sustainability.

RUSU Sustainability Collective

The Sustainability Collective is the group of students from the RMIT University Student Union (RUSU), working together in driving sustainability initiatives on campus. Projects implemented by the group include the furniture cage recycling project and the RUSU Realfoods organic, vegetarian café.

Greening RMIT

Promotes urban agriculture, gardening and sustainable food on campus, through education, collaboration, and a range of urban greening products and services. In collaboration with the School of Landscape Architecture, the project has started to construct an organic balcony garden on the RMIT City campus to promote urban agriculture and increase the amount of urban biodiversity.

Australian Youth Climate Coalition

A student club that mobilises the RMIT community to support the social movement to solve the climate crisis. The group organises protests, fundraisers, social events, and educate others throughout the year to become a part of the collective movement to inspire change.

Engineers without Borders

This group is comprised of students who are passionate about the goals of Engineers Without Borders Australia (EWB), committed to implementing its mission in the local context. The group supports its members to become involved in local projects, runs events, advertises positions within EWB and create a platform for likeminded people to socialise.

Fossil Free RMIT

Student-led campaign to divest the University's endowment of fossil fuel investments. It is a part of a global movement that is pressuring higher education institutions to rule out investment in fossil fuel stocks, make a public commitment to divest in a specified time period, and report publicly on its divestment progress.

RMIT Sustainability Ball

In 2015, RMIT students organised the second Sustainability Ball at the RMIT Alumni Courtyard. The event was jointly hosted by RUSU, Engineers Without Borders RMIT, Greening RMIT, Fossil Free RMIT and the RMIT Australian Youth Climate Coalition. The Sustainability Ball provides a venue for students to learn about sustainability-related projects on campus whilst enjoying sustainable food, ethical and organic drinks, and

Oxfam

RMIT Oxfam enables students to participate in broader Oxfam activities and access resources. The group provides a means for RMIT students to decide the Oxfam issues and activities they want to engage, to develop RMIT focused activities and campaigns and to relate broader issues to the RMIT experience.

Fair Trade Steering Committee

The RMIT Fair Trade Steering Committee guides Fair Trade at activities in the University, including providing ethically-sourced products at the RMIT Campus Store, encouraging Fair Trade certified coffee and food at café outlets, and organising events such as the Fair Trade fortnight.

6.2 Seedlings funds

Each year, the RMIT Sustainability Committee provides Seedlings Funds for sustainability projects and ventures. The funds aim is to catalyse new research and embed sustainability in learning and teaching, operations or student activities. Projects must show social, economic and environmental benefits to the RMIT community. Two hallmark projects from the 2015 Seedlings Fund are highlighted below.

Case study: From little things, big things grow

Ben McMenamin and his fellow students founded a blossoming initiative three years ago. 'Greening RMIT' is a student run organisation with a focus on promoting gardening and sustainability on the RMIT campus through education, collaboration and community.

Through hands-on education and community building events, it aims to inspire people to reconnect with food and the natural environment. The RMIT student community garden on a tenth floor balcony in the Melbourne CBD building is the 'living laboratory' where students learn how to grow food.

Greening RMIT gained the support of a Sustainability Committee through a 'Seedlings' grant in 2015. This funding allowed the group to expand into a student association and run a number of career and networking

events to give students the opportunity to meet industry professionals and network with peers. The Greening RMIT project received a highly commended at the ACTS Green Gown Award for Student Engagement in the same year.

In 2015, Ben also started a national University campaign called the Fair Food Challenge. This movement calls on Australian Universities to adopt more sustainable food procurement policies and provide affordable and healthy food options for students. Ben received the RMIT Robert Ritchie Prize in 2015 for outstanding student achievement.

All the students involved in Greening RMIT are sustainability champion and living proof of how our students can inspire and innovate for sustainability.

Case study: Spreading the love

At RMIT we love to see great ideas spread through communities. The Germinate project aimed to support arts and entertainment events become more sustainable by using renewable power and efficient audio technology.

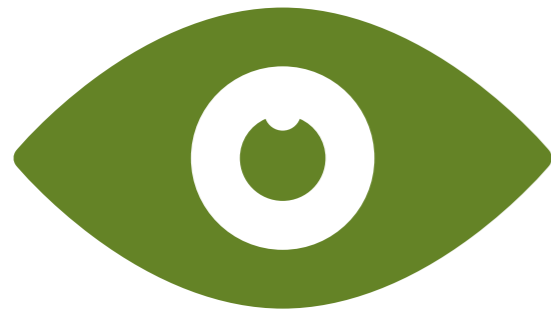
Germinate was built by music and sustainability industry innovators Creative Environment Enterprises Pty Ltd in collaboration with Dr. Ed Montano at RMIT University. It features the latest efficient audio amplification and LED lighting technology.

Germinate is a fully operational 5kW solar audio/visual production system. With a state of the art and highly efficient sound and lighting system, Germinate powered over 45 live music events across Australia since the summer of 2010, with a total audience of over 400,000 people. Collaborations included a range of events like

the Harvest Festival, where Germinate hosted world renowned international DJs, as well as tours of remote indigenous communities, local government events and national touring events.

As part of the RMIT Bachelor of Arts (Music Industry) students worked with industry partners to produce an event based on sustainability and utilising the Germinate solar technology. Organised through a first-time collaboration between RMIT students, RMIT Seedlings Grant and Melbourne Music Week's Self-Made presented by Levi's®, Breakout was a highly successful sustainable Melbourne music event. Situated within the depths of the Old Melbourne Gaol, upcoming local acts raised the roof and awareness of sustainability and environmental consciousness in the music industry.

6. Engaging students and staff in sustainability



“The eyes of the world will be on the talks and one of our own students will be at the heart of this discussion, reflecting RMIT’s commitment to sustainability.”

6.3 Building sustainability capabilities

RMIT builds its own sustainable community by raising awareness about sustainability on campus, so it becomes part of peoples’ everyday decision making.

The sustainability team communicates commitments and important information for the campus community in staff induction processes and Sustainability at RMIT brand communications. This includes website, email improvement suggestions, posters and marketing materials, and the sustainability staff Yammer page.

We engage our students and staff in sustainability by encouraging them to modify their own behaviours to minimise impacts on the environment and promote social inclusion on campus. In 2015 RMIT sent a number of students to various sustainability conferences, including the World Student Environment Network Summit in Perth, the Fairly Educated Conference in Adelaide and the Australasian Campuses Towards Sustainability (ACTS) Conference in Geelong. Staff can build their capabilities in teaching ‘sustainability skills’ through both internal and external funding sources. The University also provides a range of online resources and professional development workshops on Education for Sustainability, so that staff can embed sustainability into programs and courses in meaningful ways.

Key events take place on campuses each year to raise awareness about sustainability and influence sustainable behaviours. Examples are Earth Hour, Fairtrade Fortnight, and Ride to Uni Day.

Case study: Green Innovators battle it out in a contest of ideas

RMIT University has been the sole educational partner of the Sustainable Living Festival since 2012. This fruitful partnership founded the ‘Green Innovators Competition’ to showcase student innovation and sustainable design to hundreds of festival-goers. It also celebrates the ingenuity of our students as they solve real world problems.

The Green Innovators Competition gives students the opportunity to create sustainable projects and innovations outside their academic work. Students from all disciplines are free to enter the competition.

This event has continued to grow. It is now a major event supporting our strategic plan in the area of urban sustainable futures and design. The Green Innovators Competition also encourages potential students to take up sustainable design and environmental courses.

By providing a monetary prize and the opportunity for students to pitch and present their innovations to the public and a panel of industry experts, the Green Innovators students learn the vital skills to thrive in jobs and industries of the future.

Case study: RMIT student attends COP21 Climate Change conference in Paris

RMIT student, entrepreneur and passionate environmentalist, Matthew Race, travelled to Paris to attend the 2015 United Nations Climate Change Conference. Race was invited by Vice Chancellor Martin Bean to represent RMIT after a passionate conversation with students and staff, and a strong campaign from Fossil Free RMIT about the University’s climate change approach.

The 21st Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change was on 20 November to 11 December 2015. The conference was critical to secure a new international agreement on climate change that caps global warming below two degrees.

“I’m proud of the current initiatives that we’ve been doing and proud of attending a university that takes sustainability seriously,” said Matthew.

“In terms of Paris, I never ever expected to be going. I just put my case forward to be honest, and I pretty much left it all on the table.”

Martin Bean said the decision to send Race to Paris put RMIT at the very centre of the climate change debate. This aligned with the University’s vision to offer life-changing educational experiences for students.

“We are all striving to create a better world and supporting initiatives that enable outcomes such as more sustainable energy and water use, and building safer and more resilient cities, is a big part of that,” said the Vice Chancellor.

“The eyes of the world will be on the talks and one of our own students will be at the heart of this discussion, reflecting RMIT’s commitment to sustainability.”

The Bachelor of Business (Entrepreneurship) student has started his own residential renewable energy installation company, NegaWATT Australia. The project won him the 2014 and 2015 Jacques Nasser Business Start-up Scholarship. His ultimate vision is to one day build it into a peer-to-peer, decentralised energy company that involves the sharing of electricity between users.

6. Engaging students and staff in sustainability

6.4 Student wellbeing

Our students told us they love being part of the city but it's was hard to find space to relax and enjoy campus life. They wanted more places to collaborate and study, and want easy to use services without waiting in a queue.

This is why our focus in 2015 was on student wellbeing, going beyond the classroom to provide social spaces that foster productivity, collaboration and creativity among our students.

Every year, RMIT conducts a Student Experience Survey to get feedback on different elements of the student experience, like teaching quality, learning resources, student support and skills development. This is an important way to track how well we meet students' needs and deliver a supportive learning environment. The overall student satisfaction score was 77.2% among Higher Education students and 85% among Vocational Education students. This is a good level of student satisfaction, but there are clear areas where we can improve. We will focus on setting clear standards and expectations and providing more feedback to our students to lift our satisfaction score and enhance the overall student experience.

High quality learning environments

The University's capital works program delivers major, state-of-the-art learning, teaching and research facilities across all our campuses. Each year the program aims to provide facilities that enhance students and staff connectivity and interdisciplinary interaction, whilst developing new indoor and outdoor recreation spaces to enhance the student experience.

A number of projects in 2015 were implemented to enhance sustainability and the student experience, including bike parking upgrades to provide more secure bike parking spaces and new drinking fountains to help the planet and student's pockets.

Supporting social connections

RMIT is one of the most global universities in the world. International students make up 45% of our student population. The University also ranks 32nd in the world for the international profile of our academic staff. Domestically, our student profile consists of overseas born students, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, rural and remote locations and students from less privileged backgrounds.

Social and cultural diversity is one of our greatest assets. It gives our community and partners access to a range of cultures, ideas and experiences. An inclusive cultural and social environment equips our students for life and work in a global environment. This is why as an institution, it is our goal to recognise, value and grow our diversity, and support social integration, on our campuses and in the community.

RMIT offers a wide range of initiatives to build a university culture where students and staff are tolerant and respectful. We want the University to be a safe place where diversity is valued. RMIT offers training to all staff on the value of inclusion and cultural diversity.

