

# Sustainability Annual Report 2019







## **Bundjil Statement**

RMIT University is a public-sector organisation under Victorian law and stands on Aboriginal Country of the Kulin Nation. RMIT recognises and acknowledges the laws of Bundjil, the Kulin Nation's ancestral creator and leader, who travels as an eagle hawk. These laws help all RMIT staff to respectfully and lawfully work, live and study on Aboriginal Country.

RMIT recognises and acknowledges the Bundjil Statement, which helps all RMIT community to respectfully work, live and study on Aboriginal Country through a dhumbali (commitment) to not harm the wurneet (waterways), biik biik (lands) and bubups (children) of Bundjil. RMIT supports the rights and the self-determination of Indigenous peoples and acknowledges the importance of Indigenous knowledge in preserving and protecting place for current and future generations.

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**< Left: Wurrunggi Biik – Law of the Land public artwork**

Designed by prominent Indigenous artist and RMIT's Vice-Chancellor's Indigenous Research Fellow, Dr Vicki Couzens, with collaborators Jeph Neale and Hilary Jackman.





# 1. About this report



## 1.1. Report Scope

This is RMIT University's fifth annual sustainability report, spanning the calendar year from 1 January to 31 December 2019. The report documents progress and highlights key achievements as the University continues on its journey as a leader in organisational sustainability.



Public reporting is central to the University's commitment to transparency regarding the impact of teaching and learning, research and operations on the environment, local economies and society. This report highlights the key commitments and activities.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) Standards: Core option. In line with GRI requirements, this report presents the significant economic, social and environmental impacts and contributions, both current and those that are reasonably foreseeable. The information contained in this report has not been the subject of any external assurance.

This report covers all Australian entities listed under the RMIT Annual Report with additional data from international campuses where available and indicated. This report does not contain any restated information.

In preparing this report RMIT has considered the following GRI Reporting Principles for defining report quality to ensure a high-quality sustainability report is achieved:

- Accuracy
- Comparability
- Balance
- Reliability
- Clarity
- Timeliness



## 1.2. Materiality

This report has been informed by GRI's Reporting Principles for defining report content – stakeholder inclusiveness, sustainability context, materiality and completeness. It has also been informed by the principles of the AA1000 standard which provides guidance to organisations on identifying and responding to issues in sustainability.

RMIT undertakes a formal materiality assessment every two years, conducted by an independent external GRI consultant. This assessment was informed by GRI's Reporting Principles and AccountAbility's Five-Part Test.

There was a strong focus on incorporating the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as part of this process to understand which SDGs strategically aligned with RMIT and where the University creates an impact to help achieve the global goals.

Step	Inputs
<b>1. Identify</b> A desktop review to develop a list of sustainability issues	A review of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Peers from the tertiary education sector globally</li> <li>RMIT University's risk register</li> <li>Media stories referencing RMIT or the sector over the past 12 months</li> <li>RMIT's Strategic Plan</li> <li>Direct interviews with internal and eight external stakeholders on content, key issues and the relevance of the UN Sustainable Development Goals to RMIT</li> <li>A short survey of key industry partners</li> </ul>
<b>2. Prioritise</b> Ranking of issues	A review of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sector-specific lists of material issues</li> <li>The sustainability reports and websites of peers</li> <li>Issues reported in the media</li> <li>Survey of internal and external stakeholders to rank issues as part of the interview process</li> </ul>
<b>3. Review</b> Review of the most recent report	A review of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The 2018 Sustainability Annual Report against the core requirements of the GRI standards 2016</li> <li>Direct interviews with stakeholders on content and areas for improvement</li> </ul>
<b>4. Validate</b> Presentation of prioritised issues at RMIT University	A workshop with the University's Sustainability Committee to review and validate the results.

The materiality assessment provided a list of topics that were identified as being core University impacts and/or of interest to stakeholders. Topics which are also strongly reflected in RMIT University's risk register are highlighted (marked\*) for their potential to impact the University's functions or the broader society and environment.

Following the content determination and materiality assessment, the key issues identified were:

- Learning and Teaching\*
- Research\*
- Health, Safety and Wellbeing\*
- Climate Change
- Environmental Footprint
- Partnerships
- Governance and values\*
- Diversity and Inclusion
- Staff capability\*
- Public Policy and Leadership

The issues emerging since the last assessment include the strengthening of the University values and staff capability which correlates with the Academic Careers Area of Focus. There was also a strengthened emphasis on Health, Safety and Wellbeing which is closely aligned to the current focus on COVID-19. This report will address and outline the University's management approach to these material issues. There is also a full mapping of material issues against GRI indicators and UN Sustainable Development Goals in an appendix to this report.

RMIT welcomes your enquiries and feedback on this report.

Please email: [sustainability@rmit.edu.au](mailto:sustainability@rmit.edu.au)

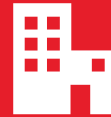
### 1.3. Highlights

# 25%

The first full year of sourcing 25 per cent of the University's grid electricity from a wind farm outside Ararat (Melbourne Renewable Energy Project).



Sustainability and Corporate Social Responsibility requirements were built into all RMIT tenders managed by the Procurement Team.



Property Services achieved ISO 14001 accreditation for Environmental Management which, along with Safety and Quality, now forms an integrated system for continuous improvement.



In August the Vice-Chancellor's Executive agreed to demonstrate global leadership by embedding the UN Sustainable Development Goals into relevant processes, policies, practices and the next five-year strategy.



There was a considerable focus in this year's capital works projects on the recycling of construction waste and the reuse of furniture and fixtures.



Organics waste is now collected from all on-campus retailers and sent for commercial composting.



The Tiny House project, displayed in the Sustainability Space, showcased multidisciplinary student work from VE Furniture Design and VE Textile Design and created a lot of student interest about small-living, upcycling and multipurpose furniture.



A responsible sourcing framework was developed for the Campus Store to drive sustainability outcomes and minimise ethical risks in the supply chain.

# x2

Engagement on the sustainability channels more than doubled and staff from Melbourne and Vietnam took part in the second year of the Green Impact behaviour change program.





## 2. Vice-Chancellor's Statement





The extraordinary people of RMIT continue to progress the goals set out in our *Ready for Life and Work* strategy, as they transform lives and shape the world every day. Since 2019, a great deal has changed in our immediate operating environment and the world we share with the many people and organisations who make what we do possible.

We face into this new landscape more determined than ever to address the challenges of the world we live in and prepare our students for life and work, today, tomorrow and for decades to come. Sustainability remains a key priority as we look to an increasingly complex future.

Our Sustainability Annual Report provides an open account of our sustainability performance. It also demonstrates our support, commitment and progress against the principles of the United Nations Global Compact. I'm very proud of what we have achieved and I'm delighted to highlight a few of our key successes.

▪ **UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Times Higher Education (THE) Impact Rating**

RMIT demonstrated strong leadership on the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), raising awareness, fostering collaboration and measuring impact at scale. The Times Higher Education (THE) Impact Rankings measure universities' social, environmental and economic impact and progress towards these goals, so we're extremely proud to have ranked 10th overall and number one in the world for reducing inequalities.

▪ **Renewable Energy Purchasing (Melbourne Renewable Energy Project 2)**

Building on our experience from 2017 and sharing our expertise, RMIT again demonstrated sustainability leadership through our role in the second renewable energy purchasing group with the City of Melbourne. In the long-term, -renewable energy contracting will contribute towards the SDGs of affordable and clean energy climate action, allowing RMIT to make significant progress towards being Carbon Neutral by 2030.

▪ **Bundjil Statement**

We continued our journey of reconciliation at RMIT, evolving our dhumbali from our second Reconciliation plan Dhumbah Goorowa. Significantly, a Bundjil statement is now part of our Policy Governance Framework, shaping policy documents and providing a consistent narrative on how RMIT wants to be known. This will contribute to holistic, meaningful cultural transformation at the University.

▪ **Integrated Management Systems**

RMIT Property Services received certification for its integrated management system which now integrates environmental management, health and safety and quality. Bringing together these management systems ensures we deliver a whole of business approach and reflects our commitment towards continuous improvement in operations.

As we move through 2020 and beyond we will face new and unknown challenges, as a University and as a community. However, what I can say with certainty, is that our shared belief in the power of education and our passion for making a positive influence in the world will be unchanged.

**Martin Bean CBE**

Vice-Chancellor and President, RMIT University





# 3. About RMIT





### 3.1. Organisational profile

RMIT is a multi-sector university of technology, design and enterprise that exists to prepare students for workplaces that are rapidly evolving and play a part in shaping a changing world. RMIT University has 94,000 students and 12,000 staff globally. The University holds an international reputation for excellence in professional and vocational education, applied research, and engagement with the needs of industry and the community.

As the world economy transforms, RMIT has a responsibility to make the resulting changes work for the whole of society. RMIT is passionately committed to growing interdisciplinary expertise and creative thinking, together with practical application and problem-solving directly relevant to communities.

Through dedication to living sustainably, respecting indigenous cultures and promoting intellectual freedom, RMIT's staff and students understand the importance of a values-based culture.

RMIT has three campuses in Melbourne – Melbourne City, Brunswick and Bundoora. Internationally, RMIT has two campuses and a language centre in Vietnam and a research and industry collaboration centre in Barcelona, Spain. RMIT also offers programs through partners in destinations including Singapore, Hong Kong, Indonesia and China, with research and industry partnerships on every continent.

The University is the largest landholder in the City of Melbourne, meaning RMIT plays a significant role in making Melbourne one of the world's most liveable cities. In total RMIT's property portfolio comprises more than 121 buildings in Australia, with over 500,000 m<sup>2</sup> space and a further 20 buildings on overseas campuses providing an additional 55,000 m<sup>2</sup> of space.

The consolidated 2019 net operating result for RMIT University and its subsidiaries was \$62.9 million or 4.1 per cent of revenue, continuing the strong results of recent years. RMIT University's operating result was \$43.1 million or 3.1 per cent of revenue.

RMIT subsidiaries are governed by a Board of Directors which includes a member or members of the RMIT University Council. Financial performance, operational highlights and risk management are reported quarterly to Council.

Subsidiaries as at December 2019 were:

- RMIT Holdings Pty Ltd
- RMIT Indonesia Pty Ltd
- RMIT Spain SL
- RMIT Training Pty Ltd
- RMIT Online Pty Ltd

The University's Annual Report contains further information on RMIT's financial performance, subsidiaries and executive profiles [rmit.edu.au/about/governance-management/annual-reports](https://www.rmit.edu.au/about/governance-management/annual-reports)

RMIT University was established and is governed in accordance with the *Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology Act 2010 (Vic)*.

### Place and Being

RMIT's three campuses in Melbourne are located on the unceded lands of the people of the Woi Wurrung and Boon Wurrung language groups of the eastern Kulin Nations. The Traditional Owners of the land were the first practitioners of sustainability and RMIT respectfully recognises their Ancestors and Elders past, present and future.

RMIT is one of Australia's original educational institutions, founded on a culture of philanthropy from a donation from Francis Ormond, established as the Working Men's College in 1887. Over time it has grown to incorporate several schools and colleges around Melbourne, including being awarded royal patronage in 1954. In more recent times it has grown to encompass international operations to take a more active role in global communities. To explore more of the RMIT journey, including the family tree visit: [rmit.edu.au/about/our-heritage](https://www.rmit.edu.au/about/our-heritage)



## 3.2. Governance

### University Council

RMIT is a public university created under the *Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology Act 1992*, governed by the RMIT Council and managed by the RMIT Chancellery. Under the legislation, the RMIT Council is responsible for the “general direction and superintendence” of the University including formulating policy and monitoring performance.

The Council has 13 members, including one elected staff representative and one elected from the student body. Its chair is the RMIT Chancellor, Dr Ziggy Switkowski AO. RMIT is compliant with the Voluntary Code of Best Practice for the Governance of Australian Universities. The University Council is provided regular updates on sustainability initiatives at RMIT through the Sustainability Committee Chair.

### The Vice-Chancellor's Executive

The Vice-Chancellor and President Martin Bean CBE is responsible for ensuring the University has strong and effective leadership and a clear direction. He is supported by the Vice-Chancellor's Executive (VCE) who provides strategic advice across the University's portfolios.

For further information about the RMIT governance structure, please visit the website: [rmit.edu.au/about/governance-and-management](http://rmit.edu.au/about/governance-and-management)

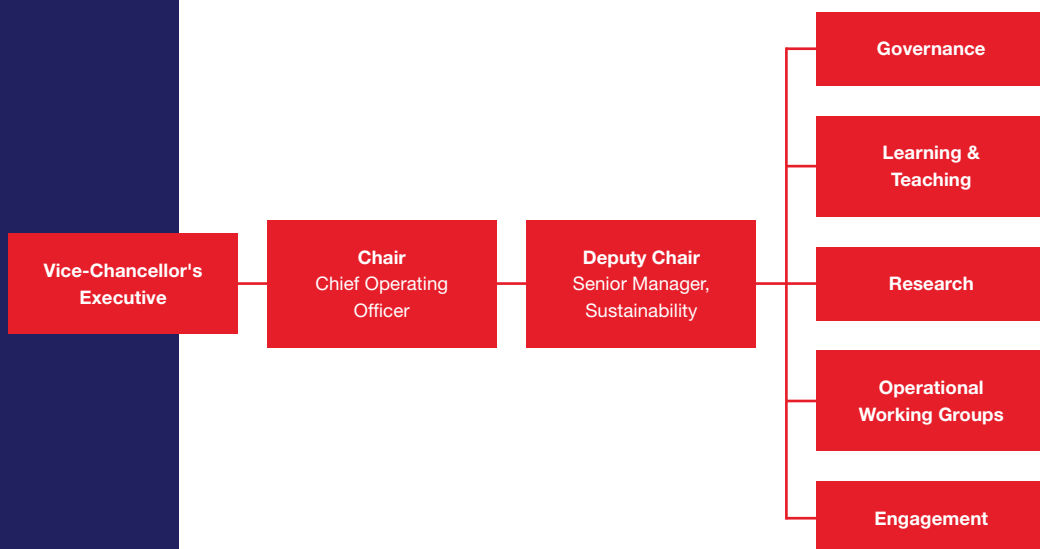
### The Sustainability Committee

RMIT's Sustainability Committee is the highest governing body with the responsibility to promote and coordinate sustainability initiatives across all areas of the University. Its goal is to ensure sustainability principles and practices are embedded within the University's core teaching and learning, research, governance and operational activities.

The Sustainability Committee reports through the Chair to the Vice Chancellor's Executive on the University's sustainability performance and makes recommendations about sustainability-related commitments, policies, strategies and targets. At the end of 2019 the long-standing Chair of the Committee, Professor Paul Gough, left RMIT to take up the role of Vice-Chancellor at a UK University. Professor Gough was an exceptional leader driving the strategic direction of the Committee and the Committee members expressed their thanks for his support, guidance and passion.

The Chief Operating Officer, Dionne Higgins was appointed as the Sustainability Committee Chair, bringing a wealth of experience to the role.

Governed by the Sustainability Committee, RMIT is committed to the objectives of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. These goals are aimed at ending poverty, protecting the planet and prosperity for all.





### 3.3. Key documents

#### Strategic Plan – Ready for Life and Work

RMIT's strategic path is built upon the guiding values and principles and is intrinsically connected to the University's sustainability goals. Developed in collaboration with students, staff and wider RMIT community, the strategy emphasises that it is the collective responsibility of the whole University community to work towards attaining the 2020 vision.