Student Wellbeing Advisors at RMIT Connect offers support and advice to international students during their time in Australia and at RMIT. They provide free and confidential advice on a range of matters, including settling into study at RMIT, living in Melbourne, accommodation options, managing money, emergency assistance, and getting involved in student life.

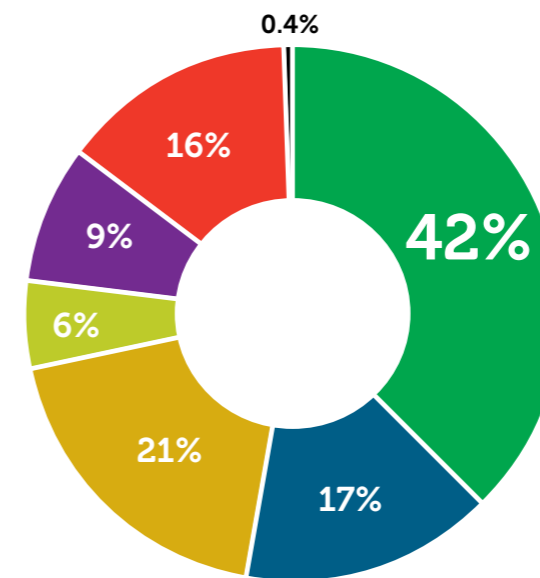
The Ngarara Willim Centre for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples supports Aboriginal students, offering ongoing guidance with study, work, living and cultural needs.

The Disability Liaison Unit (DLU) helps students living with a disability, long-term illness and/or mental health conditions to ensure that all students can actively participate in all aspects of RMIT life.

We design our communal spaces for social/cultural integration to promote access, engagement and harmony. This reinforces our commitment to on-campus diversity and inclusion.



Figure 2: Student equity statistics

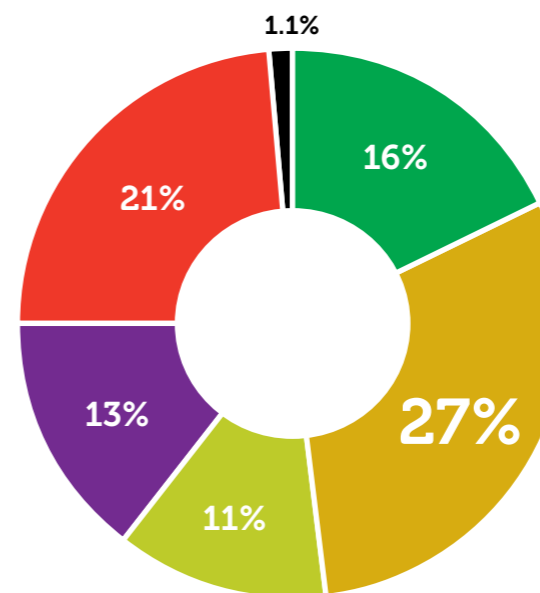


Higher Education



21% overseas born

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders
- Low socio-economic status
- Rural/remote
- Non-English speaking background
- Overseas born
- VET Students admission to Higher Education
- School Leavers



Vocational Education



13% Rural/remote

7. Shaping Future Leaders

RMIT understands that its biggest social responsibility is to shape future leaders who have the skills, talent and passion to drive positive change. Our job is to provide a transformative learning experience for our students in the formal curriculum, but also through our industry network. We foster connections with broader industry and society to equip students with the skills to shape future practices and live and work sustainably.

We integrate sustainability into our learning and teaching, equip our students with innovative and enterprising skills for future industry, and provide them with opportunities to engage and make positive contributions to campus sustainability initiatives.

7.1 Equipping graduates with skills for future industries and jobs

Graduate learning outcomes are at the centre of learning and teaching at RMIT. Our strategic goal is to prepare students for life and work, ensuring that every RMIT student has an education connected to industry and enterprise.

Sustainability is at the heart of our graduate attributes. The attributes aim to give graduates the ability to contribute to their community and industries, engage with diversity, provide leadership on sustainable approaches to complex problems, and become responsible and engaged members of their local, global and professional communities.



Case study: Sustainability Beyond the Boundaries: Graduate Sustainability Industry Impact Study

At RMIT, we always look for ways to enhance students' sustainability skills to prepare them for life beyond the classroom. Sustainability capabilities directly link with the top employability skills employers want from graduates. These include learning, communication, problem solving, initiative and enterprise skills.

RMIT integrated principles of sustainability into graduate attributes to meet employer expectations and our own learning and teaching practice standards. One of our general graduate attributes is the 'environmentally aware and responsible' graduate attribute (EAR GA). This expects graduates to possess a level of sustainability awareness and capacity to act responsibly during the degree programs. We launched the Sustainability Beyond the Boundaries: Graduate Sustainability Industry Impact Study to identify how RMIT graduates apply RMIT's EAR GA to their professional practice.

The study was separated into two stages to assess the success and impact of the Graduate Attribute. The first stage reviewed existing assessment approaches. We also held graduate focus groups to determine the best method for assessing the capability, and ran surveys and interviews with staff from university alumni departments to understand the best ways to engage with graduates.

We then designed the attribute assessment tool based on the first stage findings. A vignette approach presented a hypothetical situation or story to participants. Fifty-eight graduates from the RMIT's School of Property Construction and Management (PCPM) completed the survey.

The outcome of the project is a tested survey tool to assess the attainment level for the RMIT 'environmentally aware' graduate attribute, and an approach to engage graduates in research with the university.

The pilot survey showed that there was a high number of PCPM graduates who got jobs that could be linked to their sustainability-related courses at RMIT. Over 90% respondents felt that their learning at RMIT gave them the capacity to respond (to take action, responsibility, leadership on) sustainability issues. 68% stated that they consider their workplace to have an expectation for employees to be 'environmentally aware and responsible'. When asked how they would likely respond to information about their employer's negative environmental or social impacts, most graduates said that they would make changes to reduce negative impacts and suggest ideas that support wider change.



Case study: LTfS Innovation Project – Applying key principles of sustainability to work integrated learning

As future socially responsible citizens in society, RMIT students have an awareness and understanding of the critical issues that affect the sustainability of our future planet. Studies show that hospitals are significant contributors to natural resource depletion and environmental damage. In many areas of management there are tensions between the interests of the patients and the environment, with several gaps in the evidence based on hospital sustainability.

The sustainability module known as 'The Practice of Sustainability in the Diagnostic Laboratory' tackles issues associated with the future workforce of our students in a clinical hospital setting.

The module empowers students with the knowledge and skills to be active contributors to environmental sustainability in their workplaces, as well as in broader society.

The module is an online course taken by students completing the WIL Professional Practice in hospital laboratories across Melbourne. This is the time when students are first exposed to the coalface of the working environment of their future profession. The sustainability module centres on three main parts: the 'nuts and bolts' of sustainability principles; a focus on waste from hospital and clinical perspectives; and preparing laboratory medicine graduates to be the change agents for the future.

RMIT graduate attributes

1. Work-ready
2. Global in outlook and competence
3. Environmentally aware and responsible
4. Culturally and socially aware
5. Active and lifelong learners
6. Innovative

Graduate attributes are closely linked to program outcomes and employability. Industry linkages are integral to developing highly skilled, globally focused graduates. Most of our higher education and vocational programs use elements of practical experience in a work setting. This is part of our commitment to industry-relevant education and training. Students have the opportunity to engage in work placements, industry projects, internships, and opportunities for overseas work and study. This gives them the skills and knowledge that employers value in a fast-changing global economy. As a result, employers from around the world value RMIT graduates for their leadership and work readiness. Over 65% of our graduates secured full-time employment, four months after graduation.

Learning and Teaching for Sustainability supports other University initiatives that build graduate employability.

These include:

- **Graduate Future Careers** a university-wide project to maximise the employability and enterprise formation prospects of all RMIT students, and
- **The Work Integrated Learning** initiative – a collaborative engagement with industry and community partners, where students learn and work with partners and build networks with potential future employees.

7.2 Mainstreaming sustainability in teaching

Graduating into a world of unique challenges, our students need new knowledge and skills that transcend old disciplinary and sector boundaries. We support our students to become future leaders by offering learning and teaching for sustainability (LTfS), and engaging them to co-create solutions to real world problems, both on and off campus.

LTfS is an ongoing RMIT initiative led by the Office of Dean Learning and Teaching to create new curriculum resources, professional development and experiential learning activities. Each school and discipline is encouraged to apply sustainable development concepts relevant to their real-world, real-time issues, professional-industry standards, and government and community priorities that reflect both local and global contexts.

The initiative aligns with the practices of Education for Sustainability. It aims to develop students' sustainability literacy, and enhance the learning experience in relation to current and future professional and global imperatives and improves their graduate employment outcomes.

What is Education for Sustainability?

According to the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, Education for Sustainability means including key sustainable development issues into teaching and learning; for example, climate change, disaster risk reduction, biodiversity, poverty reduction, and sustainable consumption. It also requires participatory teaching and learning methods that motivate and empower learners to change their behaviour and take action for sustainable development. Education for Sustainability promotes competencies like critical thinking, imagining future scenarios and making decisions in a collaborative way.

The Office of Dean Learning and Teaching offers three LTfS fellowships to leading RMIT educators each year. The primary focus of these fellowships is on strategic, high-quality curriculum resources and learning activities, created in collaborative and innovative ways with industry-focuses.

The LTfS Fellowship supported this year were,

- **Dr Olivia Guntarik** – Strengthening Students Environmental Literacies through Indigenous Art Education
- **Associate Professor Yoko Akama** – Designing Re-Connectedness
- **Mette Stryhn** – Open Boundaries: Sustainable Furniture Solutions

RMIT hosts an LTfS Multidisciplinary Network of Academics and Professionals to enhance sustainability connectivity, scholarship and curriculum. It aims to create a fluid “incubation space” for curriculum and professional development, shared events, opportunities and resources, which connect students and staff.

In 2015, RMIT’s teaching and research of sustainability in the built environment received global recognition in winning the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors’ Sustainability Award. The award, which is aligned to the United Nations Principles for Responsible Management Education, showcases best practice and achievement in construction-related programs.

Formal sustainability programs

RMIT’s environment and sustainability programs empower students to create a more sustainable world. RMIT undergraduate and postgraduate programs give students options to specialise in their areas of interest. Options include international development, conservation, engineering, geospatial sciences, planning, environmental science or sustainable practices. Students tackle problems of water usage, energy, food, liveable cities, climate change and risk management and understanding challenges faced by the local, national and global community.

Our international and community services programs help students contribute to combatting social and economic inequalities and empower people and communities. Students can choose from programs such as community service, international studies, public policy, social work, psychology and languages to work towards this agenda.

RMIT students work with academic experts and industry leaders, and graduate with practical knowledge and experience ready meet real world sustainability challenges.

Strengthening Students’ Environmental Literacies through Indigenous Art Education

We try to have the maximum social impact through our teaching fellowships. This LTfS Fellowship aims to show Indigenous people’s close relationship to their environment, as well as the social and cultural significance for Australian history education. The research team collaborated with artists working in the visual arts, craft, design and new media sector to highlight how Indigenous art forms can strengthen RMIT students’ environmental literacy.