At the heart of the strategy is an aim to create life-changing experiences for students that prepare them for life and work. Seven strategic goals underpin the University's commitment to sustainability and reflect the impact it has on the economy, society and the environment.

RMIT's values of passion, impact, inclusion, agility, courage and imagination are enshrined in the mission to help to shape the world with research, innovation, teaching and engagement.

Areas of Focus were established in 2019 to ensure that the aspirations set out in the *Ready for Life and Work* strategy were achieved before the expiration of the plan in 2020. The University worked as one with a common set of values, a commitment to reconciliation and five clear Areas of Focus – Student, People, Industry, Global and Service Culture. RMIT's 2019 Annual Report provides a further update on how progress is being made towards the Strategic Plan:  
[rmit.edu.au/about/governance-management/annual-reports](http://rmit.edu.au/about/governance-management/annual-reports)

#### Sustainability Policy

The University's Sustainability Policy was formally adopted in 2012 to embed sustainability principles and practices throughout learning and teaching, research and operational activities. It sets a number of goals across the areas of culture, tertiary education, research, community, partnerships, infrastructure and operations and links to a range of strategies and policies that guide specific activities.

The Sustainability Policy is available at:  
[rmit.edu.au/about/governance-and-management/policies/sustainability](http://rmit.edu.au/about/governance-and-management/policies/sustainability)

#### Graduate Attributes

The graduate attributes outline the broad skills that RMIT University expects its graduates will have acquired and be able to demonstrate to an appropriate level whatever their program of study. Two of the key graduate attributes for sustainability are:

- **Environmentally aware and responsible**

Graduates of RMIT University will have engaged in processes to develop their abilities to recognise environmental and social impacts and to provide leadership on sustainable approaches to complex problems.

- **Culturally and socially-aware**

Graduates of RMIT University will have developed cultural, social and ethical awareness and skills, consistent with a positive role as responsible and engaged members of local, national, international and professional communities.

#### Risk Management Framework

Risk Management Framework is based upon and guided by the International Risk Management Standard AS/NZS ISO 31000:2009.

The RMIT Council provides strategic oversight and monitoring of the RMIT Group's risk management activities and performance and ensures the degree of exposure that RMIT is prepared to accept in pursuit of its objectives is established and articulated in RMIT's statement on risk appetite.

The Council Audit & Risk Management Committee, with support of the Internal Audit and Risk Management function, periodically reviews the effectiveness of the RMIT Risk management policy process and its application to potential risk exposures, monitors the alignment of risk-appetite and risk-profile, and ensures internal audit plans for the RMIT Group include appropriate consideration of risk.





## Policy Governance

RMIT developed a new Code of Conduct in 2019. The Code articulates how staff work as a community of professionals, academics, education practitioners and researchers. It sets out the standards of behaviour required and expected of staff to be practised through ways of working, knowing and being which include core values. The Code provides the standards that other policies are aligned to and captures the vision and values of the University. As a public University that conducts its business across the *biik biik* (lands) and *wurneet* (waterways) of the Eastern Kulin Nations, the Code acknowledges RMIT's *dhumbali* (commitment) to place, explained in the *Bundjil Statement*.

In 2019 a new compliance framework was developed, establishing a new Compliance Policy and Compliance Breach Management Procedure, setting out the principles and responsibilities for an ethics-informed culture of compliance. Informed by ISO19600, a new Compliance Management Program was also developed for implementation through 2020, supporting awareness and accountability across the RMIT Group.

On 1 January 2019, the *Modern Slavery Act 2018* (Commonwealth Act) commenced, heralding a new statutory modern slavery reporting requirement for larger companies operating in Australia, including RMIT. To ensure compliance with the Act the University established a Modern Slavery Statement working group, which has been working through a discovery phase and the development of an action plan. The action plan sets out commitments for the first cycle of Modern Slavery Statement reporting, identifying and addressing risks of modern slavery across operations and supply chains, whilst developing education and awareness across the RMIT Group.

For more information visit: [rmit.edu.au/about/governance-and-management](http://rmit.edu.au/about/governance-and-management)

## Business Resilience

A resilient organisation is a sustainable organisation. In 2019, RMIT focused on establishing a framework on business resilience to safeguard people, process, assets and place. RMIT's Business Resilience Framework enables RMIT to anticipate, withstand, respond and recover from potential threats and the resultant impacts to business operations.

The Business Resilience Framework is underpinned by three capabilities, which may be activated independently or together:

- Critical Incident Management**  
 A systematised approach to immediate response, management and direction of activities for critical incidents at RMIT (including natural disasters, injury, death, technology, security and hazards).
- Business Continuity Management**  
 A holistic management process that identifies potential threats to RMIT and the impacts to business operations, as well as building effect response capability.
- IT Disaster Recovery**  
 Protects RMIT from the effects of significant technology-focused disruptive incidents such as cyber-attached, equipment failure and data corruption.











# 4. UN Sustainable Development Goals





The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provide a pathway for organisations to a more sustainable future. The 17 goals and their respective set of targets and indicators help organisations to identify sustainability aspects relevant to their operations and add value.

To demonstrate its global leadership and genuine sustainability commitments, RMIT employs the SDGs as its sustainability framework, which means that RMIT is embedding the SDGs into its strategies, processes, policies, and practices including curriculum, research, governance and operations. This work is an articulation of the formal public commitment the University made to the SDGs through the Sustainable Development Solutions Network in June 2017.

## 4.1. Goals into actions

In September 2019, the Vice Chancellor's Executive approved an enterprise-wide model to promote and coordinate Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) activities across the University to maximise SDG influence and impact. The key actions were:

- To demonstrate RMIT's global leadership by embedding, where appropriate, the SDGs into relevant processes, policies, and practices. By using measurement and reporting mechanisms to transparently disclose performance toward achieving the goals and be held publicly accountable for performance.
- To incorporate the SDGs into the next five-year strategy, providing an integrated approach for SDGs throughout the university.
- To expand the remit of the RMIT Sustainability Committee and provide direction to it as a coordinating unit for the SDGs across the University, creating a common narrative, collateral, and enabling mechanisms to further the SDGs in curricula, research and engaged partnerships.

The RMIT SDGs Project, an institution-wide project continued to maximise RMIT's contribution to the SDGs and improving accountability and collaboration. In 2019 a number of positive initiatives were delivered by this project, including:





## The Times Higher Education – SDG Impact Ranking

RMIT has been ranked number one in the world for its efforts to reduce inequality (SDG 10) and ranked 10th overall for its contributions to the 2030 sustainable development agenda, rocketing up from 82nd place in the previous round of the ranking.

RMIT ranked 5th in the world for 'Decent Work and Economic Growth' (SDG 8), an increase of 48 ranking places, and 12th for 'Clean Water and Sanitation' (SDG 6). In what was a 52-place increase, RMIT also rose to 15th for 'Partnership for the Goals' (SDG 17) and ranked 21st for 'Sustainable Cities and Communities' (SDG 11).

This strong performance is a testament to the continued efforts to implement the SDGs agenda throughout the University and key initiatives in the areas of social justice, inclusion, environmental management and operational practices.



## SDGs Working Group

A dedicated SDGs working group was created. The SDGs Working Group, made up of by academics and professional staff from different parts of the University, reports to the RMIT Sustainability Committee and is responsible for:

- Advising RMIT on its approach to address and implement the UN 2030 Sustainable Development agenda across the university
- Measuring and reporting to the Committee on the performance toward achieving the goals
- Discussing priorities and actions to promote and coordinate SDGs activities across the university to maximise SDG influence and impact

The SDGs Working Group hosted an open workshop for academics and professional staff to consult on the priorities and actions required to promote and coordinate SDGs activities across the university. The workshop was hosted at RMIT City Campus in November 2019 with 44 participants attending, representing a range of schools, colleges and departments of the University. Results of this workshop were used to develop RMIT's SDG strategy and respective action plan.

## Accelerating SDG Practice

RMIT is an active member of the Accelerating SDG Practice initiative, organised by Australasian Campuses Towards Sustainability (ACTS) and Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) Australia, New Zealand and Pacific Region. This initiative aims to help lift the collective response of the educational sector in Oceania and Pacific regions to the SDGs by providing a space for universities to share and discuss approaches, challenges and learnings about SDG implementation. RMIT has direct involvement in collaboration and participation in sectoral dialogue about the SDGs through these networks to share best practice.

## Mapping

Building on the SDGs mapping process, which commenced in 2018, RMIT continued to map research contributions to the SDGs using qualitative and quantitative analyses. Results of the mapping provide a clear picture of SDG impact across the University, supporting a wide range of projects across the globe. Mapping strengthens both accountability and decision-making processes. A similar approach has now been initiated for publications and curriculum.

## Website

The RMIT SDGs website continues to develop proving an important instrument to demonstrate RMIT's commitments and contributions to the SDGs, as well as to increase awareness, improve transparency and foster cross-disciplinary collaboration. It is also an important instrument to communicate and engage with internal and external stakeholders, resulting in new industry partnerships and funding opportunities.

## Research Support

The SDGs assistance program, implemented in 2018, continues to provide support for academics to embed SDGs into their research projects. For instance, the acceptance of Grace Leone for the Italian Australian Foundation Fellowship 2019 is one example. This Fellowship explored ways of addressing the SDGs in the context of creative civic learning in public space.

The SDGs assistance program is also important to increase awareness of the SDGs, foster research collaboration opportunities and share knowledge.

## Events

RMIT hosted several SDGs events, such as roundtables, presentations, seminar series and workshops to develop strategies, share expertise, discuss best practices, foster collaboration, support the sustainable development agenda and drive awareness amongst the RMIT community and external stakeholders. For instance, this included the "SDGs Dialogue" seminar hosted at the RMIT city campus in September 2019. This seminar was open to the public and aimed to increase awareness and foster collaboration around the SDGs agenda. During the event, RMIT academics and professional staff had the opportunity to present different SDGs initiatives in progress.

## 4.2. Partnerships for the Goals

RMIT recognises that the SDGs can only be realised with strong commitments, global partnerships and cooperation. Improving and developing partnerships is an important way to foster innovation for sustainable development. Some of RMIT's SDG partnerships include:

### Jean Monnet Sustainable Development Goals Network

Based in the EU Centre of Excellence, the Jean Monnet SDG Network formalises the relationships amongst researchers, policy think tanks and Non-Government Organisations who share a primary interest in enhancing the effective contribution of the EU to the implementation of the SDGs in the Asia Pacific. The Network brings together partners from RMIT University, the National Centre for Research on Europe at the University of Canterbury, the University of Glasgow, the Centre for European Studies at the Australian National University, and the European Union Centre in Singapore.

By strengthening collaboration amongst researchers and policymakers, the Network promotes a more effective evidence-base for EU institutions to engage with nations in the region to implement the SDGs. Its core question is: how can EU integration be more effective in supporting the implementation of the SDGs in the Asia Pacific than would be possible for individual Member States? How can this role be developed further?

In 2019, the Jean Monnet Sustainable Development Goals Network conducted:

- Nine seminars on each of Goals 2-10 of the UN Agenda;
- A research roundtable in Singapore
- A policy dialogue
- Three Early Career Research workshops

Network members developed an analytical framework for understanding the implementation of the SDGs. They continued their research on the EU's role through examining their contribution to the SDGs in Laos, Bangladesh and the Philippines, as well as India and China. They also undertook research on the role of the EU in promoting the Asia-Europe Meeting, as a means of generating collaborative focus on the implementation of the SDGs.

### RMIT Europe

The University's European hub in Barcelona, Spain, connects Europe to Australia and Asia through research and innovation, industry partnerships and student global experiences. RMIT Europe demonstrates its commitments and contributions to the SDGs through research projects, roundtables and internships in partnership with governments and industry.

For instance, in 2019, researchers at RMIT Europe led a panel discussion on the role that the education sector plays in supporting the Sustainable Development Goals Agenda at the European Roundtable for Sustainable Consumption and Production (ERSCP 2019). RMIT Europe also hosted a Design, Disaster and Development Research Forum and an SDGs study tour in Barcelona, in which students developed strategies to tackle urban heat – a growing challenge for cities around the world as urban populations increase.





## SDG Report Collaboration

The 'SDG Measurement and Disclosure by the ASX 150' report was a collaboration between RMIT University and the Global Compact Network Australia (GCNA) with the overarching aim to contribute to the conversation about how companies can make meaningful progress towards achievement of the SDGs.

The work undertaken by researchers in the School of Accounting, Information Systems and Supply Chain provides valuable insights for companies interested in improving the quality of their sustainability reports and maximising their contributions to the SDGs. The findings from this study are also increasing awareness and stimulating debate among companies, government and regulatory agencies, civil society members, and other stakeholders around sustainable development and the SDGs.

## One Planet Network

RMIT is a member of the UN One Planet Network (OPN), designed to pool international expertise, resources and innovation across different sectors to enable the shift to more sustainable modes of production and consumption. The OPN provides a platform for SDG 12 across six key areas: public procurement, consumer information, tourism, lifestyles and education, buildings and construction, and food systems. The OPN also contributes to SDG 8 on global resource efficiency in consumption and production and work to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation.

The OPN provides a platform to help countries accelerate and implement mechanisms for SDG 12 in the following areas: public procurement, consumer information, tourism, lifestyles and education, buildings and construction, and food systems. The OPN also contributes to SDG 8 on global resource efficiency in consumption and production and work to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation.

Since 2019, RMIT has been working on two main thematic areas of OPN's Sustainable Buildings and Construction Program: affordable and resilient housing and responsibly sourced materials for a circular economy. To this end, a global state of play report has been written (for launch in 2020) which examines the opportunities presented for a circular economy in the building and construction sector and provides a roadmap for consideration by various countries in the regions as part of their National Determined Contributions (NDCs).

## UNEVOC Centre

The UNEVOC Centre at RMIT is part of that International Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation. It provides an inclusive global learning network focused on skills for the world of work. UNEVOC at RMIT partner with government, industry, and the not-for-profit sectors to lead applied and research-based activities for meeting the UN Sustainable Development Goals, specifically SDG 4, 5 and 8, with a focus on an applied program of research in the following areas:

- Young people, 21st Century capabilities, and transitions in the future of work;
- Building a networked approach to enabling and capturing social value in learning and training;
- Exploring educational ecologies of well-being, resilience, and enterprise.

## UN Global Compact – Cities Programme

The UN Global Compact – Cities Programme is the urban arm of the UN Global Compact, the world's largest corporate responsibility initiative. It has been hosted by RMIT University since 2008 as a specialist program, recognising that cities play an important role in collectively tackling seemingly intractable and complex political, economic, ecological and cultural challenges.

The Cities Programme acts as a platform for action through partnered sustainable urban development and fosters collaboration across government, business and civil society. The objective is to work with cities to advance the Sustainable Development Goals at the local level, promote the UN Global Compact 10 principles on human rights, labour, the environment and anti-corruption in cities, and support the implementation of UN-Habitat's New Urban Agenda.

In 2019, the Cities Programme delivered the final year of the City Partnerships Challenge pilot in Australia, fostering five substantial multi-sector partnership projects to progress the SDGs at the local level. Expanding on learnings from the first year and past capacity building weeks, participating cities moved to focus more on multi-partnered governance mechanisms through intensive training on Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) to enable the effective development of their sustainable urban initiatives. During the year, individual business cases were refined and expanded further by the members of each task force, with the support of the Cities Programme, RMIT researchers and/or Cities Programme partners, like the Australian and New Zealand chapter of PRME.