The three desired outcomes of the Fellowship were to:

- obtain photographs of Indigenous creative artefacts and artworks
- compile a teaching kit that included a range of outdoor learning strategies that incorporate aspects of the built and natural environments, and
- develop an online learning tool that provides a further means to connect with local artists who participated in the project.

We worked with Indigenous artists, elders and traditional custodians, as well as Barbara Morgan from the RMIT Study and Learning Centre, and Language and Learning Centre Skills Advisor, Simon Evans to achieve these desired outcomes.

The teaching kit focuses on how to evaluate students’ skills in describing and explaining the cultural, political and economic environments. It gives the opportunity to directly test the learning outcomes as they relate to one of RMIT’s largest courses – Pop Culture in Everyday Life.

We were able to establish the foundations of a model for Indigenous engagement in education outcomes. This found that it was important to involve Indigenous participants as an ongoing part of the learning process.

The project ran an extensive community outreach and consultation process in many Indigenous communities and organisations. This incorporated Indigenous worldviews in the design of the teaching content. We visited sites of cultural significance such as the Walking Birrarung trail, Aboriginal Heritage Walk at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Indigenous coastal trail that stretches from Brighton to Beaumaris, Bataluk Cultural Trail in Gippsland, the Stony Rises in Pomborneit Western Districts of Victoria as well as heritage sites around the Great Ocean Road, the Grampians and the Murray River.



Designing Re-Connectedness

Designing Re-Connectedness is a framework pioneered by RMIT to incorporate sustainability into design education. It aimed to shift thinking about sustainability in design from a marginal ‘eco-’ add-on to an embedded guiding principle in design education. Yoko Akama from the School of Media and Communication developed the Designing Re-Connectedness framework. The framework incorporates six spheres of sustainability: environmental, social, economic, technological, political and spiritual. Each sphere develops students’ understanding of the inter-relationship of these dimensions in their design approaches to achieve the ‘Environmentally Aware and Responsible Graduate Attribute’.

The six-sphere framework expanded student’s understanding of sustainability.

It clarified how they could incorporate sustainable principles into their own design practice.

“In previous tertiary design courses I have completed, sustainability was looked upon with barely the depth of the TBL [Triple Bottom Line] theory, where it was suggested the most we could do as designers was to use recycled paper and vegetable inks,” said one student.

“Through the six-spheres I have begun to understand the wider effects of sustainable design. Particularly through the three new areas, my understanding has broadened from looking at being sustainable as a purely physical/product based ideology to including a deeper, human meaning and connectedness of life and design choices, actions and thoughts.”

Open Boundaries - Sustainable Furniture Solutions

RMIT is proud of how its design education enables students to use their creativity to develop innovative and sustainable furniture ideas to bring to market. The Open Boundaries course gave students a socially responsible design brief. The brief outlined options to provide sustainable furniture solutions for Indigenous communities/organisations, or for the homeless and ‘newly settled’ in Melbourne.

The Indigenous communities/organisations included Centrelink liaison, Ngaigu-Mulu Aboriginal Corporation (NMAC). This Aboriginal-owned and managed organisation focused on Indigenous training and employment through local Indigenous knowledge and cross-cultural training programs. Students researched the political, social, historical and philosophical facts and issues of the Indigenous community in Katherine in the Northern Territory to establish sustainable and viable outcomes for seating objects.

The target market were Indigenous people attending NMAC courses. As part of the design brief students must allow the maker to assemble the seat themselves and there must be room for the makers own artwork

as part of the aesthetic. Due to the low literacy of the target market, students must produce suitable assembly instructions and the object must be able to be assembled during the duration of the NMAC course.

The homeless and ‘newly settled’ group included young people with children with links to a homelessness support service. This group wanted to establish and/or maintain private rental as a long term housing option and needed furniture. The target market for the students’ were clients of the Salvation Army’s Crisis Centre in St Kilda with all items being manufactured at Creative Opportunities, an Australian disability manufacturing enterprise within the Salvation Army.

At the end of the Open Boundaries course, students had insights into ways we can re-vision our future through considering the impact of resource consumption and how our localities and circumstances affect the way in which we live our lives.

8. Sustainable Urban Precincts Program (SUPP)

The Sustainable Urban Precincts Program (SUPP) is RMIT's \$98 million plan to cut energy, water use and carbon emissions through sustainable design and innovation. SUPP includes five learning and teaching projects, six interdisciplinary research projects and 10 PhD scholarships. As a part of this project, RMIT students and staff are now part of world-leading, innovative and collaborative multi-disciplinary research projects, supported by strong industry linkages.

8.1 Learning and Teaching projects supported by SUPP

The Green Office and Classroom

Dr Margaret Hamilton – Computer Science and Information Technology

The Green Office and Classroom project uses RMIT buildings and students as a guide to design a more sustainable workplace. It used 'crowd sourced' data to enable real time monitoring of green variables on campus. This reduces the University's carbon footprint. The project addressed measurable objectives of the Sustainability Action Plan and use of leading edge communications to engage students in sustainability.

Electrical Building Lab

Dr Brendan McGrath - Electrical and Computer Engineering

The Electrical Building lab is an experimental laboratory used in the teaching of sustainable electrical building services in the School Electrical and Computer Engineering (SECE) elective – 'Electrical Building Design'. The laboratory will augment existing electrical energy teaching technologies, and create a 'virtual plant' that replicates major building electrical service equipment. This will be a living laboratory project that demonstrates electrical energy efficiency and integrates sustainability-teaching into the SECE teaching program.

The Greenhouse Challenge

Assoc. Professor Tom Steiner, Deputy PVC, Learning and Teaching (Science, Engineering and Health)

The Greenhouse Challenge collaborates with industry to create Work Integrated Learning opportunities on project topics. The project will create a learning environment where students, staff and industry are directly engaged in reducing RMIT's energy footprint. It extends School of Aerospace, Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering's (SAMME) existing Greenhouse Challenge program, in operation since 2004, to multidisciplinary student cohorts across all three academic Colleges.

Showcasing IT for Sustainability

Dr Alem Molla - Business IT and Logistics

The SUPP project is a living laboratory used to create real-life scenarios to develop the analytical thinking, problem solving skills and environmental competence of Information Systems (IS) students. Students will use a series of multimedia case studies to enhance their capabilities in a workplace context. Case studies to be piloted include; IT Strategy, Knowledge Management, IT Industry, Professional Ethics, and Decision Systems, Master of Business IT Courses. The project will differentiate RMIT as a leader in Green IT.

Navigating a 'Fierce Planet'

Dr Nicole Pepperell and Dr Liam Magee - Global, Urban and Social Studies

The 'Fierce-Planet' sustainability game is assisting RMIT to foster creative ways of learning, teaching and thinking about sustainability in their curriculum. The Fierce-Planet is an existing game developed within the Global Cities Institute in conjunction with the UN Global Compact Cities Program. It promotes learning about complex urban sustainability issues, and interrelationships between resource contention, social needs and environmental preservation. This project will develop specific game models that can be readily integrated into course delivery across multiple disciplines.

8.2 Research projects supported by SUPP

The Sustainable Urban Precincts Program supports six interdisciplinary research projects highlighted below:

Buildings Engineered for Urban Sustainability: Performance Assessment, forecasting and a toolkit for selection of performance based retrofits

Professor. Sujeeva Setunge, DSC. Property Construction and Project Management

This project increases understanding of performance of Green Building retrofits and generates new knowledge measuring gaps between expected and actual performance. Project outcomes will result in improved design, investment and construction management of green retrofits.

Inhabiting Buildings: Embedding Sustainability into RMIT Culture

Dr Tania Lewis (Media and Communications) and Dr Yolande Strengers (Global Urban and Social Studies)

This research aims to develop an in-depth baseline map of how RMIT students and staff inhabit selected buildings, and a change management action Research plan to encourage more sustainable practices. It will focus on measuring everyday social practices to identify how resources are used, the role buildings and technology in resource use, and where the opportunities are for social, cultural and organisational change.

Powering our Future Cities: Achieving Greener Buildings and Energy Use Behaviour Using Demand Response and Energy Informatics

Professor Xinghou Yu, Platform Technologies Research Institute

This research advances understanding of how demand response technologies and energy informatics can be employed to influence building level energy use and individual user's behaviours and power our future cities. Project integrates existing and proposed green technologies on-site at RMIT and addresses the behavioural, technical and economic challenges associated with energy use behaviour.

Enhanced Micro-grid with Sustainable Energy Storage for Peak Load Levelling

Professor Grahame Holmes, School Electrical and Computer Engineering

This project explores the potential for an enhanced micro-grid with sustainable energy storage to provide short term peak load levelling urban building complex at RMIT. It provides the capacity to unite all forms of renewable energy generation across RMIT Bundoora and City campuses into a fully functioning smart energy grid.

Online Infrastructure for iCO2mmunity: Personal and community carbon footprint monitoring for university wide engagement towards greener living

Dr Flora Salim, Spatial Information Architecture Laboratory and School of Architecture and Design

This project implements a technology solution for use by students and staff to increase self and community awareness of green living behaviours. It is specifically designed to support RMIT students and staff to monitor and compare carbon footprints generated from their work, study and travel activities and inspire them to choose better alternatives.


Technical and triple bottom line evaluation of a tri-generation system for RMIT Bundoora West Campus

Dr. Abhijit Date, School of Aerospace, Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering

As part of the SUPP, Honeywell has designed a 1200kW tri-generation system for installation in late 2016 alongside the existing central plant at the Bundoora West campus. This project is working alongside our industry partners to conduct an evaluation of the technical performance of this tri-generation system, and assess its overall, triple bottom line impacts on a, lifecycle basis compared with the alternative of grid electricity and natural gas supply.

8. Sustainable Urban Precincts Program (SUPP)



 **Case study: A once in a generation opportunity to advance sustainability**

The Sustainable Urban Precincts Program (SUPP) shows how we are committed to transforming our own built environment to create sustainable and resilient cities. RMIT's vision is to integrate our campuses with our neighbouring cities so we contribute to urban sustainability and culture. We strive to ensure that changes to the built environment show leadership in sustainable design and innovation.

SUPP uses an innovative hybrid energy performance contract to achieve cost savings, cut emissions and meet asset management requirements. Utilising the RMIT campus as a 'Living Laboratory' to nurture research that engages with internal infrastructure and operations.

The five strategic objectives of the SUPP are:

- Reducing resource consumption
- Achieving the University's carbon emissions target
- Improving maintenance standards and asset management
- Leveraging learning, teaching and research outcomes
- Providing future-proofed infrastructure

SUPP aims to reduce RMIT's electricity use over eight years by an estimated 239 million kilowatt hours. This will lead to a 30,000-tonne reduction in greenhouse gas emissions annually. Water use will be cut by an estimated 68 million litres.