Throughout 2019, the Cities Programme also delivered ethical city training workshops and facilitated panel discussions at key national and international events to further the SDGs, including the UN High-Level Political Forum, the United Cities and Local Governments [UCLG] world congress, the Seville Commitment to the Local 2030 Agenda and the UN's Climate Change Conference COP25.





# 5. Stakeholder engagement





## 5.1. Engagement mechanisms

RMIT identifies stakeholders based on the following key criteria:

- **Representation:** those who represent or who can legitimately claim to represent key interests with which RMIT University interacts.
- **Dependency:** those who are dependent on RMIT University and those on whom the University depend for operations.
- **Responsibility:** those to whom RMIT University has direct responsibility such as legal, financial, operational or contractual links.
- **Influence:** those who have the ability to impact on RMIT University's decision making.

The table below shows how RMIT engages with stakeholders:

Stakeholder Group	Engagement methods	Frequency
<b>Students</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Biennial surveys</li> <li>▪ Meetings with the Student Group</li> <li>▪ RMIT University Student Union</li> <li>▪ Student Experience Advisory Committee</li> </ul>	Constant
<b>Staff</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Annual surveys</li> <li>▪ Annual performance development reviews</li> <li>▪ University support services</li> </ul>	Constant
<b>Alumni</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Website</li> <li>▪ Events</li> <li>▪ Mailing lists</li> </ul>	As required
<b>Industry partners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Advisory Boards</li> <li>▪ Relationship Managers</li> <li>▪ Work Integrated Learning</li> </ul>	As required
<b>Suppliers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Contractual management process</li> <li>▪ Tender processes</li> <li>▪ Relationship management</li> </ul>	Constant
<b>Governments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Meetings</li> <li>▪ Project collaboration</li> <li>▪ Annual reports</li> </ul>	As required
<b>Local communities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Website</li> <li>▪ Publications</li> <li>▪ Open Day</li> </ul>	As required

## Sustainability Engagement Plan

RMIT is committed to widespread engagement across the community of students and staff to encourage and ensure the adoption of sustainable practices and outcomes. The community is engaged through sustainability initiatives including events, behaviour change programs, social media campaigns and living lab projects.

The objectives 2019 RMIT Sustainability Engagement Plan were:

1. Increase the visibility of the sustainability team through face-to-face activities, curation of the sustainability space and digital engagement.
2. Deliver sustainability inductions by promoting behaviour change to increase recycling rates and reduce environmental impacts.
3. Promote sustainability commitment through events and promotional activities.
4. To create a shared dialogue on global issues through external partnerships, conference papers, campus tours and student living lab projects.
5. Demonstrate maturity and competency to generate student and staff advocacy.



## 5.2. Sustainability Programs

### Sustainability Ambassador Program

RMIT's student sustainability ambassador program continued to gain momentum in 2019 with 29 students trained. The program provided students with an opportunity to get involved in sustainability-related workshops, events and initiatives throughout the year. Students who fulfil induction training requirements and 15 hours of voluntary work, received academic recognition through the 'Future Edge' program, aimed at supporting and improving key skills for future employment. The Ambassadors involvement in the Welcome Days and sustainability workshops was invaluable and in 2019 they even got the opportunity to become 'Waste Warriors' to educate people about recycling on campus.

### Green Impact Engagement Program

Undertaken for the second year in Melbourne and Vietnam, the RMIT Green Impact program was developed to support the delivery of positive actions aligned with the University's sustainability strategy. The program is based around a bespoke online toolkit that educates staff about what they can do at an individual level to address social and environmental sustainability actions at home and in the workplace. Actions are broken down based on levels of complexity, each with a corresponding award: gold, silver and bronze. The program also connects staff with the Australasian Campuses Towards Sustainability (ACTS) network to create a community of people working together towards common goals.

Taking action at a localised team level has helped to empower hundreds of staff participating in the program, with several new achievements this year including clean-up events in Melbourne and Vietnam, a tree planting day, waste-free events and the new addition of the biodiversity category in the toolkit.

Student volunteers undertook accredited training to become environmental auditors to verify that the actions teams recorded in their workbooks were implemented to a satisfactory level. This form of work-integrated learning is an opportunity for students to gain invaluable industry experience. Vietnam team 'Hanoi Big Team' took out the number one place for the second year in a row, demonstrating a tremendous effort.

### Sustainability Space Curation

RMIT's Sustainability Space found a new home in mid-2019 when they traded places with Student Life and settled into their new space beside the Job Shop (10.4.70). The sustainability team are grateful for the increased visibility on campus that this centrally located space has provided. To have a presence outside of the office to better connect with staff and students has been invaluable for raising the awareness of sustainability at RMIT. The new space was launched with the successful curation of a Tiny House Exhibition in collaboration with the School of Vocational Design and Social Context. To maximise the activation of the sustainability space, it is now bookable for events and engagement initiatives linking to social or environmental sustainability.



### **Tiny House Curation**

The Tiny House Exhibition was the first curation in the new Sustainability Space, which commenced with a Tiny House Warming to recognise all the hard work that made this project come to life, followed by a successful month-long exhibition which attracted great interest. The Tiny House Warming was an opportunity to showcase the final product that resulted from a collaboration with the School Vocational Design and Social Context and the RMIT Sustainability Team.







Students' work focused on what could be found inside a Tiny House ranging from modular, multi-functional furniture to sustainable fibres and prints made into soft furnishings. The focus of the project was to predominantly use upcycled and repurposed materials in new and interesting ways, as well as integrating sustainability into every aspect of product design.

Textile Design students were asked to research global and domestic trends in sustainable interior textile products, highlighting any design or material innovations in technology or manufacturing. The research phase was critical in the development of their collections as they became aware of current trends in interior sustainability and it highlighted some very exciting designers and innovative material use. They then set out to develop two textile collections; one for printed textiles and one for constructed textiles. The emphasis was on incorporating sustainable design strategies and think about circularity and repurposing.

Furniture Design Students' brief investigated the growing demand from customers who are choosing to live in small living spaces because of lifestyle, economic or environmental benefits. Students were required to demonstrate how their design affects the physical, social and cultural environments into which it will be implemented. This brief was also about making sustainability central to problem-solving within new furniture designs and developments to minimise the footprint and impact on natural resources. Part of designer-ethics is to understand your impact on current and future generations.

Graphic Design students focused on designing a suite of brand assets to accompany the Tiny House display. All groups were supported by industry experts and benefited from working as cross-disciplinary teams to produce the final products to a high standard.





The tiny house collaboration encourages people to value and find more meaningful connections with the objects in their life. It provided students with many challenges and allowed them to carefully consider material selection and the potential impact of their design decisions and production methods.

**Lucy Adam**

Teacher in Textile Design and Development  
in the School of Vocational Design and Social Context





## Living Lab Projects

Each year the Sustainability Team support student learning by providing guest lectures, giving campus tours and supporting projects. Many of the projects supported came from the Greenhouse and Sustainability Program, which connects RMIT students with industry to implement sustainability projects. The program is administered by a project team under the learning and teaching portfolio of the College of Science, Engineering and Health. It aims to provide students from across the University with meaningful opportunities to apply their learning to real-world sustainability challenges. Projects supported by the Sustainability Team in Property Services in 2019 included:

- **Climate Change events impacts on students:** Students from Masters of Environmental Science & Technology were asked to explore the relationship between extreme climate change events and student health, safety & wellbeing. The RMIT Climate Change Adaptation plan identified an opportunity to better understand the impacts of severe climate change events on the RMIT student population. The project made recommendations on how RMIT could assist students in becoming more resilient. Key focus areas included transport options, student accommodation, on-campus comfort, support available to students and education programs.

- **Landscape Design Standards:** Final year engineering students undertake a Capstone Project with industry that provides an authentic, challenging, yet achievable problem-solving engineering experience. All Engineering Capstone Projects are presented at EnGenius, a major industry showcase held in October. Students from Civil Engineering were engaged on a project with the Sustainability Team to assess campus vulnerability to serve weather and climate change and make suggestions for new specification in the Design Standards for landscaping features that would help shape more resilient campuses. The Design Standards is a set of specifications that set out the minimum requirements for the design and construction of all RMIT facilities, with the students proposing elements such as green facades and water sensitive urban design solutions.
- **Risks to assets during extreme climate event:** Property Services has an asset management system that is certified to ISO 55001; which is an international standard for asset management. This system uses a consistent methodology for assessing, planning, maintaining and reporting on assets. This project identified assets within RMIT's portfolio that may be impacted by severe climate change events and made recommendations on how this infrastructure could become more resilient.

- **Green Travel Planning:** In Semester 1, students from the Master of Business Information Technology undertook a Green Travel Plan Project, which aimed to inform the way staff, students and visitors travel to and from the Bundoora Campus at RMIT. The project had a broad scope which studied various issues around the subject of staff and student travel, including policy context, current situation and future projections, existing and future road/transport networks, modes of transport and a communication plan for behaviour change. They were then tasked with recommending a business IT solution that supports green, sustainable travel to campus.
- **Sustainable Transport App:** Building on the previous project in Semester 2, students from the Computer Science & Software Engineering program built upon the findings of the Business Information Technology student work to design a Sustainable Transport android mobile app. The app used gamification and incentive-based rewards to encourage students and staff of RMIT Bundoora campus to use more sustainable methods of travel to and from the University. In the demonstration version of the app, students and staff could be rewarded for using sustainable methods of travel by receiving points that could be used to obtain prizes or discounts on-campus, with a leaderboard designed to encourage uptake and competitiveness.



## 5.3. Sustainability Events

A central focus for the Sustainability Team in 2019 was waste avoidance. Throughout the year there were several initiatives undertaken on campus including trials of mug libraries, recycling stations, organics bins and working with retailers and events teams to avoid waste through better planning and operations. In partnership with the Events Team, Open Day and the End of Year Staff Party provided a controlled environment to allow the trial of several new initiatives including:

- **Organic bins:** The team worked with food and drink vendors to ensure compostable packaging was used and organic bins were closely monitored to reduce contamination.
- **Reuse:** No single-use plastics were supplied, glasses were purchased and collected for reuse.
- **Hydration Stations:** temporary drinking fountains were set up on each campus and people were encouraged to bring their reusable water bottles.
- **Strong messaging** was provided before the event and clearer, more consistent signage was used on the day.

For more information see [section 6.4](#).

## Annual Program

The Sustainability Team ran an impressive 40 events in 2019 (over a 60 per cent increase from 2018) which were aimed at educating students and staff on sustainability and the RMIT context. With an average of three sustainability events per month, there was strengthened collaboration with different departments including RMIT Activator, Student Life and the Job Shop, increasing capacity to embed sustainability on campus.

Sustainability Week is held at the end of March to give new and returning students, as well as staff, a comprehensive understanding of what sustainability means to RMIT University and the important role they can play. Over 200 staff and students attended across a range of events held across the Brunswick and City campuses including:

- A sustainability tour of RMIT's built environment kicked off the week with attendees learning about the significant work undertaken to make RMIT's spaces energy-efficient, cutting edge in design and student-centric.
- Annette Young ran an inspiring session on sustainable and ethical fashion at the Brunswick campus.
- A climate change action workshop was conducted by Sustainability Victoria. The focus was on empowering individuals with H.O.P.E (How One Person Engages). Two researchers from RMIT Sustainable Futures held an insightful session on building emotional resilience.
- Researcher Associate Professor Adrian Dyer and ecologist Freya Thomas discussed the integral role biodiversity has in an urban landscape and the role of bees and pollination.
- A unique, hands-on workshop was held at the Brunswick Dye Garden where part of the workshop focused on understanding the role of the Dye Garden and surrounds, both now and what it might look like in the future. Kendelle Hobbs, a third-year Textile Design student spoke about her portfolio of natural dye experimenting after being influenced by a recent trip to India.





Other key events included the Sustainability Showcase, which focused on practical workshops for learning new skills like DIY skincare products and thought-provoking sessions such as Dr Scott Rawlings presentation on the State of the Environment Report.

The Global Goals jam is a two-day hackathon-style event where creative teams work together on local challenges related to the Sustainable Development Goals. It is hosted in more than 90 cities globally, connecting over 5,000 change-makers. RMIT Sustainability partnered with DesignThinkers Group Australia, RMIT Activator and the Yarrariver Keeper Association to tackle SDG14 'Life Below Water'. The RMIT community members who attended were keen to tackle local issues including storm-water run-off, gross pollutants, and microplastics entering Melbourne's waterways. The winning team called 'Joint River Management System' proposed a holistic approach to existing infrastructure to better isolate and capture litter at different stages of it entering and travelling along the waterways. The team received vouchers and the opportunity to progress their idea further with RMIT Activator.

As part of RMIT University's Entrepreneurship Week, RMIT Sustainability hosted a Sustainability Symposium Panel at the Bundoora East Campus. Attendees heard from unique businesses, start-ups and the University on how they embed sustainability in their business model and seek to reduce their environmental impacts through efficiencies in supply chains and ethical sourcing. The panel was focused on inspiring students from the School of Engineering to become entrepreneurs that can problem solve and ultimately tackle some of the biggest challenges in sustainability.



## City Challenge

RMIT is committed to preparing students for work and life and ensuring all students can benefit from global experiences. In partnership with Common Purpose and the City of Melbourne, RMIT students came together with frontline organisations to tackle one of Melbourne's biggest challenges: waste.



As the City of Melbourne aims to send no waste to landfill by 2030, waste management has become a pressing issue. It's a problem the annual City Challenge, an initiative of RMIT's Global Experience Office, set out to solve by inviting 500 students to research and develop their own innovative solutions.

Held over two days, the challenge tasked students with finding viable solutions for the waste industry, with the chance for their ideas to become a reality through the help of RMIT Activator.

They presented the top five concepts to an industry panel including The Right Honourable Lord Mayor of Melbourne Sally Capp; Deputy Vice-Chancellor Engagement Melissa Sweetland; RMIT Senior Manager Sustainability Linda Stevenson; and Chief Executive Officer of KS Environmental Jim Dunstan.

Students were given a crash course on the waste industry and met with industry representatives including Sustainability Victoria, Queen Victoria Market and waste management company Veolia to learn about waste management and sustainability to help them interrogate areas of interest and develop their ideas.

The Lord Mayor said RMIT was valued for driving the intellectual capital of this city.

"We're able to provide insight, through programs like these, into issues that are directly affecting our community and our economy today, and have long term legacy consequences," she said. "RMIT successfully harnesses young talent, ideas and energy, and applies that in so many valuable ways. That's why the City of Melbourne looks to RMIT as an integral part of how we plan our future."

Associate Director Global Entities & Experiences Sam Baillie said it was inspiring to see the passion students brought to this challenge.

"Given they had two days to immerse themselves in the war on waste, the quality of ideas pitched to the Lord Mayor demonstrate what RMIT students can achieve when they work together. Programs like the City Challenge allow students to develop skills that are crucial for life and work."

The concepts impressed the panel so much that the Lord Mayor announced she would introduce the teams to the CEOs of these organisations to carry their ideas forward.





## 5.4. Memberships

RMIT is a member of key local and global organisations, these include:

### **United Nations Global Compact Network Australia**

Membership of the United Nations Global Compact Network Australia (GCNA) assists RMIT in sector-based collaboration, leadership advocacy and global connections on sustainability. In 2019, RMIT provided the GCNA with a home on the City campus, providing a strengthened connection to collaborate on research projects and support student outcomes.

### **Australian Technology Network (ATN)**

The Australian Technology Network brings together four of the most innovative and enterprising universities in the nation: RMIT University, University of Technology Sydney, University of South Australia and Curtin University.

Chaired by the Vice-Chancellor, Martin Bean CBE, the group is committed to forging partnerships with industry and government to deliver practical results through real-world research.

### **Australasian Campuses Towards Sustainability (ACTS)**

RMIT is a member of ACTS, a network which aspires to inspire, promote and support change towards best practice sustainability within the operations, curriculum and research of the Australasian tertiary education sector. RMIT partners with ACTS to deliver the Green Impact Engagement Program.

### **Green Building Council of Australia (GBCA)**

RMIT is a member of the GBCA to support and drive the adoption of green building practices in the property industry. RMIT currently has seven projects rated under the Green Star system and are finalising a submission under the Interiors rating tool for the OurPlace Project.

### **Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN)**

Membership of the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) provides practical solutions for sustainable development and the sharing of best practice teaching and research in sustainability for RMIT.

### **Tertiary Education Facilities Management Association (TEFMA)**

TEFMA is an organisation which promotes and supports the management and development of the facilities portfolio in the Australasian tertiary education sector. Annually RMIT participates in the TEFMA sustainability performance benchmarking study to track performance in the sector.





# 6. Education





RMIT is committed to enabling graduates to meet future challenges and take advantage of new opportunities. Graduate attributes are designed to ensure that every graduate is equipped with the practical skills and expertise that employers consider most valuable:

- Work-ready
- Global in outlook and competence
- Environmentally aware and responsible
- Culturally and socially aware
- Active and lifelong learners
- Innovative

## 6.1. Work-Integrated Learning

Work-integrated learning (WIL) connects the classroom to the workplace and is an integral part of the University's commitment to work-relevant, industry-engaged education. Providing students with the opportunity to integrate academic learnings into workplace application, not only prepares students for real-life situations but also allows them to test drive their career options.

WIL is available across most disciplines and more importantly are co-designed with industry and community partners. WIL activities can occur in the workplace, in simulated workplace environments, at the university, online or face-to-face. Industry-engaged WIL activities involve students interacting with organisations (industry, government and community) through discipline relevant projects and work placements. A partner organisation may host a student placement or have teams/individuals undertake a project based on real problems or industry/community needs. Industry partners are engaged in the project and provide genuine, constructive feedback to the students.

Whether the activity is a placement or project, WIL can be tied to one or more courses within the student's program, as the activity is formally assessed for credit and therefore contributes to their degree.

In 2019, 14,272 RMIT students undertook WIL placements and projects. The Careers and Employability Team worked closely with schools and portfolios in Melbourne and Vietnam to provide support systems and processes, develop university-wide resources, facilitate the sharing of best practice through the WIL Community of Practice and broker WIL opportunities into the University from employers and community partners. Careers and Employability staff were also involved in a range of national projects around the development of a national WIL quality framework, online WIL, interdisciplinary project-based WIL and the development of resources and modules to support international students prepare and access WIL.



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## The Campus as a Canvas

The city is an ever-changing and limitless realm of possibility. It's a clustering of human activity which generates a propulsive and relentless energy. And while this can be a positive possibility, the city also encroaches, stifles and burdens those who inhabit it. That anxiety – and the need for reprieve – sits at the heart of BiodiverCity, a piece of work by RMIT architecture student Esther van Noppen. This artwork was developed as part of the 'Activating Construction Sites' elective, hosted by RMIT's School of Art and School of Architecture and Urban Design. In the elective, students explored the relationships between RMIT and the landscapes and communities the University is a part of.

Unfolding over 17 metres of hoardings wrapped around the heritage restoration of the Francis Ormond Building, BiodiverCity presents the flora and fauna of RMIT's City campus, superimposed and expanded, over the backdrop of its built environment. Built from photos taken by van Noppen onsite and manipulated to create a distorted reality, the work highlights the role of the natural world within the hustle and bustle of the urban landscape. For van Noppen, producing such a public-facing work is a chance to create a moment of pause for the citizens of the CBD, instigating a moment of reflection and contemplation. 'I hope it makes the environment they experience a little bit better,' the artist says. 'That they find it worthwhile to look a little bit longer at the work.'

## 6.2. Careers and Employability

Careers and Employability plays a significant role in preparing students to be ready for life and work upon graduating. In 2019 expanded services were provided to students through the RMIT Job Shop with 14,457 students engaged. Other notable achievements included 990 students employed on campus through 'Jobs on Campus' and a 73 per cent increase in Career mentoring partnerships, with 3,320 partnerships achieved. Targeted strategies have been enhanced for specific cohorts of students including final year, indigenous, international and students from a low socioeconomic background resulting in significantly increased engagement across all these cohorts. In 2019, the first RMIT Indigenous Careers Fair was held in partnership with RMIT's Ngarara Willim Centre.

Careers and Employability have developed and supported a suite of micro-credentials across the Leadership and Work Ready capabilities. These micro-credentials are offered to students as both co-curricular and embedded creds within Programs.

## 6.3. RMIT Creds

In 2016, RMIT University's Education portfolio developed and launched a pioneering project with the aim of producing a series of digital micro-credentials in collaboration with industry and leading employers. Creds were developed on the back of various industry, university and government reports that recommended certification of skills gained through formal and informal learning in workplaces or alternatives to traditional universities.

RMIT Creds has closed out 2019 having delivered a broad portfolio of 126 products across 11 capabilities, driven primarily by industry demand. In 2019 alone, Creds amassed 110,000 student enrolments.

In 2019, RMIT Creds were awarded the BHERT award for Higher Education Partnership between RMIT and EY. EY Australia's Managing Partner; Government and Health Sciences, Catherine Friday, suggested that this Agreement with RMIT was significant because "it demonstrates a wonderful collaboration between EY and RMIT to share expertise and design essential micro-credentials for future talent, enabling undergraduates to acquire skills to help elevate their confidence and performance when working in a consulting industry."

RMIT's strength in learning design, quality standards and assessment to ensure that the learners of these digital credentials can apply their learning and demonstrate newly acquired skills, was highlighted by winning the 2019 LearnX Award for 'Best Learning Design Team'.

In 2019, the RMIT Creds program has delivered:

- 38,153 embedded student enrolments.
- Embedded in 427 programs, including 48 core programs.
- 36,792 badges accepted and 9,318 shared with potential future employers.





## 6.4. Student Life

Student Life supports RMIT's work on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) sharing the commitment to end poverty, fight equality and respond positively to climate change. RMIT is demonstrating progress towards a sustainable future through various student-facing programs.

### Campus Store

The RMIT Campus Store contributes to the rich student experience and helps in building connection within the RMIT community and alumni by providing a range of products, services and experiences.

An important part of the Campus Store's mission is that it provides student employment and opportunities with the University's Work Integrated Learning and Career Development programs. The store employs and trains RMIT students during peak trading periods and to undertake projects.

In 2019, the Campus Store reviewed their supply chains, requiring traceability of all vendors involved in the production and procurement process. This process included the implementation of a rigorous audit process, whereby some vendor engagement and product lines have been discontinued.

Other environmental initiatives undertaken by the Campus Store include:

- Reduction of unnecessary packaging and the provision of environmentally friendly alternatives where possible.
- Preferring carbon neutral or Fairtrade products services where possible .
- Recycling of all soft plastics and the removal of single-use plastic bags.
- Reviewing and developing a sustainable merchandise line.

### Creative

RMIT Creative offers a diverse program across dance, performing arts, music, visual arts and design – including events, activities and student-run collectives.

In 2019, RMIT Creative supported the reduction of single-use takeaway cups through the Mug Library, funded by the Sustainability Team and constructed by the RMIT Woodworking Club. The Mug Library provides a supply of reusable mugs for staff and students to use at coffee shops on campus. The mug libraries were built over a series of woodworking skillshare workshops attended by students.

RMIT's Catwalk Club, in collaboration with Clothes Loop, held a Fabric Remnant Party, a fabric market extravaganza for students and the public. The market event was to help much-loved pieces of fabric find better homes and projects – including six student-run stalls.



### Sport

RMIT Sport offers RMIT students, alumni, staff and the community a range of activities, teams, competitions, programs and clubs to get involved in. Participation in sports increases the health and wellbeing of the community.

RMIT Sport offers over 40 different sports clubs, with over 9,000 students participating in 2019 including 1,239 new members and a nine per cent increase in female participation.

In 2019, RMIT Sport launched a Women's Football Academy, set to create education and new talent pathways for players, coaches, sports scientists, administrators and media professionals into the VFLW and AFLW.

## Student Life Events

RMIT Student Life runs various events throughout the year to help students meet new people, learn new skills and keep connected to life at RMIT.

In 2019, Student Life transformed the events offering, putting sustainability at the heart of the event delivery design. A range of initiatives were implemented to give consideration to the impacts of events including:

- Setup of large-scale water stations at events to reduce the need for unnecessary plastic bottles.
- Preferencing the use of digital marketing channels for event promotion and using 100 per cent recycled paper for all remaining printed posters and signs.
- Requiring all food vendors to use BioPack or bamboo-based products, eliminating the use of single-use plastics, containers and Styrofoam. Restricting the sale of pre-packaged drinks at events.
- Plastic and fabric wristbands at events have been replaced with stamps and food coupons are now printed on seed paper.
- Replacing single-use cable ties with reusable velcro straps.
- No florist foam in flower installations.

## Student-led Groups

RMIT remains committed to fostering a culture that empowers students to uphold sustainability principles and pursue their own sustainability initiatives. In 2019, there were four RMIT University Student Union (RUSU) affiliated sustainability groups in action on campus:

- **Environmental Engineering Student Association:** Hosts social and industry events, in what is the longest-running engineering student organisation at RMIT.
- **Student Association for Sustainable Systems Engineering (SSE):** Helps students adjust to University life and encourages connections between other SSE students.
- **Fossil-Free RMIT:** Campaigns for the University's divestment from fossil fuels from the University's philanthropic funds.
- **RMIT Vegan Club:** Promotes the ethical, health and environmental reasons behind veganism, how to become vegan and provides a social network for RMIT vegans, vegetarians and others interested in making this change.

In addition, the RUSU Sustainability Department drives sustainability initiatives on campus with coordination from a dedicated Sustainability Officer, who also sits on the RMIT Sustainability Committee.



# 7. Research Impact





RMIT remains deeply committed to demonstrating its global sustainability leadership by working collaboratively with its research partners to maximise positive impacts and bridge the gap between research and application.

## 7.1. Contributions to the SDGs

RMIT is proud to disclose the number of research projects contributing to the SDGs on the target level. The diagram below provides a snapshot of the 655 research projects that address one or more of the targets embedded in the SDGs.

### 2019 Snapshot of RMIT SDG Research Impact





## 7.2. Enabling Capability Platforms (ECPs)

Research at RMIT aims to solve critical global problems and to deliver significant economic, social and environmental impact. Unlike conventional discipline-based research structures, RMIT has the following eight Enabling Capability Platforms (ECPs) which connect researchers from multiple disciplines and from across Colleges under a thematic umbrella:

- Advanced Manufacturing and Fabrication
- Advanced Materials
- Biomedical and Health Innovation
- Design and Creative Practice
- Global Business Innovation
- Information and Systems (Engineering)
- Social Change
- Urban Futures

An Enabling Capability Platform is defined by its people, infrastructure, relationships (internal and external), and subject matter expertise. ECPs provide a mobile, interdisciplinary and collaborative mechanism to solve complex problems in current and emerging areas, providing relevant solutions to industry and communities, both locally and globally. This allows RMIT to deploy its areas of excellence and strength to comprehensively address critical local, national, regional and global challenges and to nimbly capture emerging opportunities.

An example of an SDGs-related project funded by the ECPs in 2019 is the concept note "Towards a Sustainable Development Goals Transformation Platform at RMIT". The note was produced by Associate Professors Lauren Rickards and Wendy Steele in response to external and internal stakeholders being strongly committed to implementing the SDG agenda for change. This concept note fosters discussions about RMIT's SDG engagement and contributes to critical thinking and action on the SDGs. It offers important practical suggestions for advancing the sustainable development agenda in the HE sector.





### 7.3. Research Translation

RMIT encourages researchers to create positive impact through research, delivering tangible benefits to society. A dedicated Research Translation team supports researchers in planning to achieve impact through their research including where research can contribute towards SDG goals. Researchers are assisted in developing a pathway to impact with a strong focus towards research application and uptake in real-world settings, and in measuring their impact to demonstrate benefits to partners and society.

A specialist Intellectual Property and Commercialisation team provides expert advice to researchers seeking to develop and market new technologies or services. The Research Partnerships team applies their sector expertise to support researchers in identifying and responding to industry research needs. This facilitates partnerships with government, business, community and service organisations that bring RMIT's research capability to bear on critical social, environmental and industry challenges. The provision of this integrated support across impact planning and capture, commercialisation and partnerships enhances RMIT researchers' capacity to contribute to the SDG goals.

Examples of innovative research projects that help solve complex local, regional and global sustainability problems are presented in this section.





### Turning carbon dioxide back into coal

The School of Engineering at RMIT has developed a new technique that can efficiently convert CO<sub>2</sub> from a gas into solid particles of carbon.

The research team have used liquid metals to turn carbon dioxide back into solid coal, in a world-first breakthrough that could transform the approach to carbon capture and storage. Dr Dorna Esrafilzadeh, a Vice-Chancellor's Research Fellow in RMIT's School of Engineering, developed the electrochemical technique to capture and convert atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> to storable solid carbon.

This research offers an alternative pathway for safely and permanently removing the greenhouse gas from the atmosphere.

Current technologies for carbon capture and storage focus on compressing CO<sub>2</sub> into a liquid form, transporting it to a suitable site and injecting it underground. But implementation has been hampered by engineering challenges, issues around economic viability and environmental concerns about possible leaks from the storage sites. RMIT researcher Dr Torben Daeneke said converting CO<sub>2</sub> into a solid could be a more sustainable approach.

### Early delivery of equitable and healthy transport options in new suburbs

Dean of the School of Global, Urban and Social Studies Professor Robin Goodman leads a research team that assists the public and private sectors in providing transport options to residents of Melbourne's new suburbs.

Melbourne's infrastructure is struggling to keep pace with current population growth. New suburbs are expected to accommodate an extra half a million new homes over the next 35 years. With scarce local employment and services, residents in outer suburbs can spend 15 or more hours per week commuting. Most travel by car on congested roads as public transport is absent, unreliable, overcrowded or increases commute times.

The project, "Early delivery of equitable and healthy transport options in new suburbs", builds evidence of resident transport experiences; and develops tools to overcome legislative, procedural and funding barriers to implementing early transport delivery; as well as financial models and tools. It identifies pathways for collaboration between public and private actors – including local governments, planning agencies, and developers – given that the complex policy, financial and funding mechanisms of new transport delivery depend on their collaboration.



## **Improving the Financial wellbeing of vulnerable Australians**

For low-income Australians, saving enough money to provide educational basics such as school uniforms for their children, or increasing their own employability through education can seem out of reach. Improving the financial literacy of these vulnerable Australians provides the backbone to improving their financial wellbeing and educational opportunities for themselves and their families.