RMIT is on track to achieve the ATN emissions reduction target of 25% below the 2007 baseline by 2020, three years ahead of schedule. RMIT has also committed to a \$98 million plan to cut energy and water use and greenhouse gas emissions by upgrading ageing infrastructure in 90 buildings across its three Melbourne campuses.

Activities completed in 2015 include:

Upgrades to all of the existing air-conditioning and heating plant to the Brunswick campus, which services 21,000m² of gross floor area. This included provision of conditions in spaces that had previously been without reliable air conditioning (B514 and B512) and the installation of a new central chilled water plant servicing three key buildings on campus.

For the Bundoora West campus, SUPP upgrades to heating and cooling plant will be felt by 90% of the campus, which equates to a total area of 49,000m². The Bundoora West campus central plant was totally renewed and in addition to providing new boilers and chillers to enable reliable and efficient campus operations. The upgrades will improve the reliability of the systems whilst providing additional flexibility to the campus operations. A significant air-conditioning upgrade was also completed within Building 202 to improve the system function whilst also providing better comfort outcomes within this space.

On the Bundoora East campus, 76% of campus teaching space has been upgraded with chillers having been replaced within two key buildings to provide efficient and reliable cooling moving forward. Additionally, the boiler plant that services building 251 was replaced and a total of 15,400 m² of campus space is now serviced by renewed heating and cooling systems, including a number of areas that have not had reliable cooling for a number of years.

On the City campus, the SUPP project has completed the installation of three new high efficiency chillers in Building 12 which serve Buildings 80 and the majority of buildings on both sides of Bowen Street. These new chillers replaced aged and existing chillers that had reached end of life and were at risk of failure.

Working with our industry partners, Siemens and Honeywell the installations include alternate power generation and reticulation, lighting control systems, heating, ventilation and air-conditioning systems, building automation systems; and water saving and harvesting solutions.

The program also adds value to education and research. It includes \$4.8 million of the funding dedicated to Learning and Teaching and Research Projects.

The SUPP at RMIT is a "once in a generation" opportunity for the University to propel the University forward in achieving sustainable outcomes.



8. Sustainable Urban Precincts Program (SUPP)

8.3 PhD scholarships supported by SUPP

The RMIT SUPP Program is supporting a number of PhD scholarships for students across RMIT. These projects are implemented within the six research studies supported by SUPP.

Buildings Engineered for Urban Sustainability

1. Local and global pattern detection for event-aware time series prediction, Hui Song
2. Engineering sustainable performance: Assessing the influence of Building performance on Academic occupant productivity, Matthew Francis
3. Optimised energy retrofitting of higher education buildings, Kanishka Atapattu

Inhabiting Buildings

4. Work/life ecologies - Flying High: Academic Air Travel and Sustainability, A/Prof. Tania Lewis and Dr. Andrew Glover
5. Smart Materials, Smart Spaces, Smart Practices: An ethnography of a technologically innovative university building, Allister Hill
6. Embedding Sustainability in Food Practices at Urban Universities: Investigating Eating Spaces for Students at RMIT City campus, Bhavna Middha

Powering Future Cities

7. Intelligent Energy Demand Management for Building Automation Networks within a Smart Grid, Xinghuo Yu (SECE), Caspar Ryan (CSIT) and Alem Molla (BITL)
8. Information Systems for Shaping Energy Use Behavior, Sami Eusuf
9. Adaptive Software for Energy Management in Green Buildings, Khan Kashif
10. Distributed Optimisation for Demand Side Management in Smart Grids, Chaojie Li

Enhanced Micro-grid with Sustainable Energy Storage

11. Enhanced Microgrid with Sustainable Energy Storage for Peak Load Levelling – Prof Grahame Holmes
12. Integration of Hydrogen Energy Storage into a Renewable Microgrid– Anima Ganeshan

Infrastructure for ICO2mmunity

13. Context-aware Device-free Activity Recognition with uncertainty analysis, HDR Candidate, Wei Shao
14. Mining Changes in Mobility Patterns from Smartphone and Wireless Connectivity Data HDR Candidate, Amin Sadri
15. Human Occupancy Recognition and Indoor Comfort Prediction with Crowd-sourced and Ambient Sensor Data, Irvan Areif Ang

Tri-generation Energy Project

16. Basic System Energy Flows – TRIGEN as the Base System, Mitchell Lennard

9. Sustainability research and innovation

RMIT is a recognised leader in sustainability research. Our research programs span environmental, social, economic and social domains and extend from social sciences to technology and natural sciences. Broad concerns about consumption, climate change, urban environments, and natural resources (energy, water, biodiversity) are featured in our global leading and engaged research. Our research spans contemporary design practice, urban futures, social change, information systems, technology, materials, advanced manufacturing, biomedical and health innovation, and global business innovation

Some of RMIT's best sustainability contributions come from cutting-edge research that provides solutions to social and environmental challenges. We collaborate with industry to translate our research into practical outcomes. We work with businesses, governments and community organisations to address existing and future needs, share knowledge and develop innovative approaches. We recognise that our collaborative efforts influence how future industries and cities can develop and achieve sustainable outcomes for their stakeholders.

9.1 World class sustainability themed research

Sustainability themed research is a large part of RMIT's overall research profile. More than a quarter of all funded research projects were classified as sustainability-related by December 2015. This totalled over \$41 million in research funding dedicated to sustainability, 26.2% of the University's total grant income.

Sustainability research programs feature strongly in RMIT's research profile, with 76 PhDs and 10 Masters completed in the past three years. The University produced over 800 weighted publications, of which 7% were on the topic of sustainability.

The most recent sustainability research audit found that sustainability research grant funding across the University continues to grow. The target areas for research funding include sustainable cities, engineering and sustainability, renewable energy, environmental management, policy and planning, business and sustainability, and disaster management.

The Australian Research Council's Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) assessment system evaluates the quality of the research conducted at Australian universities. In 2015, RMIT was rated as 'well above world standards' in 13 fields and 'above world standard' in nine. This included architecture, environmental science and management, urban and regional planning, design practice and management, and civil engineering.

9.2 Research programs and centres

RMIT hosts a number of research centres that work on different sustainability areas. Our flagship sustainability research centres addresses climate change, resilient cities and communities, design and built environment, organisational change, public policy and social change. They draw on the University's interdisciplinary knowledge and expertise and build collaboration with relevant external partners to create real-world outcomes.

The Global Cities Research institute brings together key researchers to understand complex issues in global urban settings from provincial centres to mega-cities. The Institute is associated with the UN Global Compact Cities Programme, working to address questions of sustainability, resilience, human security and adaptation in the face of globalisation and climate change.

The Centre for Urban Research is contributing to shaping cities that are environmentally, socially and economically sustainable. The Centre was established in 2012 to promote a better understanding and insight into urban questions and challenges. It leads research on critical intersecting programs like behaviour change, climate change and resilience, critical urban governance, housing, conservation science, infrastructure and mobility, and urban cultures and technologies.



8. Sustainable Urban Precincts Program (SUPP)

Case study:
Envisioning sustainable cities

The United Nations-affiliated Global Cities Research Institute aims to build sustainable cities through its research. We are living through a period where urban living has supplanted rural life for the first time in human history. Cities face the growing challenge of providing secure and sustainable places to live.

The cross-disciplinary Institute was formed in 2006 undertake highly collaborative research that links with institutions and people around the world in long-term partnerships. The centre draws on the considerable skills of teaching staff. Associate Professor Usha Iyer-Raniga, Deputy Dean of the School of Property, Construction and Project Management was appointed the co-lead of the United Nations Environment Programme 10YFP Programme for Buildings and Construction in 2015.

The Program promotes a common understanding of sustainable buildings for stakeholders and identifies the knowledge, resources and incentives to build, maintain and use them. It ensures that structures are healthy for life and work, sustainably utilise resources, respond to climate change and contribute to socio-economic

development. The Program will be launched in Nairobi as part of the UN Habitat Programme on April 2016.

The School of Property, Construction and Project Management won the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors' (RICS) Sustainability Award in 2015.

"Our school has undertaken a lot of effort to bring sustainability education into the curriculum and expand research in sustainability in the built environment generally", said Associate Professor Iyer-Raniga.

"[The award] recognised the contribution we have made to the curriculum and recognised the value in bringing in a new generation of professionals that value the built environment, and will hopefully 'touch the earth lightly.'"

The RICS Award aligns with the United Nations Principles for Responsible Management Education (UNPRME), launched at the 2007 UN Global Compact Leaders' Summit in Geneva.

9.3 Global research impact

RMIT's global reach means that its research impact transcends geographic boundaries to benefit communities around the world. The University's centres and programs connect global networks of researchers to conduct applied research focused on design innovation, technology development, improving health and critical issues for the future of our cities.

The RMIT Environment and Sustainability Network connects industry partners with researchers to provide innovative solutions for communities in Australia and overseas. The research network works in fields like social sciences, urban planning, climate change, biotechnology and behavioural and change management to implement strategies that benefit global communities and environments. Key RMIT institutes like the Global Cities Research Institute, Centre for Global Research, Water: Effective Technology and Tools (WETT) Research Centre, Centre for Applied Social Research, and Cooperative Research Centre for Contaminated Assessment and Remediation of the Environment participate in this network.

The Centre hosts more than 45 academic staff, 37 affiliate members and 33 PhD students. It builds on the work of the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute at RMIT. The Centre researchers are working with the Department of the Environment as part of the Clean Air and Urban Landscapes hub of the \$142.5 million National Environmental Science Programme. The Centre prioritises applied research that will yield measurable improvements in air quality, urban ecology, planning, design, public health and green infrastructure.

The Centre for Design and Society, in the School of Architecture and Design engages with sustainability challenges from a design perspective. The Centre's research focuses on life cycle assessment, sustainable products and packaging, social and performative creative space, and shaping collective memory.

RMIT's Centre for Applied Social Research (CASR) undertakes research and promotes public debate on key areas of social change and policy. It works with community organisations, government departments, local governments and the union movement. CASR holds that informed social research and insightful public debate are the basis for effective policy. Research staff in CASR have a broad range of interests that converges on the themes of social policy and practice, evidence and evaluation, and social support and care.

The RMIT Disaster Research Network brings together multidisciplinary researchers to examine current approaches to respond to natural and human-induced disasters. Researchers build disaster resilience across the Asia Pacific region by connecting communities with industry, government and experts in mapping, detection, early warning, modelling, infrastructure planning and post-disaster reconstruction.

A team of researchers from the RMIT Centre for Risk and Community Safety played a leading role in addressing disasters that are more frequent and severe. The team analyses bushfires safety and leads the national Network on Climate Change Adaptation and Emergency Management (NCCARF). They are also contributing to a global team preparing a special report for the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel for Climate Change, titled Managing the Risks of Extreme Events and Disasters.

RMIT is a member of 'Promotion of Sustainability in Postgraduate Education and Research Network' (ProSPER.Net) an alliance of leading universities in the Asia-Pacific region that are committed to integrating sustainable development into postgraduate courses and curricula. ProSPER.Net is developing a new generation of leaders who can best tackle global sustainability challenges in the face of rapid environmental degradation. By changing the way higher education institutions teach students about sustainability, ProSPER.Net improves the ways in which future professionals manage sustainability issues across a wide variety of disciplines.

RMIT's Humanitarian Architecture Research Bureau (HARB) does research on humanitarian design. It promotes how the architecture, landscape architecture and planning disciplines can contribute to communities that experience extreme poverty, displacement by natural disasters and conflict, and/or the increasing impacts of climate change.

9.4 Working with industry partners

RMIT has many important national and international industry relationships. Our researchers work to develop new knowledge and technologies that have industry applications. Industry linkages are a critical part of our teaching, learning and research, as we work to prepare our students for work and life, and translate our research into practical, real-world outcomes through collaboration.

Industry engagement is a key goal in RMIT's Strategic Plan to 2020. The plan connects to professions, industries and organisations through active partnerships to support the quality, reach and impact of our education and research.

In 2015, RMIT received \$1.8 million in Australian Research Council Linkage grants for collaborative research and development projects between university researchers and industry partners. One of the standout projects in 2015 was Infill developments: Project HOME (Housing Outcomes Metrics and Evaluation), led by Professor Ralph Horne. His team was awarded a \$466,000 grant to improve housing outcomes by evaluating housing design in the rapidly growing infill multi-residential sector. Industry and government collaborators on the project were the Melbourne City Council, Mirvac Limited, SJB Urban Unit Trust and the Department of Premier and Cabinet.

As part of the SUPP academics and students were brought together with industry partners Siemens, Honeywell, Aecom and Davis Langdon. The information session shared the experiences and learnings from the various project partners. Industry partners reflected on their experiences with global trends, challenges and opportunities in the design and delivery of energy conversation measures. Research project teams at RMIT presented the progress and findings of each of their individual projects. The event enabled cross-sectoral collaboration and networking.

10. Empowering our people

RMIT strives to provide its academic and professional staff with a rewarding and meaningful career. The University's new strategy aims to recruit and develop our workforce over the next five years, with a focus on strengthening people's passion for their work and turning it into impact. RMIT has a comprehensive suite of policies and practices to ensure that staff are supported in their workplace and careers. These policies related to ethical conduct, flexible working, managing performance, professional development and other employment conditions. Human Resources regularly monitors data on staff recruitment, performance and compliance and reports to the VCE.



"RMIT is one of the world's most diverse Universities. Our students benefit from the breadth of knowledge, experience, global awareness and cultural sensitivity that they bring to the University."

Table 1: Workforce breakdown

Staff Category	Total FTE	Male FTE	Female FTE	Percentage of males	Percentage of females
Melbourne					
Academic (HE)	1850	1121	729	61%	39%
Teaching (VET)	639	334	305	52%	48%
Professional	2363	915	1448	39%	61%
Executive	95	69	26	73%	27%
Total	4947	2439	2508	49%	51%
Vietnam					
Academic (HE)	126	80	46	63%	37%
English language programs	66	48	18	73%	27%
Professional	330	112	218	34%	66%
President's office	15	10	5	67%	33%
Total	537	250	287	47%	53%

Table 2: Rate of new hires

New staff recruitments by type	Female	%	Male	%	Total
Academic (HE)	91	35	171	65	262
Teaching (VET)	19	40	28	60	47
Professional	240	61	151	39	391
Executive	4	9	39	91	43
Total	354	48%	389	52%	743

10.1 A great place to work

The University needs to attract and retain high quality academic and professional staff to maintain its position as a leading learning and research institution. We are committed to making RMIT a great place to work, by providing rewarding careers that enable our staff to pursue their passions and reach their full potential.

RMIT is continually working to improve organisational systems that support the needs of staff. Recognising their diverse passions, the University supports, develops and empowers all staff to achieve greater impact and learning.

Staff have a range of lifestyle benefits and flexible work arrangements, as part of an environment that recognises that career and life choices are equally important. RMIT offers a variety of leave arrangements for staff, including parental, carer's, long-service, research, professional development and community service leave. These arrangements enable employees to balance work with rest and recreation, family responsibilities and other specific purposes.

RMIT ran two major recruitment campaigns in 2015. This resulted in 743 new staff, including 262 academics. All of our employees are covered by Enterprise (Collective) Bargaining Agreements.

10.2 Diversity

RMIT is one of the world's most internationally diverse universities. Our students benefit from the breadth of knowledge, experience, global awareness and cultural sensitivity they bring to the University. We have a strong commitment to diversity and inclusion, with policies, partnerships and collaborations to support an inclusive learning and working environment for all students and staff.

Our fairness and values policy framework is a suite of equity and diversity policies, procedures and guidelines. The RMIT Equity and Inclusion Plan aims to build an inclusive cultural and social environment where diversity is encouraged and celebrated. We are also undertaking university-wide consultations to inform the development of a Diversity and Inclusion Plan to 2020.

The University has formed an Equity and Diversity Committee to inform RMIT's social inclusion strategy and practice. The Committee develops, implements and reviews strategies and plans. It advises on social inclusion indicators, performance, and major initiatives that affect students and staff equity and social inclusion. The Dean of Students chairs the committee and reports quarterly to the VCE.

The University has a strong commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff, articulated through the Statement of Reconciliation, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy and the work of the Ngarara Willim Centre, which supports student application and enrolment.

All RMIT staff receive training on diversity and inclusion. This starts at induction, where staff access information and support needed to prevent discrimination, practice tolerance in the workplace, and support our multicultural student population. In 2015, 51% of our workforce (on an FTE basis) in Melbourne and 53% in Vietnam were women. Female staff comprised approximately a third of the Executives in Melbourne and the President's office in Vietnam.



Case study: Taking Reconciliation Action

We recognise that reconciliation is about building better relationships between the wider Australian community and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples for the benefit of all Australians.

RMIT is currently developing a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) in consultation with our stakeholders. The plan will create opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and strengthen relationships and respect between Indigenous people and other Australians.

The University's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education and Research Advisory Group supports the development and implementation of the Reconciliation Action Plan. RMIT endorsed a Reconciliation Statement in 2009 as a commitment to improving access, participation and outcomes in education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The University is committed to an educational environment where contact between different cultures is seen as a key asset.

RMIT's indigenous engagement approach should broaden our knowledge of the world and promote the personal development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people so they have the skills to live and work in a globalised world.

RMIT is committed to:

- Improving levels of access and participation and outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- Providing specific education and training for and about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- Embedding their knowledge and expertise in education, training and research.
- Establishing relationships that lead to negotiated partnerships relevant to the purposes of the University.
- Creating an inclusive community of learners and thinkers free from prejudice and discrimination.
- Promoting and supporting the right of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to self-determine their identities and futures.

10.3 Professional Development

RMIT provides career development and professional learning opportunities so that staff can pursue their passions. This fosters a workplace where employees know how to contribute to RMIT's strategic goals to transform the student experience and achieve greater impact through our research and engagement.

As the hub of professional development at RMIT, the team at developME have created a range of learning and development programs, workshops and resources that are designed specifically to support our staff professional development needs. DevelopME offers a wide variety of opportunities for professional development in different modes including face-to-face workshops, self-paced training options and online e-learning modules.

RMIT strengthened its learning and teaching capabilities by developing educational capability models and offering ongoing professional development programs for staff during the year. We held two major Learning and Teaching Expos in Melbourne and Vietnam and the International Society for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning's conference at the RMIT City campus in 2015.

10.4 Health and wellbeing

RMIT's Health, Safety and Wellbeing team provides information, advice and support to help students and staff manage health and safety risks on campus. With the University's significant investment in the capital works program, the team is directly involved in its planning, procurement and mobilisation.

The 2015 programs emphasised mental health awareness and education, chemical management and contractor safety management.

RMIT staff have access services to support wellness. These include complementary medicine teaching clinics, discounted private health insurance, access to RMIT City Fitness gym, and flu vaccination programs that are aimed to improve their mental and physical wellbeing. An Employee Assistance Program, mental health resilience workshops, and various physical and online resources support staff to deal with mental health issues and improve quality of life. An early intervention program aims to prevent workplace psychological issues from developing into complex stress claims. RMIT holds an annual 'R U OK Day', with events and activities taking place across campus to promote mental wellbeing, encourage open and honest conversations and strengthen community connections.

Figure 3: Statistics on Occupational Health and Safety

	2013	2014	2015
Lost time injury frequency rate	2.86	1.81	2.07
Change to previous year	-15%	-37%	+14%
WorkCover claims submitted	38	32	37
Change to previous year	-22%	-16%	+15%
OHS incident reports	413	426	370
Change to previous year	+13%	+3%	-13%
WorkSafe notifiable incidents	6	13	23
Change to previous year	-45%	+117%	+77%
WorkSafe improvement notices	3	0	1

The University held its annual Health Safety and Wellbeing Awards to recognise all those who volunteer their time in the roles supporting OHS across the organisation. RMIT continues to experience positive return to work and injury management outcomes because of continued investment in managers and supervisors with the appropriate skills and capabilities.

RMIT continues to drive positive return to work, injury management and workers compensation. We do this by enabling managers and supervisors with the appropriate skills and capacity. Our performance is further enhanced by an early intervention program, which is leading the way with best practice standards.

As a result, the workers' compensation premium remains stable.

The level of staff engagement and satisfaction reflects RMIT's culture as a great place to work. In 2015, we conducted our fourth All Staff Survey across all campuses to gauge staff satisfaction and engagement against a range of questions. Since 2007 when the survey was first conducted, we have seen a continuous improvement in staff satisfaction levels, with the 2015 survey showing improved satisfaction in most areas.

11. Scaling up our impacts

RMIT's teaching, research and sustainable operations create significant benefits for the communities and economies where we operate. Many of these impacts are indirect, but we recognise our role in shaping local economies and industries, advancing social justice and inclusion, developing new technologies, and creating more resilient cities and communities. These contributions realise our social responsibility to be an impactful education and research institution with a strong social license to operate. RMIT recognises the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals as a pathway to creating inclusive future societies. We are committed to playing our part to lead our organisation, community and the nation towards achieving equitable development. We will contribute to the goals by educating future leaders, conducting ground-breaking research and in our engagements and operations. The goals where we can have the greatest impact are below.

Our Sustainable Development Goals:



We have mapped our Strategic Plan against these goals, and will report on our progress against these goals in our annual sustainability reports. Please refer to the GRI Content Index at the end of this report for more information.

11.1 Our legacy of social justice

RMIT was founded as The Working Men's college in the City of Melbourne. Its mission was to provide access to education with 'a skilled hand and a cultivated mind'. This legacy continues today in our operational policies, teaching and research programs that support marginalised members of society and address global development programs.

The RMIT experience empowers our people to influence fairer and more accessible public policies and social outcomes. The RMIT community links people of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and breaks down barriers to accessing education.

11.2 Advancing latest thinking

RMIT's world-class research programs advance latest knowledge and thinking in multi-disciplinary areas. This is done in many ways. Whether it is improving physical, spatial, and cultural experiences in cities, presenting insights into public debates on social change and social policy, or developing structural optimisation techniques to design innovative buildings and bridges.