Collaborating with ANZ and the Brotherhood of St Laurence, RMIT's Professor Roslyn Russell from the School of Economics, Finance and Marketing, has definitively shown the long-term improvement in the financial health of lower-income Australians who are involved in matched-savings programs such as Saver Plus.

The first program of its kind in Australia, Saver Plus was developed to encourage saving for educational expenses. With more than 36,000 participants since 2003, it is the largest and longest-running savings program in the world.

The program involves participants making regular deposits into an account then after ten months, ANZ matches the amount up to \$500. The program also involves financial education workshops.

Russell's research showed that even up to seven years after completing Saver Plus, 87 per cent of participants were still saving the same amount or more, demonstrating the long-lasting effect of such schemes. The research also demonstrated marked improvements in the financial wellbeing score of participants, increasing the average score of 64 out of 100 following the program compared to the national average score of just 59.

## **Air Quality Monitoring Stations in Ho Chi Minh City**

The air quality project was initiated in 2019 by the US Consulate General in Ho Chi Minh City, and implemented and executed by RMIT University in coordination with UNICEF Vietnam, Saigon Innovation Hub and Clean Air Asia.

Thirteen Air Quality Monitors (AQM) have been installed at local schools and social organisations across Ho Chi Minh City, in an effort to raise awareness of the increasing levels of air pollution.

The RMIT project team, led by Lecturer Nguyen Huu Nhan, worked closely with local schools and social groups to install 13 AQMs across eight districts to teach children more about the air that they breathe.

According to Mr Nhan, the positive impact of the installations was already emerging. Since installing an AQM at Thanh Da Secondary School, students have become more willing and proactive in environmental movements including sorting rubbish, reducing waste, planting trees and wearing face masks to assist with air filtering

With the new installations, the number of operating AQMs in Ho Chi Minh City now totals 18. Users can access an air quality index measured by the AQMs on the AirVisual mobile application. The data collected from the AQMs is expected to become a useful source for policymakers, government, industry and schools to revise the traffic and infrastructure system and waste disposal, and to consider other environmental solutions.

## **RMIT Europe researchers commenced work on a plus energy housing project**

RMIT Europe is a partner in a €9.6M European funded research project that will see the build and demonstration of plus energy housing in France, Germany, Norway and Italy. The project will see the creation of modular and replicable solutions for plus energy housing, which is a type of housing that generates more energy than required. The excess energy generated onsite from renewable energy sources is then available for other uses elsewhere.

The five-year research project is named climate and cultural-based design and market valuable technology solutions for plus energy houses (Cultural-E). It's being led by EURAC Research in Bolzano, Italy, and involves 18 partners including research centres, industry groups, universities and social housing providers across six European countries.

RMIT's research team on Cultural-E includes Professor Ralph Horne, Deputy Pro Vice-Chancellor, Research and Innovation for the College of Design and Social Context, Dr Marta Fernandez, Executive Director, RMIT Europe and Iván Luque Segura, Research Fellow, RMIT Europe.

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## 8. Our People





RMIT recognises that its people are core and contribute to the vision of being a global university of technology, design and enterprise.

By empowering all staff to thrive, the University can achieve its aim of shaping the world by developing innovative and creative solutions to complex local, national and global problems. RMIT understands the importance of a values-based culture, ensuring that RMIT is an inclusive place to study and work.

RMIT's purpose is to empower all people – staff and students alike – to shape their own futures to be their best and belong. The University is committed to living the RMIT values and making a difference both locally and globally.





## 8.1. Our workforce

As a global education provider, the 12,000 employees located around the world underpin the University's reputation and enhance its contribution to the wider community.

**Table: Employment Statistics**

2019	All Employees		Ongoing			Fixed Term and Casual	
	Number (headcount)	FTE*	Full-time (headcount)	Part-time (headcount)	FTE*	Number (headcount)	FTE*
<b>Gender</b>							
Female Executives	60	59	13	0	13.00	47	46.00
Female (total staff)	6,807	3,807.48	1,914	448	2,220.49	4,445	1,586.99
Male Executives	56	55.50	14	0	14.00	42	41.50
Male (total staff)	5,630	3,157.50	1,687	118	1,764.16	3,825	1,393.34
Self described	30	11.17	7	0	7.00	23	4.17
<b>Age</b>							
15-24	721	154.21	23	3	24.80	695	129.41
25-34	3,354	1,515.96	552	29	572.04	2,773	943.92
35-44	3,246	2,007.60	1,045	196	1,180.70	2,005	826.90
45-54	2,205	1,433.36	839	137	931.77	1,229	501.59
55-64	1,640	1,072.02	679	114	755.20	847	316.82
64+	1,301	793.01	470	87	527.14	744	265.87
<b>Total Employees</b>	<b>12,467</b>	<b>6,976.16</b>	<b>3,608</b>	<b>566</b>	<b>3,991.65</b>	<b>8,293</b>	<b>2984.51</b>

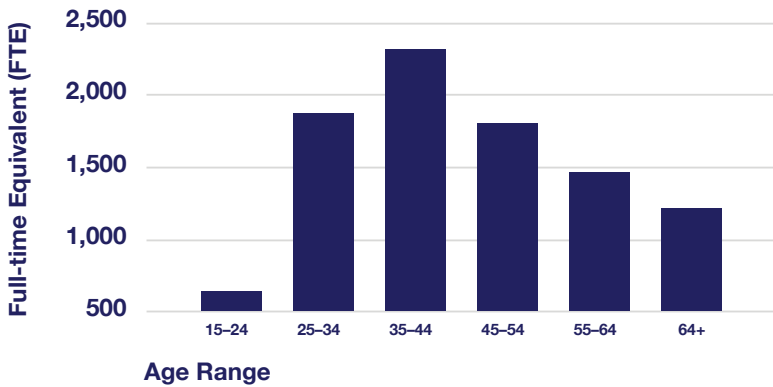
2018	All Employees		Ongoing			Fixed Term and Casual	
	Number (headcount)	FTE*	Full-time (headcount)	Part-time (headcount)	FTE*	Number (headcount)	FTE*
<b>Gender</b>							
Female Executives	63	61.96	23	–	22.76	40	39.20
Female (total staff)	5,992	3,233.76	1,836	394	2,084.08	3,762	1,149.68
Male Executives	68	66.01	35	–	33.90	33	32.20
Male (total staff)	5,315	2,889.70	1,735	92	1,795.73	3,488	1,093.96
Self described	24	6.65	4	–	4.00	20	2.66
<b>Age</b>							
15-24	657	119.21	27	1	27.16	629	92.05
25-34	2,956	1,265.41	631	37	649.87	2,288	615.54
35-44	2,947	1,797.96	1,069	169	1,176.77	1,709	621.19
45-54	2,045	1,298.94	790	126	871.23	1,129	427.71
55-64	1,568	991.56	670	78	722.63	820	268.93
64+	1,158	657.03	388	75	436.15	695	220.88
<b>Total Employees</b>	<b>11,331</b>	<b>6,130.11</b>	<b>3,575</b>	<b>486</b>	<b>3,883.81</b>	<b>7,270</b>	<b>2,246.30</b>

\*FTE: full-time equivalent (two people both working 0.5 time fraction = 1 FTE).

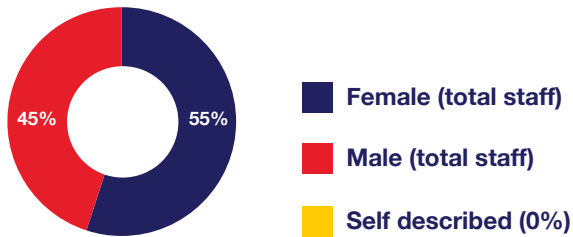
Data as at 31 December 2019. All employees have been correctly classified in the workforce data collections.

All Australian on-shore employees are covered by Enterprise (Collective) Bargaining Agreements. All staff participate in a Performance and Career Planning which involves regular reviews and ongoing discussions.

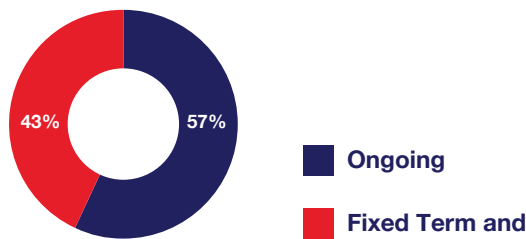
**RMIT Workforce by Age 2019 (FTE)**



**RMIT Workforce by Gender 2019 (FTE)**



**RMIT Workforce by Contract Type 2019 (FTE)**



RMIT supports staff in developing performance and career plans to develop skills and knowledge. RMIT offers all staff a range of development opportunities from compliance education, online learning, face-to-face learning and mentoring programs. All professional development opportunities have been linked to specific capabilities under the capability development framework to ensure you can pick development that helps build careers and enhance contributions to RMIT.

RMIT continues its strong commitment to creating a workforce that is inclusive and reflects the diversity of people and cultures that exist in the wider Australian community. RMIT is committed to increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and implement initiatives supporting employment.

**Table: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce**

	2017	2018	2019
<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>34</b>

The RMIT 2018 Higher Education Enterprise Agreement includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment and participation principles that recognise the rights and responsibilities of Indigenous employees, as well as highlighting the role reconciliation has as a core value of RMIT. It also requires that the University provides all non-Indigenous staff with the opportunity to participate in the relationship of reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People.





## 8.2. Diversity and Inclusion

Led by the values of inclusion, passion and courage, RMIT aims to create an environment where everyone can contribute, grow and succeed. Diversity and inclusion are celebrated and equal opportunity is an absolute.

The University Diversity and Inclusion Framework and related Action Plans are designed to build a diverse and inclusive community by:

- Promoting diversity and inclusion through visible commitments and actions.
- Implementing leading practice in the equity and inclusiveness of policies, facilities, services, workplace culture and behaviour.
- Improving access to education, employment and enterprise for diverse students.
- Improving access to employment at the University for staff with a diverse range of personal circumstances and characteristics.

The implementation of the Diversity and Inclusion Framework is supported by a high-level Committee reporting to the VCE, relevant policies, Executive Sponsors, and Working Parties comprising passionate and engaged staff and students. Diverse members of the RMIT community shape the agenda through their contributions to events, communications, programs, and active participation in forums and online communication channels.

RMIT is built on a belief in opportunity for all and we won't rest until that's the case. Because equal opportunity is an absolute – so until there are no exceptions, no pockets of inequality or barriers remaining, the task of change still lies ahead and it's ours to shape.

**Martin Bean CBE**  
Vice-Chancellor and President



## Supporting aspiration and access to RMIT for diverse students

RMIT has improved participation rates, educational outcomes and employment opportunities for diverse students through its programs including:

- **I Belong** on-campus programs to build secondary students' awareness and aspirations for tertiary education. In 2019, 2,814 SNAP secondary school students participated in I Belong programs.
- **The SNAP Access Scheme**, providing priority entry to RMIT programs for under-represented groups from secondary school students in the SNAP partnership. In 2019, 3,341 SNAP students received RMIT offers.
- **The Special Entry Access Scheme (SEAS)** for applicants seeking consideration for individual circumstances that have affected their education. Around 3,000 applicants receive an offer from SEAS consideration every year.
- 21 students who are **people seeking asylum** received a holistic access and support package comprising fee waiver access, living allowance scholarship, Myki, orientation and support services, and individualised employability development.
- **Coursework scholarships** for commencing students, with 1,800 scholarships awarded to VE and undergraduate HE students in 2019, with 96 per cent going to students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

## Diverse Genders, Sexes and Sexualities (DGSS) Inclusion

In 2019, RMIT was awarded the Employer of the Year for LGBTI Inclusion on the Australian Workplace Equality Index with Pride in Diversity. The University also received the Trans and Gender Diverse Inclusion award and received recognition as a Gold Employer for the second consecutive year. The Gold Employer status is limited to the 12 organisations across Australia with the highest AWEI national benchmarking scores, demonstrating the work and impact of LGBTI inclusion initiatives.

As a University of Choice leading and promoting LGBTI inclusion, RMIT is proud of how the student and staff community work together to build care and belonging.

The awards above recognise RMIT's commitments and achievements to promote a culture of inclusion and respect through leadership actions, communications, events, and professional development. RMIT has enhanced its policies and procedures for inclusion, improved provision for trans and gender diverse staff and students, and formed partnerships with external community groups, charities and events.

RMIT has an active student and staff Ally and DGSS network. This community continues to grow and outreach beyond RMIT through partnerships with leading community organisations and events including Minus 18, the Melbourne Queer Film Festival, and Pride and Diversity, Midsumma.

RMIT is proud that so many of the community including senior leaders joined in the major celebration of Melbourne's Pride March.



We'll continue to do everything we can to ensure our DGSS community feels accepted for who they are, can work and study without fear of harassment, bullying or discrimination and have the freedom to bring their whole selves to RMIT and to their community more broadly.

**Peter Coloe**

Pro Vice-Chancellor and Vice President Professor



### 8.3. Gender Equality

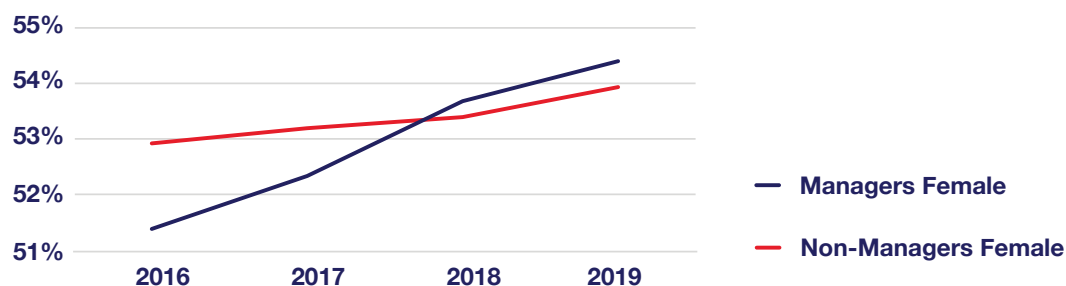
Led by the Gender Equality Action Plan, RMIT continues to identify and address barriers to women’s inclusion and career progression. The University remains focused on delivering strategic, sustainable and meaningful change across the priority areas: leadership and governance, employment conditions and women’s career advancement.

In 2019, RMIT received the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) Employer of Choice for Gender Equality (EOCGE) citation for the second consecutive year. The citation demonstrated a continued commitment to best practice in promoting gender quality in Australian workplaces.

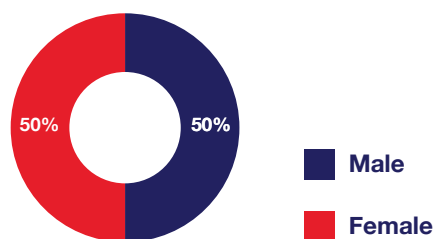
RMIT reports under the *Workplace Gender Equality (WGEA) Act 2012*. This report encompasses all employees (headcount) in Australia including full-time, part-time, casual and temporary employees. WGEA defines specific occupational categories to classify and report on managers and non-managers. Managers include the CEO, key management personnel, general managers, senior managers and other managers. As a result, the statistics below may differ from those reported within the 2019 Annual Report.