RMIT provides various avenues for industry partners to engage with the University to meet their changing needs. Students and staff help advance technologies that achieve operational efficiencies or create new innovations. Through vocational education and access to higher learning pathways, graduates are equipped with the practical skills and experience to meet industry demands in rapidly changing economic and technological contexts. These collaborations help equip industries for challenges of the future while achieving sustainable economic and societal outcomes.

11.3 Our contribution to local economies

Victoria's billion-dollar international education sector is one the state's most valuable export sectors, generating significant multipliers throughout the economy. In 2014-15, Victorian universities enrolled over 800,000 international students, representing 27% of Australia's international enrolments. An estimated 30,000 Victorians are employed by the international education sector. RMIT is one of the most significant contributors to this vibrant sector, with a large proportion of international student enrolments (44%). The sector adds value to the economy beyond financial benefits alone. International education provides highly skilled graduates, many of whom become integrated into local industries, and assist the local economy and society to address global challenges.

Our financial performance is reported in detail in our University Annual Report.

11.4 Promoting social inclusion and access

RMIT promotes inclusion and access in our interactions both inside and outside campus premises. This is particularly important for a University with a diverse student and staff population, and campuses located in vibrant urban centres, like Ho Chi Minh City.

The Equity and Social Inclusion Plan frames priorities and actions to advance RMIT's deep commitment to equity and inclusion. Our work is underpinned by strong partnerships that grow an inclusive and diverse culture for student and staff alike. These relationships are guided by RMIT's core values of being creative, connected, fair, passionate and committed to making a difference.

The Plan focuses on eliminating educational disadvantage, and providing access and opportunities for Australian low socio-economic status and migrant populations. We do this by offering opportunities for global mobility in education and careers through financial support, mentoring and industry engagement, and tertiary pathways. RMIT offers more than 2000 scholarships to students from diverse and disadvantaged backgrounds every year. This gives students who experience barriers to education the opportunity to fulfil their potential.

Our commitment to social inclusion is integrated into campus design. This inclusive design aims to provide access to our facilities and experiences to the external community. This reflects our commitment to stay connected and maximise the reach and impact of our teaching, learning and research.

Research from the RMIT Centre for Design and Society group investigates the potential of socially engaged and performative creative practices to influence cultural perceptions, embodied meanings and social practices of sustainable development and cultural value. The group explores ways of fostering design, art and performance to understand social and ecological contexts, and contribute to a multicultural urban community. The research runs pilot demonstration projects throughout the campus in areas of mobility, food, social participation, public pedagogy and situated interventions that activate potential for cultural change.

11.5 Influencing future cities and sustainability

RMIT's efforts to reduce environmental impact have a big impact on the city's overall sustainable outcomes as a significant landowner in the City of Melbourne. RMIT is strongly committed to transforming its own built environment to create sustainable and resilient cities. The capital works program aims to achieve a minimum of five star Green Star rating for all new building developments and applicable major building refurbishments.

RMIT continued to strengthen its relationship with the Green Building Council of Australia (GBCA) during the year. The University piloted the Green Star Communities rating tool. This voluntary rating tool provides best-practice benchmarks and third-party verification that drive sustainability outcomes in community and precinct-wide developments. RMIT is piloting the rating tool on the City campus to provide a holistic framework for sustainable planning, design and construction. The University's pilot participation shows how it leads in urban sustainability. This is an example of how to undertake sustainable community development in an urban context and expand industry knowledge.

RMIT researchers collaborate with local governments and residents in cities around the world to find solutions for the issues and challenges associated with living in urban environments.

Our Global Cities Research Institute (GCRI) works on understanding the complexity of globalising urban settings. It has the overall aim to develop interpretations and strategies for building sustainable cities around the world, contributing to the quality of human life and the viability of ecologies in those places. RMIT researchers at GCRI are advancing the evidence base for policy, planning and decision-making for urban and regional development in ways that enhance community resilience, promote social wellbeing and inclusion, and increase productivity whilst conserving the natural resource base.



"RMIT's efforts to reduce environmental impact have a big impact on the city's overall sustainable outcomes as a significant landowner in the City of Melbourne"

11.6 Responsible investment

RMIT understands that its financial investments can have an environmental impact. Following a passionate student campaign, the University is investigating its financial exposure to fossil fuel-related industries. We are in the process of developing a responsible investment strategy, and exploring alternative investment options.

RMIT will establish an annual investment report for both students and staff that reflects the University's investment profile. We will work with the RMIT community to develop and publish a set of governance principles that will further define the investment strategy and the associated ethical considerations that will apply to decisions. The University will consult with other significant investment organisations to see how their frameworks operate, and find opportunities to collaborate and increase our impact to affect sustainable investment outcomes.



Case study: Research helps urban poor adapt to changing climate

Research conducted in 2015 by RMIT Vietnam's Dr Tran Kim Hong suggested that the livelihood capitals of the urban poor – which are human, financial, physical and social needs – could be used to develop their resilience and adaptive capacity.

The study focused on two districts in Ho City Minh City affected by flooding: Binh Thanh and District 8.

It included about 50 interviews with local residents and 15 with local authorities. Dr Tran said there was a gap in research on the social impact of climate change in the city.

"There's a focus on infrastructure development in response to address challenges such as flooding," she said.

"But there's still work to be done in looking at the social impacts."

Tran examined the pressures facing these vulnerable communities and the supporting mechanisms that are needed to help them cope with these external risks, such as increased flooding.

"The community coping strategies were studied to identify the right approach to enable people to be more resilient and less vulnerable," she said.

"Community-based support as well as a review of policy can help to strengthen livelihood and minimise the impacts of climate change and major weather events."

12. Sustaining the value of our resources

RMIT applies sustainability principles and practices to our campus buildings and operations. The University has committed to an absolute greenhouse gas emissions reduction target of 25% by 2020 based on 2007 levels. This commitment was made in partnership with the Australian Technology Network of Universities (ATN). RMIT can draw on its expert knowledge, enterprising skills, external partnerships and campus engagement to achieve this goal.

The University is taking bold steps to meet this target. Examples are through our \$800 million capital works program, the \$98 million Sustainable Urban Precincts Program, as well as a Sustainability Committee which implements campus sustainability initiatives.

The Sustainability Committee incorporates sustainability practices into the University's operational performance, and supports student sustainability activities. The committee openly reports sustainability performance and progress to staff, students, partners and the wider community.

12.1 Green buildings and infrastructure

RMIT upgrades its buildings to reduce our energy and water use, and greenhouse gas emissions. The University ensures that changes to the built environment reflects the excellence in sustainable design and innovation that is taught in our programs. This also aligns with our commitment to transform our own built environment to create sustainable and resilient cities.

Our six-year long, \$800 million capital works program is the largest expenditure on capital works in RMIT's 128-year history. The program objective is to improve RMIT's learning, teaching and research spaces to enable students and staff to enjoy world-class, state-of-the-art facilities that are engaging, sustainable and safe. It provides facilities that enhance community connectivity and use environmentally sustainable design practices for new and refurbished buildings across all campuses.



Case study: Swanston Academic Building Urban Learning Lab

The Swanston Academic Building, one of RMIT's five-star Green Star design rated buildings showcases "Australian Excellence" in environmentally sustainable design with exceptionally high utilisation and building user satisfaction. Students and staff from the RMIT School of Property, Construction and Project Management ran a holistic sustainability Post Occupancy Building Performance Evaluation (POE) of the SAB as part of a the Urban Learning Lab study commissioned by RMIT Property Services and the RMIT Sustainability Committee.

The study's objectives were two-fold. It aimed to:

- Understand the sustainability performance of this iconic building, and
- Use a real world project to provide learning opportunities for student, staff and the industry.

The POE found SAB performs using 60% less water compared to conventional buildings. The average (mean) electricity consumption kWh/m² (usable floor area) of the 50 city campus buildings with available data was 226 kWh/m² (prior to SUPP), compared to the 89 kWh/m² measured in SAB. Hence the electricity intensity of SAB is 39% that of the average RMIT University City campus building. Temperatures in the monitored teaching spaces were found to be within the required comfort range 97% of the time, demonstrating that occupant comfort was not compromised for energy savings.

The learnings from the Urban Learning Lab project are being applied by the broader design and construction of other projects at RMIT including the New Academic Street project which commenced in 2015 which will transform the heart of the RMIT City campus creating laneways, gardens, student spaces and a better library.

12. Sustaining the value of our resources

The program will achieve a minimum five-star Green Star Design and As-Built rating for all new building and major applicable building refurbishments.

RMIT has continued to receive industry recognition for its architecture. A'Beckett Urban Square, RMIT's urban recreational and landscaping space, was recognised by Australian Institute of Architects at the Victorian Architecture Awards with the Urban Design award, as well as a Highly Commended award in the Sustainable Design category.

The Old Melbourne Gaol Gatehouse (Building 11)

A flagship project for the capital works program in 2015 was the refurbishment of The Old Melbourne Gaol Gatehouse (Building 11). This heritage building is one of the most distinctive surviving bluestone buildings from the early foundation of Melbourne. The Melbourne Gaol closed in 1926 with the gatehouse, courtyard and chapel handed over to the Emily McPherson College in 1929, which subsequently became RMIT.

The building underwent a \$11 million refurbishment which included a number of significant sustainability design modifications including new roof insulation, window film to reduce incoming solar radiation, LED lighting with occupancy and daylight control, low VOC paints, carpets and adhesives, installation of a 31.5 kL rainwater tank for toilet flushing and the use of Forestry Stewardship Council certified timbers.

12.2 Our emissions

The University aims to achieve its emissions reduction target by upgrading buildings, installing energy efficient technology and purchasing carbon offsets.

The University's Carbon Management Plan guides the emissions reduction approach across the portfolio. It forecasts future emission profiles of the University and the required reduction activities. We report our emissions through the National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting (NGER) Act 2007. This requires RMIT publicly report the energy and emissions profile to the Clean Energy Regulator. We track and report our emissions profiles annually.

RMIT's total direct (Scope 1) and indirect (Scope 2) greenhouse gas emissions in 2015 were 79,589 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (t CO₂-e). This represents an emissions intensity of 0.138 t CO₂-e/m². Greenhouse gas emissions remained largely unchanged since 2007 despite the significant growth in student number.

In 2015, RMIT purchased 12,400 MWh of GreenPower, resulting in emission reductions of 14,324 t CO₂-e.

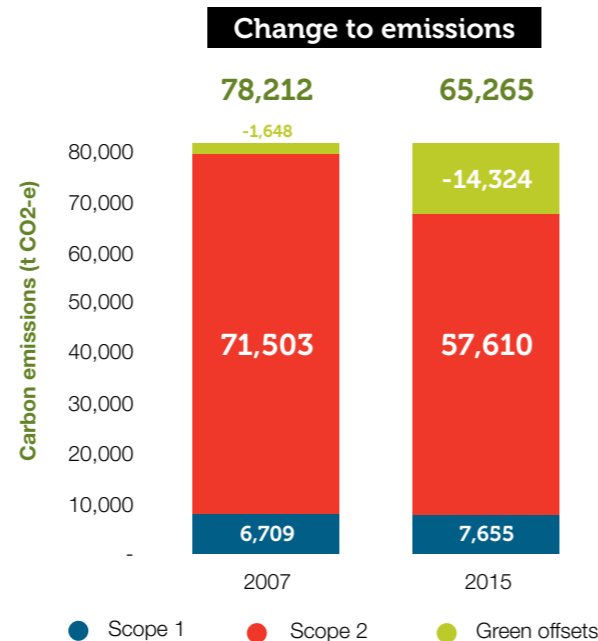
Figure 4: Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Despite reductions in emissions, energy use increased slightly at each of our campuses. This reflects RMIT's growth and expansion over the last eight years. RMIT will experience significant reductions in electricity consumption through SUPP. The energy profile will also change through fuel switching as we shift our energy supplies from coal-fired grid electricity to on-site natural gas generation.

Figure 5: Energy consumption in 2015

Source	Consumption
Electricity consumption	224,244 GJ
Natural Gas consumption	139,760 GJ
Total	364,004 GJ
Green Power	44,654 GJ
Energy intensity	0.773 GJ/m ²

The University encourages our students and staff to practice sustainable behaviours and assist in our energy saving efforts. RMIT has been participating in Earth Hour since 2008 and is proud to support this event. For Earth Hour, RMIT typically turns off external façade, rooftop and non-essential lighting across all campuses.



12.3 Water

Water consumption across all our Melbourne campuses was 223,958 kilolitres in 2015. This reflects a 14% increase in our water consumption since 2007. We are implementing a number of initiatives to reduce water consumption across our campuses.

RMIT has installed a range of water saving technologies across all campuses including: grey water recycling, water efficient fixtures, rainwater harvesting and drought tolerant landscaping.

Under the SUPP, we will install water efficient fixtures and rainwater and fire service water harvesting facilities in our City campus. Across our campuses in 2015, SUPP has installed rainwater and stormwater capture, upgraded irrigation systems, fitted water efficient fixtures, and linked the Bundoora East and West water systems. Through the program, we are already saving 29,000 kilolitres of water per annum.

12.4 Materials and waste

A preliminary waste audit of RMIT's Melbourne campuses found that about one half of the waste by weight consists of materials that could be recycled, in particular paper, aluminium and plastic bottles.

We are currently developing a new, standardised waste management system to help students and staff reduce waste and recycle more. The University is also exploring options for diverting food waste from landfill, particularly from the campus retail tenancies.

RMIT is in the process of conducting a comprehensive audit of waste streams. This will significantly improve the integrity of our data sources in 2016. We intend to report on our performance next year.

12.5 Sustainable transport

Transporting our 50,000 students and staff to University and between our three campuses has a significant environmental impact.

The Integrated Sustainable Transport Plan (ISTP) 2015-2025 for our on-shore campuses provides a strategic approach to the provision of sustainable transport for our students and staff.

As a part of the planning process, RMIT conducted a comprehensive audit of available facilities in around our campuses, as well as a travel survey conducted online by our communications department. The survey explored current modes of transport, barriers and enablers for sustainable transport modes, business travel and carpooling practices.

Based on these assessments RMIT developed a strategic framework for identifying appropriate strategies, actions and projects to enable and motivate sustainable travel choices among RMIT. At the heart of this framework is a model of behavioural change that comprises the enabling, and motivating conditions that need to be in place for sustainable travel choices to occur. The framework also aligns with RMIT's existing commitments and plans related to sustainability and campus development.

The key objectives of the plan are:

- Create a reference document that provides justification for improved and new transportation facilities, infrastructure and programs.
- Raise the environmental sustainability credentials of RMIT across all campuses, helping to establish the university as the leading tertiary education provider in terms of sustainable transport.
- Provide a policy position for RMIT on the wider transportation issues that, while outside the direct influence of the university, impact on the accessibility and attractiveness of its campuses.
- Support Green Star accreditation with respect to sustainable transport.
- Provides a strategy for improving access to the Bundoora campus with regards to its suburban location.

In 2015 RMIT continued to expand secure bike facilities at our campuses to support students and staff who ride to the University.

A new secure bicycle cage was installed at the Bundoora East campus, located outside Building 253. The project delivered upgraded changing and locker facilities to complement the facility in the neighbouring Building 254.

On the Brunswick campus a new bike cage now provides secure parking for 61 bikes, including a bike repair station. With new lockers installed in the student lounge in the adjacent Building 514.

The RMIT Bicycle Information Hub webpage provides information on the locations of facilities and how to access them. The University holds an annual 'Ride to Uni' day to encourage riding bicycles to commute as a regular habit. This initiative helps promote health and wellbeing, while assisting student and staff make safe and sustainable travel choices. Other initiatives relating to sustainable travel include encouraging staff to travel to work via public transport through 'Commuter Club' discounts. A Myki facility was installed at the Bundoora West to allow our students and staff to top up Myki passes while on campus.

13. Greening our supply chain

13.1 Our supply chain

RMIT's supply chain is focused on creating an efficient and sustainable learning, teaching and research environment. Our supply chain is mainly made up of suppliers that provide services related to campus facilities, learning technology and on-site infrastructure services.

RMIT procures building, infrastructure, equipment, goods and services from external suppliers. Goods and services we procure include stationery and office supplies, catering, information and communications technology, campus services and travel services. We also hire building and construction suppliers for our capital works projects. The majority of our procurement spend is in the area of building infrastructure, consulting services, equipment, facilities management and ITS software.



85%
of our tea, coffee and sugar ordered through corporate suppliers is Fair Trade.

13.2 Social procurement and sustainable sourcing

RMIT has a Sustainable Procurement Working Group established under the Sustainability Committee, led by the Strategic Sourcing and Procurement (SS&P) team.

The RMIT Group Procurement Policy outlines the principles and governance framework that guides the purchasing and disposal of all goods and services from external suppliers. Environmental, social and sustainability considerations are principles that govern procurement.

In 2009, RMIT was one of the two universities to be jointly named as the first Fair Trade University in Australia. A University Fair Trade Steering Committee guides Fair Trade activities at RMIT. These include:

- Providing ethically-sourced products at an accessible price to students at the RMIT Campus Store
- Choosing Fair Trade certified coffee and food at café outlets on the City campus
- Sourcing Fair Trade products in staff and meeting rooms across campus – 85% of our tea, coffee and sugar ordered through corporate suppliers is Fair Trade certified
- Participating annually in Fair Trade fortnight - in 2015, the theme was 'Be an Agent of Change' with a focus on 'Every Purchase Matters'

13.3 Evaluating our suppliers

RMIT Property Services Sustainability has incorporated sustainability requirements such as waste reporting and minimal chemicals used in services into specifications for facilities services maintenance procurement since 2014. Sustainability is listed as a weighted and scored evaluation criterion, and is included in evaluation panels for these procurement activities.

The evaluation criteria, recently established by the RMIT Catering Panel requires vendors to provide a comprehensive response to how they promote Fairtrade certified products, serve locally sourced seasonal produce, use recycled content packaging, look to minimise waste, implement practices which reduce energy and water use, and have any external environmental accreditation.

We are currently developing systems to capture data on the proportion of new suppliers screened using our environmental and labour practice criteria. We intend to report this data within the next two years.



Case study: Our commitment to Fairtrade products – 'Trace the Bean'

RMIT is an accredited Fair Trade University, committed to fair and ethical trade. RMIT has a Fair Trade Steering Committee to advise on embedding fair and ethical trade principles in operations and departments across the university. In 2015 RMIT also employed a Fair Trade Coordinator. As part of this commitment we buy Fairtrade certified products for use at events and in staffrooms, and encourage retailers to support fairly traded products. We have worked with partners to develop lines of Fairtrade RMIT merchandise sold at our campus store.

In 2015, Melanie Lazelle, the current Fair Trade Coordinator and Master of International Development student won a Sustainability Seedlings Grant for her "Trace the Bean project". Melanie travelled to India to visit Fair Trade organisations and see the supply chains of the RMIT cotton merchandise and other products like tea.

In India, Melanie saw the real impact of RMIT being a Fair Trade University and the how fair trade supports farmers, producers, businesses and communities. Melanie visited social projects developed with support by the fair trade movement, such as a school, a library, computer centre and health centre. She visited factories that produce RMIT's fair trade products and saw that they are produced by ethical and environmentally-focused organisations with good working conditions and fair wages. Back at RMIT, Melanie is sharing this information with students and staff to promote a deeper understanding of fair trade and to increase their uptake of products and the support ethical procurement across the university at all levels.

She is also establishing partnerships with industry partners, and facilitating opportunities for students to gain practical work experience such as placements and projects with Fair Trade organisations. For academic staff she is looking for ways to include a fair trade component in their teaching.

14. GRI Content Index

The content index maps against the GRI and UN Global Compact reporting requirements, as well as our contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals.

The content index will list the indicators and relevant pages for the disclosure. It will state where data has not been fully reported and when it will be made available in future reports.

Indicators	UNGC Principles	SDGs	Description	Reference (section)	Reference (page)
STRATEGY AND ANALYSIS					
G4-1			Statement from the most senior decision-maker of the organisation.	Introduction	2
ORGANISATIONAL PROFILE					
G4-3			Name of the organisation.	About this report	1
G4-4			Primary brands, products, and services.	About RMIT – Organisation profile information	3
G4-5			Location of the organisation's headquarters.	About RMIT – Organisation profile information	3
G4-6			Number of countries where the organisation operations, and names of countries with either major operations or that are specifically relevant to the sustainability issues covered in the report.	About RMIT – Organisation profile information	3
G4-7			The nature of ownership and legal form.	About RMIT – Organisation profile information	3
G4-8			Markets served (including geographic breakdown, sectors served, and types of customers and beneficiaries).	About RMIT – Organisation profile information	3
G4-9			Scale of the organisation.	About RMIT – Organisation profile information	3
G4-10	4. Uphold elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation	8. Decent work and economic growth	Total workforce by employment type, employment contract, and region, broken down by gender.	Full-time, part-time, casual by gender data is not currently available – we will report on this in our next sustainability report	26
G4-11	3. Uphold freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining	8. Decent work and economic growth	The percentage of total employees covered by collective bargaining agreements.	Empowering our people – A great place to work	26
G4-12			Describe the organisation's supply chain.	Greening our supply chain – Our supply chain	36
G4-13			Significant changes during the reporting period regarding the organisation's size, structure, ownership, or its supply chain.	Greening our supply chain – Our supply chain	36