#### Workforce participation by gender

Gender composition of the workforce, percentage female by manager and non-manager



RMIT Governance Bodies by Gender 2019 (headcount)







It's testament to the collective energy and determination of so many passionate people that we've successfully made gender equality a baseline of 'how we do things' at RMIT. We remain committed as ever to drive change where change is needed, and we won't be resting on our laurels. We will continue pushing to ensure equal opportunity is an absolute, not a nice to have.

**Martin Bean CBE**  
Vice-Chancellor and President



**Table: Women in leadership roles**

	Total		Female		% Female	
	2017	2018	2017	2018	2017	2018
Governance bodies	13	14	7	7	53.8%	50.0%
Managers	526	766	279	414	53.0%	54.0%
Non-managers	10,314	9,849	5,426	5,261	52.6%	53.4%

**Table: Promotions, appointments and resignations (% female)\***

	Promotions		Appointments		Resignations	
	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019
Managers	56.5%	62.8%	54.2%	51.7%	59.6%	58.6%
Non-managers	61.1%	68.0%	56.9%	64.2%	55.8%	58.1%

\*WGEA metrics reported as staff headcount for the full year ending 31 March 2019.

## Athena Swan

In 2019, RMIT's efforts to improve gender equity were acknowledged with the Athena SWAN Bronze award as part of the Science in Australia Gender Equity (SAGE) initiative. Through the University's Athena SWAN Action Plan (2019-2024), RMIT is working to improve gender equity and diversity in the science, technology, engineering, mathematics and medicine (STEMM) disciplines through the 10 principles of the Athena SWAN Australia Charter.

RMIT University's SAGE Athena SWAN four-year Action Plan is focused around seven key themes, all working together to make gender equity in STEMM a reality.

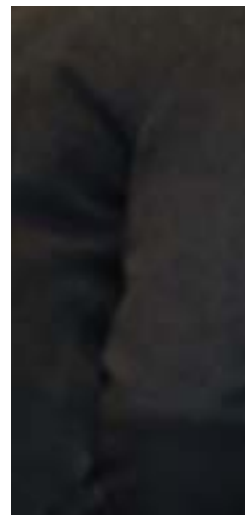
Effective change is led locally through every-day actions and decisions taken, supported by an enterprise-wide framework of well-resourced initiatives focused on attraction and retention of students and staff; supporting career progression; and an inclusive culture.



We need to be producing great role models for all of our students and staff, but you can't do that if you have gender disparity. Our involvement in the Athena SWAN program has given us the impetus to consider revisions and updates: to our policies, to our recruitment practices, and to our working culture, all with the aim of encouraging greater participation of women in leadership and research, and to ensuring that the careers of all our staff are not limited by life's challenges.

### Professor Kay Latham

Deputy Dean, Learning and Teaching, School of Science and Lead for SAGE Athena SWAN



### **Leading local action: driving transformation to support female careers in STEMM**

In 2019, RMIT trialled Achievement Relative to Opportunity in recruitment, which included reviewing practices and processes, and adopting inclusive recruitment practices to remove any unintended barriers:

- Implementation of Textio, a tool used to ensure the use of inclusive language in advertising
- Development of Diversity & Inclusion as a skill and capability for the Talent team; all Talent team have ongoing training on diversity & inclusion.
- Piloting a recruitment platform Vervoe to mitigate any unintended bias and screen 'applicants in, not screen applicants out'

### **Building the pipeline: inspiring and attracting future female talent**

RMIT is focused on building the pipeline, by inspiring and attracting future female talent. In 2019, RMIT focused on building the academic pipeline by:

- Focusing on gender-balanced shortlisting and panels
- The prestigious Vice-Chancellor Research Fellowship recruitment under Special Measures for Schools and Disciplines where there was an under-representation of women
- Undertook Women in STEMM recruitment campaigns

For the student pipeline, RMIT actively supports female-identifying students to access and succeed in STEMM. RMIT provides opportunities for students to be educated, inspired and excited so they can see their future in STEMM. RMIT showcased female STEMM student role models through communications, engagement activities and events based on collaborative partnerships and networks with high schools, educational and scientific organisations and industry.

### **Supporting fulfilling careers: nurturing existing female talent**

In order to support fulfilling careers, RMIT focused on academic promotions and ensuring gender balance and culturally diverse representation. RMIT reviewed academic promotion outcomes for women and culturally diverse people in STEMM.

### **Engaging moments of transition: creating in-time and flexible support mechanisms**

RMIT is focused on supporting gender equality in caring responsibilities and career progression for all carers, improving the management of career disruptions and transitions.

### **Transforming culture: delivering an inclusive, respectful and compassionate workplace**

RMIT has focused on building a psychologically safe and inclusive culture supporting diversity and gender equity through enterprise-wide action and local leadership. Inclusive culture underpins success in all SAGE Athena SWAN actions and ambitions to further diversity and support intersectionality at RMIT. In 2019, The Schools of Science and Engineering launched an Executive Leadership Capability Program, a comprehensive and validated model of inclusive culture.

### **Supporting and encouraging intersectional communities**

RMIT has a deep commitment to Reconciliation and the employment and retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people(s). In 2019, RMIT appointed an Indigenous Workforce Advisor in People team to focus on recruitment, development and retention at RMIT of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people(s). Additionally, RMIT looked to appoint three Indigenous Predoctoral academics under the Vice-Chancellor Indigenous Predoctoral Fellowship working in Athena Swan Schools.

### **Strengthening foundations: futureproofing Athena SWAN through good governance and leadership.**

RMIT's Athena SWAN project is driven by a working party with governance through to a Steering Committee with comprehensive membership across the STEMM discipline and a four-year action plan. Additionally, there are dedicated and funded roles across People, Higher Education and Vocational Education focused on the Athena Swan Action Plan implementation and governance.







## 8.4. Changing the Course: RMIT's plan and prevention framework to reduce sexual harm

In 2016, the Universities Australia prevalence survey 'Change the Course' highlighted high rates of sexual harm in Australian universities. RMIT has developed Changing the Course, a strategic plan and framework designed to build a community where every student and staff member is safe, respected, and free from sexual harm. The framework actions include:

- **Communications** and social marketing such as the 'Be the Change' campaign, which aims to support the community to address sexual violence and the social norms that make it acceptable.
- **Direct participation programs** such as student bystander interventions workshops, which empower individuals to recognize and intervene where they witness sexism and sexual harassment. This program addresses the norms and attitudes that drive sexual violence.
- **Provision of support and care:** Creating a single intake point to support those experiencing sexual harm and targeting interventions aimed at those at risk of perpetrating these behaviours
- **Strengthening institutional responses** through policy and process review to ensure that those seeking help for sexual harm do not have their trauma compounded by the institutional response mechanisms.

RMIT recognizes that sexual harm disproportionately affects women and fits within a spectrum of gendered violence. Consequently, the Changing the Course Advisory Group works closely with the Diversity and Inclusion Working Group to address the drivers of gendered violence. Gender equality is a human right and the costs to individuals and society of gender inequality and gendered violence are high. RMIT recognizes that gender equality will serve to make the community, safer, healthier and more sustainable. RMIT will continue to work towards this goal through Changing the Course and other strategic actions in the years to come.

At RMIT, our flexible ways of working are designed to support staff in balancing their work and life. We recognise that the needs of all our staff are diverse, and the arrangements that suit you now will likely change in the future.

**Allison Shevlin**  
Executive Director, People



## 8.5. Flexibility

RMIT is committed to supporting its people with fit-for-purpose flexible working arrangements to balance their work and life outside RMIT. Several resources, professional development opportunities and services are in place to support flexible ways of working.

At RMIT over 25 per cent of staff undertake a formal form of flexibility, this may include working part-time, purchasing leave or working a compressed work week.

Other forms of flexible working may also include remote working, flexible start and end times, time-in-lieu, job-sharing or other creative forms that suit the work and life needs of staff.

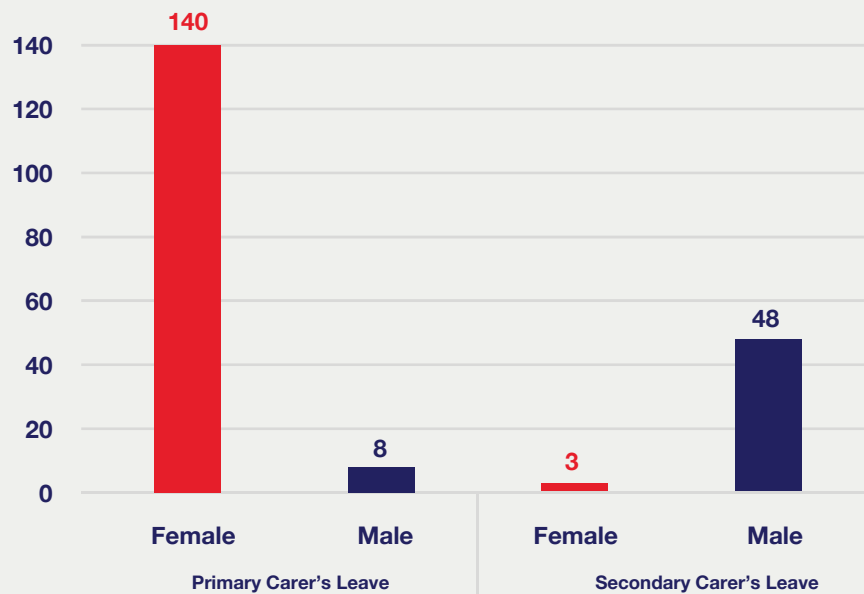
**Table: Formal flexibility rates**

Total	Men	Women
25.54%	14.80%	34.52%

\*WGEA metrics reported as staff headcount for the full year ending 31 March 2019.

We also provide a flexible workplace to support people with caring responsibilities or particular needs. All staff are entitled to carer's leave under the Enterprise Bargaining Agreement, with 199 employees taking carer's leave in 2018-2019.

### RMIT Use of Parental Leave 2019 (headcount)



\*WGEA metrics reported as staff headcount for the full year ending 31 March 2019.



## 8.6. Reconciliation

### **Bundjil Womin Djeka Ngarna- ga.**

Bundjil asks you to come and asks what is your purpose for coming and understanding. When you are on place you make a dhumbali (promise/commitment) to Bundjil and the land of the Kulin Nation. The first dhumbali, is to obey the ngarn-ga (understandings) of Bundjil. The second dhumbali, is to not harm the bubups (children). The third is not to harm the biik biik (land) and wurneet (waterways) of Bundjil.

As the spirit of Kulin ancestors live in us, let the wisdom, the spirit and the generosity in which Bundjil taught us influence the decisions made on place. Do this by understanding your ways of knowing, your ways of doing, and your ways of being on place.





At RMIT we recognise and respect the unique culture and contribution that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people bring to our communities. All RMIT staff and students, and the institution itself, have a relationship with eastern Kulin Nation sovereignty.

Through our strategies and plans, we are strengthening our commitment to engaging with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

At RMIT the Ngarara Willim Centre provides a gathering place for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and students. We are proud to provide study, cultural and personal support to our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. The centre provides specialist services and support to Indigenous students throughout their time at RMIT, as well as support to our Indigenous employees.

During 2019, RMIT has continued its dhumbali to understanding our purpose as a University located on Kulin country, and to living, working, and studying respectfully on place as Bundjil asks of us. This is reflected in our evolving understanding of the Bundjil Statement as our foundational dhumbali to knowing, being, and doing sustainably on place, and the underpinning relationship between the rights of Australia's First People and the successful advancement of our sustainability agenda.

The launch of our second Reconciliation Plan Dhumbah Goorowa – Commitment to Share (2019-2020), marked the start of the next phase in our dhumbali to reconciliation. Dhumbah Goorowa supports us to grow in understanding, acknowledging, and supporting Indigenous sovereignty and self-determination in a shared place of learning. It also strengthens our dhumbali to relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in all the areas of the University.

Building on the inclusion of the Bundjil Statement in RMIT's Policy Governance Framework, in 2019 the Statement provided the contextual framework for how the University shapes its policy documents and hence provides a written narrative of how RMIT wants to be known. The Bundjil Statement also provided the foundation for the development of RMIT's new Code of Conduct. Our progress towards cultural transformation was advanced through the development of a Reconciliation Capability, which will be included as part of our staff Capability Development Frameworks. The capability will be supported by existing professional development programs such as Bundyi Girri and Community of Practice seminars with leading Indigenous scholars from Australia and abroad, together with a suite of new learning and development offerings that support staff at all stages of their reconciliation journey.

Good progress was made towards Indigenous workforce development, and recruitment and promotions processes were revised to support the recruitment, retention and progression of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.

Ngarara Willim, which provides a gathering place for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff, was refurbished. The Centre reopened in late 2019 with shared spaces for collaboration, for community to visit and access, as well as study rooms, meeting and recreational spaces.

RMIT also developed a Community (Industry) Engagement Framework to support our shared journey by helping our people engage with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community in a respectful and culturally responsive way. The Framework will also support Indigenous businesses to partner with us and understand and work within our governance practices.

To support learning and teaching staff to respectfully engage with Indigenous knowledges within programs and disciplines, the Indigenous perspectives program of work was created to provide a safeguard for Aboriginal staff and students within RMIT. It ensures their identity and knowledges are valued by the university and addresses issues relating to the misappropriation of Indigenous knowledges by non-Indigenous people.

Reconciliation at RMIT involves a whole-of-university approach and each college and portfolio has created a reconciliation committee (called a ngulu, which means 'voice' in Woi wurrung and Boon wurrung language). The ngulus develop, implement and monitor reconciliation activities as part of our dhumbali to a just and meaningful relationship between Indigenous communities and our RMIT community.



## 8.7. Accessibility

Driven by its Accessibility Action Plan, RMIT is committed to enhancing inclusion and ensuring full and effective participation by all.

In 2019, RMIT was ranked fourth in the Australian Network on Disability (AND) Access and Inclusion Index, recognising its efforts in providing an inclusive and accessible workplace and support to students.

RMIT promotes inclusion for thousands of students with disability through individual education support plans, professional counsellors, mental wellbeing programs, mentoring and internships, and accessible teaching and learning materials. The Equitable Learning Services (ELS) team provided individual consultations to more than 1740 students with a disability, long-term illness and/or mental health condition and primary carers of individuals with a disability in 2019. Through an Equitable Learning Plan (ELP), students can receive equitable adjustment arrangements, which can include adjustments to study and assessment, sign language interpreters and other support staff, accommodation scholarships, and assistive technologies.

RMIT values the richness of diversity among staff and recognises the contribution being made already by those working with disability. As a signatory to the Disability Confident Recruitment Charter, RMIT offers advice and support through recruitment processes to ensure inclusive applicant management.

The Accessibility at Work team focuses on making workplace adjustments for staff which may include physical changes to the working environment, technological adjustments or working arrangement flexibility.

In addition to the ongoing work to improve campus accessibility, one of the biggest areas of improvement and progress for RMIT in 2019 was the development and launch of RMIT's Digital Accessibility Framework. The framework sets consistent standards for delivering online information, content and services to meet the needs of the University's diverse community, making them accessible and engaging for a wider audience.



As one of our six values, inclusion is not something we say but something we live each day. Our places, spaces and communication options enable full participation in university life, for our staff and students alike.

**Dionne Higgins**

Chief Operating Officer, Executive Champion for Accessibility

## Disability Confident Recruiter (DCR) Accreditation

As inclusion is one of the fundamental values of RMIT, the commitment has been made to improve accessible and inclusive recruitment practices. In December 2019, RMIT commenced the undertaking to gain Disability Confident Recruiter (DCR) accreditation from the Australian Network Disability.

Achieving DCR accreditation will enable RMIT to remove potential barriers and gain confidence in access and inclusion across the whole recruitment process. It will enable skilled jobseekers with disability to compete for positions on a level playing field and will also improve the overall recruitment experience for all applicants.

In 2019, the following three ELS modules were developed:

- **RMIT Equitable Learning Course:** The ELS pilot module is intended to build staff confidence in supporting students with disability, long-term illness and/or mental health conditions and/or primary carers of individuals with disability. It is suitable for staff at all levels in all areas and is also a good induction tool for new staff as it gives a general overview of ELS services and processes.
- **RMIT Alternative Assessment Arrangements:** The AAA module is intended to improve the ability of educators to engage confidently and appropriately with the processes of developing alternative assessment arrangements for students to meet the needs of a learner cohort experiencing disability, long-term illness and/or mental health conditions, without compromising academic integrity. The aim is to clarify and streamline the process for both approving and implementing AAAs as recommended by ELS. It is suitable for all educators and program staff.
- **RMIT Inherent Requirements:** The IR module is intended to provide RMIT schools/colleges with a tool to understand the process for creating inherent requirements for their programs and how to apply them appropriately and inclusively. It is mostly directed towards senior program staff including Program Managers, Deans and Associate Deans who will be involved with creating program IRs but also contains advice for discussing IRs with students so may be useful for educators too.







## 8.8. Health, Safety and Wellbeing

RMIT is committed to providing a safe learning and work environment for all staff, students and visitors.

RMIT's Global Safety Model underpins the University's operational safety, health and wellbeing, and operational risk management. The Global Safety Model is supported by policies, strategies, processes, guidance materials and proactive programs.

In 2019, RMIT developed the new 2020-2025 Health Safety and Wellbeing strategy that builds on the deep sense of care for each other across the student and staff communities. Other achievements in 2019 include:

- Delivering a series of wellbeing seminars and events to more than 250 staff and 10,000 students.
- Delivered 'assisting students in distress' training to over 1,000 staff and mental health first aid training to hundreds of staff and students.
- Supplying over 2,500 staff flu vaccinations.

### Occupational Health and Safety

RMIT utilises a Proactive Risk and Incident Management Excellence (PRIME) tool, allowing RMIT staff to report incidents or hazards. The tool provides an overall comprehensive management tool to assist RMIT to avoid and manage existing and emerging risks across the organisation.

### Medical Hub @ RMIT

RMIT now has a medical hub conveniently located at RMIT's City campus, providing high-quality medical care to all members of the community including RMIT students and staff. The medical hub provides a safe environment for people of all backgrounds, cultures, beliefs, abilities and sexuality.

The state-of-the-art facility was opened in 2019 and provides an environment for dedicated physicians and staff to deliver a holistic approach to primary health.

The medical hub is located on Level 3 of Building 8 and appointments can be made online or over the phone.

	2017	2018	2019
<b>Lost time injury frequency rate*</b>	2.01	1.80	1.92
Change to previous year	-26%	-10%	+7%
<b>WorkCover claims submitted</b>	34	33	27
Change to previous year	+ 3%	-3%	-18%
<b>OHS incident reports</b>	299	979	1056
Change to previous year	-55%	+227%	+8%
<b>WorkSafe notifiable incidents</b>	12	16	19
Change to previous year	-40%	+33%	+19%
<b>WorkSafe improvement notices</b>	3	1	4

\*LTIFR: The number of lost-time injuries per million hours worked.

### OHS Hazards, Incidents Standard Claims, Associated Costs

	2017	2018	2019
Number of lost-time standard claims per 100 FTE	0.16	0.35	0.26
Average cost per claim (payment to date + estimate of outstanding claim cost)	\$48,493	\$34,870	\$75,171
Hazard and incident reports per 100 FTE	2.99	20.66	17.22

The increase in hazard and incident reporting in 2018 reflected the greater focus on health and safety across RMIT and implementation of the Global Safety Model project.



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# 9. Operations

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## 9.1. Resource Usage

### Energy and emissions reduction

In 2019 RMIT achieved a 48 per cent decrease in greenhouse gas emissions from the 2007 emissions baseline. This result was achieved following a large scale energy efficiency program, renewable energy contracting, solar PV rollout and the recent focus on building optimisation.

RMIT continues to operate onsite co-generation and tri-generation plants at the City and Bundoora West campuses. During 2019 RMIT generated over 24GWh of electricity onsite, saving almost 13,400 tCO<sub>2</sub>-e off the emissions profile. RMIT's existing renewable energy contract provided 7,600 MWh of carbon neutral electricity in 2019.

RMIT has taken a leadership role in renewable energy contracting in Australia. Beginning with the original Melbourne Renewable Energy Project (MREP) partnership with the City of Melbourne and 12 others. RMIT University is now taking the lead role in a second much larger buying group to contract long-term renewable energy, known as MREP2. Through this role, RMIT is not only transforming its energy supply profile, but is bringing other organisations along on the journey and leading by example.

Building optimisation for reducing energy consumption was a focus in 2019. Property Services formed an energy savings working group who undertook data collection and trend analysis to identify savings. The energy savings working group worked to ensure that heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) systems were scheduled to operate during timetabled hours and any anomalies were resolved.

In this report, RMIT accounts for all energy and emissions produced and consumed on its Australian campuses. RMIT calculate all buildings emissions (Scope 1 and 2 emissions, intensity and reductions) according to the appropriate Australian Government factors, aligning with those under the National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting (NGER) Act. All targets are based on a 2007 baseline when the RMIT total emissions were 78,120 tCO<sub>2</sub>-e.

RMIT has also included its international operations (where stated) and is working to expand this coverage – however, there is no current timeframe for completing this.

### Energy by Campus 2019

	Natural Gas	Electricity
City	213,344 GJ	23,928,468 kWh
Bundoora	115,028 GJ	4,364,309 kWh
Brunswick	5,990 GJ	1,610,204 kWh
Bendigo	0 GJ	26,583 kWh
<b>Total</b>	<b>334,362 GJ</b>	<b>29,929,563 kWh</b>

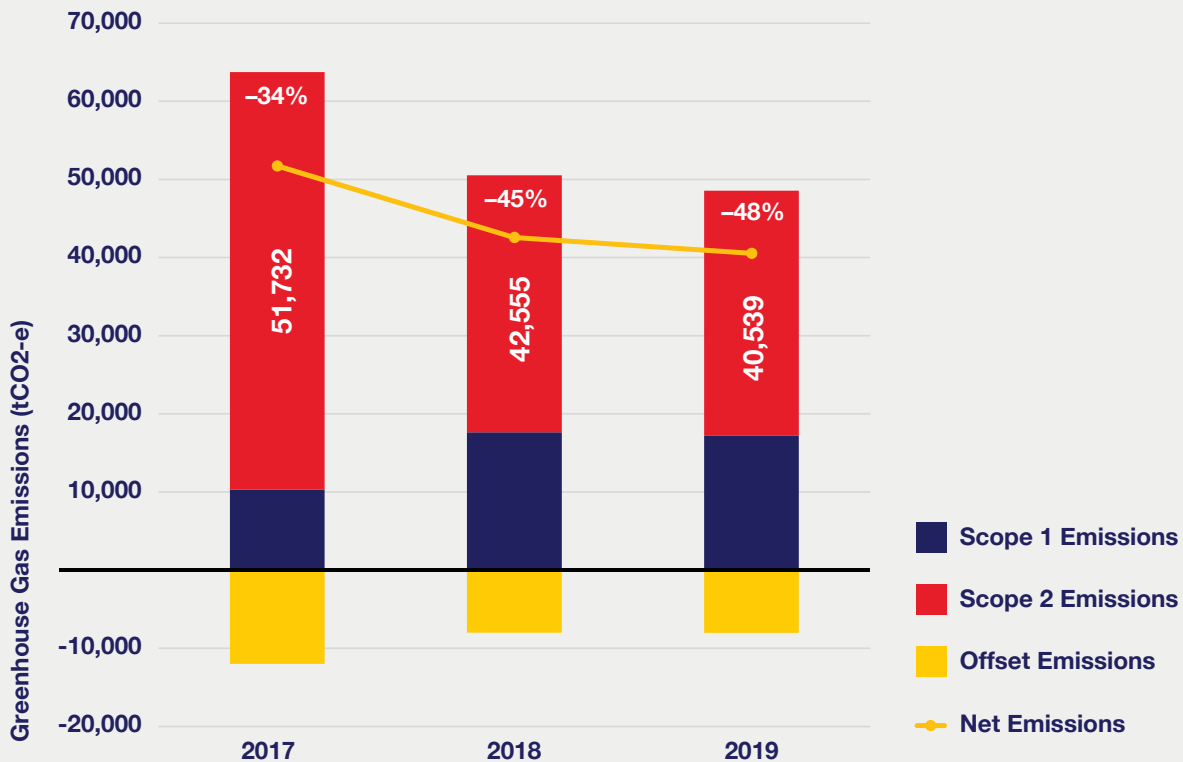
### RMIT University Energy and Emissions by Year 2017-19

	2017	2018	2019
Electricity	49,216,846 kWh	30,637,410 kWh	29,929,563 kWh
Natural Gas	200,775 GJ	341,684 GJ	334,362 GJ
Emissions Offset	12,000 tCO <sub>2</sub> -e	8,000 tCO <sub>2</sub> -e	8,021 tCO <sub>2</sub> -e
Net Emissions	51,754 tCO <sub>2</sub> -e	42,551 tCO <sub>2</sub> -e	40,539 tCO <sub>2</sub> -e

### RMIT University Emissions Attributable to Higher Education 2019\*

<b>Total</b>	<b>32,873 tCO<sub>2</sub>-e</b>
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\* Emissions attributable to HE activities are based on the on-site EFTSL intensity.



\*Net emissions intensity ratio measured as net tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent per square meter gross floor area (tCO<sub>2</sub>-e/m<sup>2</sup>) from building energy use.



\*End Use Energy Intensity ratio measured as gigajoules per square meter gross floor area (GJ/m<sup>2</sup>) from building energy use, after on-site generation (output).

## RMIT Scope 3 Emissions

RMIT collects data on scope 3 emissions, primarily focusing on travel-related emissions (air travel and taxis) with robust systems for data collection. RMIT will continue to monitor data collection processes to assess the feasibility of expanding to capture other scope 3 emissions data.

As a global University, travel plays an important role in developing and contributing to academic research, learning and teaching – facilitating collaboration, sharing knowledge and best practice. Comparatively, travel is also a significant proportion of the University's total emissions and must be balanced against the commitment to reduce emissions. The University's travel emissions profiles are sourced from reporting from the preferred travel providers. In 2019, RMIT reports 11,861 tCO<sub>2</sub>-e of emissions from air travel and 129 tCO<sub>2</sub>-e from taxi use.

## Materials and waste

RMIT is committed to the practice of managing and conserving resources through following the waste hierarchy of avoidance, minimisation and recycling.

The operational waste profile is provided by RMIT's waste contractor and includes landfill, mixed-recycling, paper/cardboard and organic waste from all on-shore campuses. Operational waste excludes confidential paper waste. In 2019, RMIT produced a total of 1,248 tonnes of waste and had a diversion rate of 24 per cent. This is a two per cent improvement from 2018. The landfill waste produced is equal to 23kg per student. An organic waste collection was introduced to all City campus retailers in April 2019 and saw a significant increase in the number of organics bins needed – from two bins to eight – and an increase in collections to two times per week.

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### Operational Waste 2019



In 2019, RMIT focused on expanding its waste profile data to include construction and demolition (C&D) waste from the capital development projects. The results from the C&D waste data demonstrated that it was a significant contributor to RMIT's waste profile by absolute weight. With this knowledge, RMIT was able to identify significant opportunities to apply circular economy principles to capital projects to avoid waste and strengthen reuse.

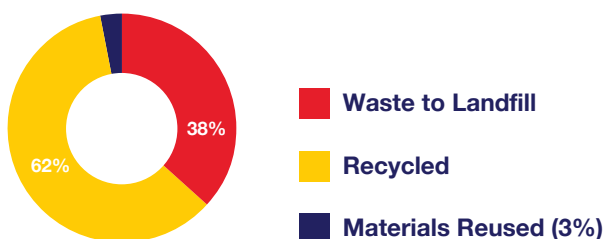
The construction and demolition waste data were provided by the principal contractor on each of RMIT's capital projects. In 2019, 22 of RMIT's capital development projects across 17,600 m<sup>2</sup> of Gross Floor Area provided C&D waste data. From these projects, 876 tonnes of waste was produced and 62 per cent diverted from landfill. This equates to 18kg of landfill waste generated per square metre of capital development project.





Benchmarking C&D waste in 2019 allowed RMIT to reduce waste from capital development projects by putting its circular economy principles into practices such as prioritising the reuse and upcycle furniture before buying new items. This initiative resulted in 1,200 items or 27 tonnes of materials reused and, subsequently, diverted from landfill. In 2020, RMIT endeavours to measure the economic, social and environmental impacts of implementing circular economy principles in its capital development projects.

### Construction and Demolition Waste 2019



### Water

Managing water resources, improving water systems and enhancing water efficiency remains a focus for RMIT. RMIT has a total of 40 smart meter devices installed across the building portfolio, giving visibility to consumption profiles. As well as the smart meter devices, RMIT has a total capacity of 1.3 million litres of on-site storage tanks, reducing requirements for potable water usage. Water consumption across the Australian campuses was 224,968 kilolitres in 2019. This represents a 31 per cent reduction in water consumption per EFTSL compared to 2007.

### Sustainable Transport

RMIT encourages healthy and active lifestyles through sustainable transport choices, providing secure bike parking options across all Australian campuses. RMIT is currently well served by public transport (trains, trams and buses) at the City, Bundoora and Brunswick campuses. RMIT University is a key interface point with Rail Projects Victoria for the delivery of the Metro Tunnel project. RMIT stands to benefit from the completion of Metro Tunnel, with an additional station planned adjacent to the City campus –providing more train services for staff, students and visitors and stronger connections between campuses.

### Integrated Management Systems

As part of the Operations Portfolio, Property Services is responsible for operating, maintaining and enhancing all RMIT buildings. Property Services is focused on providing quality and sustainable built environments to support all of RMIT University's activities.

In 2019 RMIT Property Services received certification for its integrated management system which formally brought together environmental management (ISO 14001), health and safety (ISO 45001) and quality (ISO 9001). A whole of business approach allows the University to more comprehensively manage immediate and long-term environmental impacts, allowing the University to meet industry best practice environmental standards.

Alignment to these international standards provides greater assurance of service delivery outcomes for RMIT stakeholders and reflects RMIT's commitment towards continuous improvement in operations.



## 9.2. Procurement

As Australia's largest tertiary institution, RMIT has a significant impact through the University's operational footprint and supply chain. This allows the University to leverage its buying power to drive improved practices in the supply chain and support the strategic objective of shaping the world.

Guided by the Sustainable Procurement Plan, RMIT integrates sustainability considerations into its procurement practices including processes, responsibilities and governance. The University's approach to sustainable procurement is aligned with the international standard, ISO 20400:2017 Sustainable procurement – guidance (ISO 20400). The standard defines sustainable procurement as “procurement that has the most positive environmental, social and economic impacts possible over the entire life cycle”.