Indicators	UNGC Principles	SDGs	Description	Reference (section)	Reference (page)
G4-14			Whether and how the precautionary approach or principle is addressed by the organisation.	We support the precautionary approach by taking action to reduce our environmental impacts	34
G4-15	10. Work against corruption in all its forms	17. Partnerships for the goals	Externally developed economic, environmental and social charters, principles, or other initiatives to which the organisation subscribes or which it endorses.	Engaging our stakeholders – Memberships and external initiatives	7
G4-16	10. Work against corruption in all its forms		Memberships of associations (such as industry associations) and national or international advocacy organisations.	Engaging our stakeholders – Memberships and external initiatives	7
G4-17			List entities included in the organisation's consolidated financial statements or equivalent documents.	See 2015 University Annual Report – Financial Performance	-
G4-18			Process for defining the report content and the Aspect Boundaries.	Material issues and aspect boundaries	47
G4-19			All material Aspects identified in the process for defining report content.	Material issues and aspect boundaries	47
G4-20			For each material Aspect, report the Aspect Boundary within the organisation, and entities, groups of entities or elements (listed in G4-17) for which the Aspect is material.	Material issues and aspect boundaries	47
G4-21			For each material Aspect, report the Aspect Boundary outside the organisation, and entities, groups of entities or elements for which the Aspect is material.	Material issues and aspect boundaries	47
G4-22			Effect of any restatements of information provided in previous reports, and the reasons for such restatements.	Material issues and aspect boundaries	47
G4-23			Significant changes from previous reporting periods in the Scope and Aspect Boundaries.	Material issues and aspect boundaries	47
STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT					
G4-24			List of stakeholder groups engaged by the organisation.	Engaging our stakeholders – How we listen	6
G4-25			The basis for identification and selection of stakeholders with whom to engage.	Engaging our stakeholders – How we listen	6

14. GRI Content Index

Indicators	UNGC Principles	SDGs	Description	Reference (section)	Reference (page)
G4-26			The organisation's approach to stakeholder engagement, including frequency of engagement by type and by stakeholder group, and an indication of whether any of the engagement was undertaken specifically as part of the report preparation process.	Engaging our stakeholders – How we listen	6
G4-27			Key topics and concerns that have been raised through stakeholder engagement, and how the organisation has responded to those key topics and concerns, including through its reporting.	Engaging our stakeholders – How we listen	6
REPORT PROFILE					
G4-28			Reporting period (such as fiscal or calendar year)	About this report	1
G4-29			Date of most recent previous report (if any).	About this report	1
G4-30			Reporting cycle (such as annual, biennial).	About this report	1
G4-31			The contact point for questions regarding the report or its contents.	About this report	48
G4-32			The 'in accordance' option the organisation has chosen, the GRI Content Index for the chosen option, and reference to the External Assurance Report, if the report has been externally assured.	About this report, GRI Content Index	1, 39
G4-33			The organisation's policy and current practice with regard to seeking external assurance for the report.	External assurance not sought	1
GOVERNANCE					
G4-34			The governance structure of the organisation, including committees of the highest governance body. Identify any committees responsible for decision-making on economic, environmental and social impacts.	About RMIT – Governance	4
G4-41			Processes for the highest governance body to ensure conflicts of interest are avoided and managed.	About RMIT – Governance	4
ETHICS AND INTEGRITY					
G4-56			Describe the organisation's values, principles, standards and norms of behaviour such as codes of conduct and codes of ethics.	About RMIT – Organisation profile information & 2015 Annual Report – Students and Staff	3

DMA and Indicators	UNGC Principles	SDG	Description	Reference section	Identified Omission(s)	Reason(s) and Explanation for Omission(s)	Reference pages
MATERIAL ASPECT: ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE							
G4-DMA			Generic Disclosures on Management Approach	Economic			30
G4-EC1	2. Make sure businesses are not complicit in human rights abuses	8. Decent work and economic growth	Direct economic value generated and distributed	Scaling up our impacts		2015 Annual Report – Financial Performance	30
MATERIAL ASPECT: INDIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACTS							
G4-DMA			Generic Disclosures on Management Approach	Economic			30
G4-EC7	1. Support and respect the protection of international proclaimed human rights	8. Decent work and economic growth	Development and impact of infrastructure investments and services supported	Scaling up our impacts			30
G4-EC8		8. Decent work and economic growth	Significant indirect economic impacts, including the extent of impacts	Shaping future leaders – Equipping graduates with skills for future industries and jobs			14
MATERIAL ASPECT: ENERGY							
G4-DMA			Generic Disclosures on Management Approach	Energy			34
G4-EN3	7. Support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges	12. Responsible consumption and production	Energy consumption within the organization	Sustaining the value of our resources – Our emissions			34
G4-EN4	7. Support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges	12. Responsible consumption and production	Energy consumption outside of the organization	Sustaining the value of our resources – Our emissions			34
G4-EN5	7. Support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges	12. Responsible consumption and production	Energy intensity	Sustaining the value of our resources – Our emissions			34
G4-EN6	7. Support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges	12. Responsible consumption and production	Reduction of energy consumption	Sustaining the value of our resources – Our emissions			34

14. GRI Content Index

DMA and Indicators	UNGC Principles	SDG	Description	Reference section	Identified Omission(s)	Reason(s) and Explanation for Omission(s)	Reference pages
MATERIAL ASPECT: EMISSIONS							
G4-DMA			Generic Disclosures on Management Approach	Emissions			34
G4-EN15	8. Undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility	13. Climate action	Direct greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions (Scope 1)	Sustaining the value of our resources – Our emissions			34
G4-EN16	8. Undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility	13. Climate action	Energy indirect greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions (Scope 2)	Sustaining the value of our resources – Our emissions			34
G4-EN17			Other indirect greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions (Scope 3)	Not reported		This data is not currently available – we will report this in the next two years	34
G4-EN18	8. Undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility	13. Climate action	Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions intensity	Sustaining the value of our resources – Our emissions			34
G4-EN19	8. Undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility	7. Affordable and clean energy	Reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions	Sustaining the value of our resources – Our emissions			34
MATERIAL ASPECT: EFFLUENTS AND WASTE							
G4-DMA			Generic Disclosures on Management Approach	Effluents and Waste			35
G4-EN23			Total weight of waste by type and disposal method	Not reported		This data is not currently available – we will report this in the next two years	35

DMA and Indicators	UNGC Principles	SDG	Description	Reference section	Identified Omission(s)	Reason(s) and Explanation for Omission(s)	Reference pages
MATERIAL ASPECT: TRANSPORT							
G4-DMA			Generic Disclosures on Management Approach	Transport			35
G4-EN30		11. Sustainable cities and communities	Significant environmental impacts of transporting products and other goods and materials for the organisation's operations, and transporting members of the workforce	Sustainable Transport			35
G4-EN32			Percentage of new suppliers that were screened using environmental criteria	Not reported		This data is not currently available – we will report this in the next three years	36
CATEGORY: SOCIAL, SUB-CATEGORY: LABOR PRACTICES AND DECENT WORK, MATERIAL ASPECT: EMPLOYMENT							
G4-DMA			Generic Disclosures on Management Approach	Employment			26
G4-LA1	4. Uphold elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation	8. Decent work and economic growth	Total number and rates of new employee hires and employee turnover by age group, gender and region	Partially reported	Gender omitted	This data is not currently available – we will report this in the next two years	27
G4-LA3	4. Uphold elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation		Return to work and retention rates after parental leave, by gender	Not reported		This data is not currently available - we will report this in the next two years	29
MATERIAL ASPECT: OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY							
G4-DMA			Generic Disclosures on Management Approach	Occupational Health and Safety			28
G4-LA6		11. Sustainable cities and communities	Type of injury and rates of injury, occupational diseases, lost days, and absenteeism, and total number of work-related fatalities, by region and by gender	Partially reported	Type of injury, occupational diseases, absenteeism, work-related fatalities by gender and region	Data relating to injury type, lost days and absenteeism by gender and region is not currently available.	29

14. GRI Content Index

DMA and Indicators	UNGC Principles	SDG	Description	Reference section	Identified Omission(s)	Reason(s) and Explanation for Omission(s)	Reference pages
MATERIAL ASPECT: TRAINING AND EDUCATION							
G4-DMA			Generic Disclosures on Management Approach	Training and Education			28
G4-LA9			Average hours of training per year per employee by gender, and by employee category	Not reported		This data is not currently available – we will report this in the next two years	28
G4-LA11			Percentage of employees receiving regular performance and career development reviews, by gender and by employee category	Not reported		This data is not currently available – we will report this in the next two years	28
MATERIAL ASPECT: DIVERSITY AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY							
G4-DMA			Generic Disclosures on Management Approach	Diversity and Equal Opportunity			27
G4-LA12	4. Uphold elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation	8. Decent work and economic growth	Composition of governance bodies and breakdown of employees per employee category according to gender, age group, minority group membership, and other indicators of diversity	Empowering our people - Diversity			27
MATERIAL ASPECT: EQUAL REMUNERATION FOR WOMEN AND MEN							
G4-DMA			Generic Disclosures on Management Approach	Equal remuneration for women and men			27
G4-LA13	4. Uphold elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation		Ratio of basic salary and remuneration of women to men by employee category, by significant locations of operation	Not reported		This data is not currently available – we will report this in the next two years	26

DMA and Indicators	UNGC Principles	SDG	Description	Reference section	Identified Omission(s)	Reason(s) and Explanation for Omission(s)	Reference pages
MATERIAL ASPECT: SUPPLIER ASSESSMENT FOR LABOR PRACTICES							
G4-DMA			Generic Disclosures on Management Approach	Supplier assessment for labour practices			36
G4-LA14	5. Uphold the effective abolition of child labour		Percentage of suppliers that were screened using labour practices criteria	Not reported		This data is not currently available – we will report this in the next two years	36
SUB-CATEGORY: HUMAN RIGHTS, MATERIAL ASPECT: NON-DISCRIMINATION							
G4-DMA			Generic Disclosures on Management Approach	Non-discrimination			27
G4-HR3	4. Uphold elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation		Total number of incidents of discrimination and corrective actions taken	Not reported		This data is not currently available – we will report this in the next two years	27
G4-HR10	5. Uphold the effective abolition of child labour		Percentage of new suppliers that were screened using human rights criteria	Not reported		This data is not currently available – we will report this in the next three years	36

15. Material issues and aspect boundaries

Our material issues	Who it affects	Boundary	Where to find information
Designing sustainable cities	RMIT students and staff, Government, communities	Inside and outside	Influencing future of cities and sustainability
Diversity and inclusion	RMIT students and staff, communities	Inside and outside	Supporting social connections Diversity
Employability and graduate impact	RMIT students and staff, alumni, businesses and industry	Inside and outside	Shaping future leaders
Education for Sustainability	RMIT students and staff, alumni, businesses and industry	Inside and outside	Shaping future leaders
Mainstreaming sustainability into the curriculum	RMIT students and staff, alumni, businesses and industry	Inside and outside	Shaping future leaders
Student engagement in sustainability	RMIT students and staff	Inside	Campus sustainability initiatives Engagement in sustainability
Green buildings and infrastructure	RMIT students and staff, businesses and industry	Inside and outside	Green buildings and infrastructure Case Study: Sustainable Urban Precincts Program
Sustainability themed research	RMIT students and staff, Government, businesses and industry	Inside and outside	Incubating sustainability research and innovation
Student wellbeing	RMIT students and staff	Inside	Student wellbeing
Staff engagement	RMIT staff	Inside	Engagement in sustainability Health and wellbeing
Responsible procurement	RMIT students and staff, suppliers	Inside and outside	Greening our supply chain





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