RMIT is a signatory to the UN Global Compact and is committed to applying its Ten Principles that establish fundamental responsibilities of business in the areas of human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption. The RMIT Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) framework is applied in the procurement process to meet these obligations and to ensure that suppliers meet the minimum requirements regarding their own ethical practices.

Sustainability, Corporate Social Responsibility and Indigenous Participation are now included in all tender documents and as default evaluation criteria to be actively addressed by vendors for inclusion in final contracts.

In 2019, RMIT added three Indigenous companies to the catering panel and one on the marketing panel. Several catering panel members partner with food charities like SecondBite to ensure that good quality leftover food is redistributed to people who need it most, rather than to landfill.

Products supplied by Indigenous companies were also actively pursued and added to the RMIT office supplies contract as and when available. In 2019, approximately 15.5 per cent of all office supplies spend was on products with some recycled content.

The major Property Services panels now all incorporate industry engagement and sustainability commitments. For example, three students/graduates were directly employed by the Capital Works Builders Panel members and several construction firms participated in construction and hazard minimisation research. RMIT's major facilities management agreement with Airmaster Australia Ltd has resulted in almost \$1M worth of industry engagement opportunities implemented for RMIT students between July 2018 and December 2019.

The Events Panel tender finalised in 2019 has also resulted in key opportunities for mentoring, business internships and graduate employments for Marketing and Finance.

A responsible sourcing framework was developed for the Campus Store to drive sustainability outcomes and minimise ethical risks in the supply chain. The products stocked in the Campus Store are prioritised to showcase student, alumni and Indigenous work.





## 9.3. Revitalising Heritage

The University's City campus has grown to include several historic buildings since the establishment of the Working Men's College in 1887. As the custodians of these iconic Melbourne landmarks, RMIT invests in the preservation and reinvigoration of its heritage assets. In 2019 the University embarked on two of its biggest restoration projects.

### The Capitol

Originally built in 1924, and reopened in 2019, The Capitol has a spectacular architectural and cinematic history and is a true Melbourne icon. The Capitol, originally known as the Capitol Theatre, was designed by celebrated architects Marion Mahony Griffin and Walter Burley Griffin and is considered one of their finest interior design works. It was the first large and extravagant 'picture palace' to be built in Victoria, seating an audience of more than 2000 and providing Melbourne with blockbuster movies and live performances.

The theatre's features include intricate LED-lighting details, elaborate salons, a richly decorative carpet motif in orange, carmine and green and a spectacular geometric ceiling designed to evoke a crystalline cave. Unfortunately, by the early 60s the theatre faced demolition, the seating capacity was reduced to 800, and the original stalls and street-level entrance made way for the current shopping arcade that now extends under the theatre to Howey Place.

The theatre was once again saved from demolition when RMIT purchased the building in 1999, as a spillover lecture theatre venue. At the time, it also housed some of Melbourne's festivals including the Melbourne International Film Festival (MIFF) and Melbourne International Comedy Festival (MICF). By 2014, the restoration works required to keep the theatre open were so substantial that it needed to be closed to the public.

The RMIT Capitol Theatre Appeal was launched in November 2017 to raise the required funds to refurbish this iconic landmark and return it to the people of Melbourne. Thanks to the generous support of donors the RMIT Capitol Theatre appeal raised over \$1.36 million and, in conjunction with the generous support of the Victorian Government, allowed the University to reactivate this cultural icon.

In June 2019, the iconic theatre was reopened with a new name – The Capitol – and a visionary transformation. RMIT and Six Degrees Architects have reimagined The Capitol as a contemporary destination for culture, education and innovation and lovingly restored many of the theatre's original features. The Capitol now offers a cinema, video, new digital media, virtual/augmented reality, gaming, video art and animation. There is an extended stage to host live talks and lectures, a 7.1 Dolby sound system, 4K laser digital projection, coffee and wine bars, and a direct link to RMIT's Media Precinct, enabling remote broadcasting capabilities.

It will continue to inspire and delight patrons as it has for almost a centenary, but The Capitol is now equipped to educate, collaborate and connect with the future of Melbourne's creative community.







The Capitol has been a central part of the cultural fabric of Melbourne since it was opened by the Lord Mayor in November 1924. A stunning example of 'Chicago-School' Architecture at the time, and one of Melbourne's 'big three' cinemas, it has survived through the threat of demolition in the 1960s to continue to support cinema to this day. RMIT's rejuvenation of The Capitol, with State Government and community support, has not only made the cinema beautiful and functional once more, but given technical and physical flexibility to the venue so that it can encourage storytelling and creativity in forms beyond its historic cinema purpose, and continue to be a real asset for learning, teaching, and creative life.

**Marc Morel**  
RMIT Manager, Venues







## The Oxford Scholar Hotel

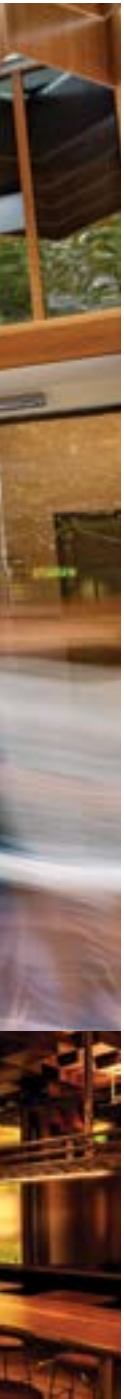
The Oxford Scholar Hotel located on the corner of the Swanston Academic Building was built in 1857 during the Victorian gold rush and was designed by architect Charles d’Edbro. RMIT purchased the historic building in 1986 as part of future development plans and was known as a cherished “watering hole” for many RMIT students, staff, alumni and the wider community.

In 2018, RMIT conducted an extensive renovation of the Oxford Scholar Hotel, led by architect and RMIT alumnus Rodney Eggleston of March Studio and reopened in May 2019. The Oxford Scholar Hotel was transformed to include a new bar, dining and event spaces, whilst preserving and respecting its historic Queen Anne Revival style architecture.

Using technology to reinvent the original, the transformed Oxford Scholar Hotel has been designed to be an inclusive space where alumni, staff, students and the community can gather. The two upper levels now include a variety of bookable function spaces exclusively for staff and students, creating more spaces to connect and collaborate. The venue has also been expanded with flexibility in mind and boasts a significant increase in capacity, with the ground floor now licensed for up to 280 patrons.

For more information about RMIT’s heritage buildings visit: [rmit.edu.au/about/our-heritage/historical-buildings](http://rmit.edu.au/about/our-heritage/historical-buildings)





## 9.4. Philanthropy

A tertiary education can transform the lives of students, giving them the opportunity to access knowledge and pursue their passion. The RMIT Philanthropy Fund was established thanks to the generosity of donors to support scholarships, research and other major projects. Managed by the Philanthropic Fund Committee, 1,900 scholarships were awarded in 2019 to VE and undergraduate HE students, with 96 per cent of scholarships provided to students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

In 2019, a separate Investment Management Committee was established to work alongside the Philanthropic Fund Committee to provide financial expertise to the investment process and take carriage of the implementation of the Responsible Investment Principles.

As of December 2019, RMIT held \$89M in philanthropic funds across a range of investments, including equities, bonds and cash. The Fund utilises two responsible investment products which provide environmental and social screening:

- **Russell Investments Australian Responsible Investment ETF:** the fund is weighted towards companies that demonstrate positive environmental, social and governance (ESG) characteristics after negatively screening for companies that have significant involvement in a range of activities including tobacco, gambling, fossil fuel exposure and controversial weapons.
- **Russell Investments Low Carbon Global Shares Fund:** the fund maintains a reduced carbon exposure, whilst also increasing exposure to renewable energy. The fund of international share is designed for investors who value environmental, social and governance (ESG) considerations within the investment decision-making process, particularly those related to climate change risk. Other ESG exclusions include controversial weapons, uranium and tobacco companies.

As at December 2019, the fossil fuel liability of the Philanthropy Fund had reduced to 3 per cent (down from 5.69 per cent in December 2018). RMIT has set itself an objective to achieve a zero-fossil fuel investment portfolio by the end of 2020. The University's External Fund Managers have been working closely with RMIT for several years to implement the University's Responsible Investment Principles. This partnership resulted in the development of the Global Low Carbon fund in 2018 and they are shortly about to launch a global zero-carbon fund, which the University will move to as soon as it becomes available.

For the first time in 2019, RMIT utilised philanthropic funding to undertake 'impact investing' which is an investment designed with the intention of generating a measurable, beneficial social or environmental impact alongside a financial return. RMIT began working with Skalata Ventures, a not-for-profit organisation that runs an independently funded seed program to scale and grow early-stage companies into significant and sustainable businesses. This fund supports future pathways and seed investment for the start-up community such as those which are developed through the RMIT Activator program.

For more information visit: [rmit.edu.au/responsibleinvestment](https://rmit.edu.au/responsibleinvestment)  
[rmit.edu.au/alumni-and-giving/giving](https://rmit.edu.au/alumni-and-giving/giving)





# 10. GRI Reporting

## 10.1. Material Topics and Impacts

### Scope and Boundary of Material Topics

<b>Learning and Teaching</b>	Learning, teaching and education current and future RMIT students.
<b>Research</b>	The outcomes of RMIT University's research and the impacts they have on the wider world.
<b>Health, safety and wellbeing</b>	The physical and mental health, safety and wellbeing of all students, staff, employees and the general public.
<b>Partnerships</b>	Collaborative relationships with industries, institutions and organisations to meet challenges in sustainable development.
<b>Climate change</b>	Responding to a changing climate by understanding our impacts and the risks to our operations as well as through our research, teaching and leadership activities.
<b>Environmental footprint</b>	RMIT building and infrastructure across all campuses and sites.  Prioritising energy and greenhouse gas emissions and including water, waste and staff travel.
<b>Governance and values</b>	Policies, systems and approaches to the governance and implementation of the core values of the University in its relationships.
<b>Diversity and inclusion</b>	Students, staff and employees who study and work at RMIT campuses and sites worldwide including staff gender equality, students from low socio-economic backgrounds, culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, diverse genders sexes and sexualities, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds and disability and access.
<b>Staff capability</b>	Staff at all campuses, including attraction and retention, labour relations and workforce casualisation.
<b>Public policy and leadership</b>	Adopting a leadership position among our peers and influencing our stakeholders on challenges in sustainable development.



## 10.2. GRI Content Index

Disclosure	Location
<b>Organisational Profile</b>	
102-1 Name of the organisation	Section 3.1
102-2 Primary brands, products, and services	Section 3.1
102-3 Location of the organization's headquarters	124 Latrobe Street, Melbourne VIC 3000
102-4 Number of countries where the organization operates	Section 3.1
102-5 Nature of ownership and legal form	Section 3.1
102-6 Markets served: geographic locations, sectors served, types of customers and beneficiaries	<a href="http://rmit.edu.au/about">rmit.edu.au/about</a>
102-7 Scale of the organisation	<a href="http://rmit.edu.au/annualreport">rmit.edu.au/annualreport</a>
102-8 Total number of employees by employment contract (permanent and temporary), by gender	Section 8.1
102-9 A description of the organization's supply chain	Section 9.2
102-10 Significant changes to the organization's size, structure, ownership, or supply chain	No significant changes
102-11 Whether and how the organization applies the Precautionary Principle or approach	Section 3.3
102-12 A list of externally-developed economic, environmental and social charters, principles, or other initiatives to which the organization subscribes, or which it endorses	Section 4.2 Section 5.4
102-13 A list of the main memberships of industry or other associations, and national or international advocacy organizations	Section 4.2 Section 5.4
<b>Strategy</b>	
102-14 A statement from the most senior decision-maker of the organization about the relevance of sustainability to the organization and its strategy for addressing sustainability	Section 2
<b>Ethics and Integrity</b>	
102-16 A description of the organization's values, principles, standards, and norms of behaviour	Section 3.3
<b>Governance</b>	
102-18 Governance structure of the organisation	Section 3.2
<b>Stakeholder Engagement</b>	
102-40 A list of stakeholder groups engaged by the organization	Section 5.1
102-41 Percentage of total employees covered by collective bargaining agreements	Section 8.1
102-42 The basis for identifying and selecting stakeholders with whom to engage	Section 5.1
102-43 The organization's approach to stakeholder engagement	Section 5.1
102-44 Key topics and concerns raised	Section 1.2



Disclosure	Location
<b>Reporting Practice</b>	
102-45 Entities included in the consolidated financial statements	rmit.edu.au/annualreport
102-46 Defining report content and topic boundaries	Section 1.1
102-47 A list of material topics	Section 1.2
102-48 Restatements of information	Section 1.1
102-49 Changes in reporting	Section 1.2
102-50 Reporting period	Section 1.1
102-51 Date of most recent report	Section 1.1
102-52 Reporting cycle	Section 1.1
102-53 Contact point for questions regarding the report	Section 1.2
102-54 Claims of reporting in accordance with the GRI Standards	Section 1.1
102-55 GRI content index	This table
102-56 External assurance	Section 1.1



## Material Topics and Topic-Specific Disclosures

Material Topic	Description	Location
<b>Learning and Teaching</b>		
GRI 103 Management Approach 2016	103-1 Explanation of the material topic and its Boundaries 103-2 The management approach and its components 103-3 Explanation of how the organization evaluates the management approach.	Section 6
<b>Research</b>		
GRI 103 Management Approach 2016	103-1 Explanation of the material topic and its Boundaries 103-2 The management approach and its components 103-3 Explanation of how the organization evaluates the management approach.	Section 7
<b>Health, safety and wellbeing</b>		
GRI 103 Management Approach 2016	103-1 Explanation of the material topic and its Boundaries 103-2 The management approach and its components 38 103-3 Explanation of how the organization evaluates the management approach.	Section 8.8
403-1 OH&S	Occupational health and safety management system	Section 8.8
<b>Partnerships</b>		
GRI 103 Management Approach 2016	103-1 Explanation of the material topic and its Boundaries 103-2 The management approach and its components 103-3 Explanation of how the organization evaluates the management approach.	Section 4.2
<b>Climate change</b>		
GRI 103 Management Approach 2016	103-1 Explanation of the material topic and its Boundaries 103-2 The management approach and its components 103-3 Explanation of how the organization evaluates the management approach.	Section 9.1
305-1 Emissions	Direct (Scope 1) GHG emissions	Section 9.1
305-2 Emissions	Energy indirect (Scope 2) GHG emissions	Section 9.1
305-3 Emissions	Other indirect (Scope 3) GHG emissions	Section 9.1
305-4 Emissions	GHG emissions Intensity	Section 9.1

Material Topic	Description	Location
<b>Environmental footprint</b>		
GRI 103 Management Approach 2016	103-1 Explanation of the material topic and its Boundaries 103-2 The management approach and its components 103-3 Explanation of how the organization evaluates the management approach.	Section 9.1
302-1 Energy	Energy consumption within the organisation	Section 9.1
302-3 Energy	Energy intensity	Section 9.1
303-1 Water	Water withdrawal by source	Section 9.1
306-2 Waste	Waste by type and disposal method	Section 9.1
Governance and values		
GRI 103 Management Approach 2016	103-1 Explanation of the material topic and its Boundaries 103-2 The management approach and its components 103-3 Explanation of how the organization evaluates the management approach.	Section 3.2
<b>Diversity and inclusion</b>		
GRI 103 Management Approach 2016	103-1 Explanation of the material topic and its Boundaries 103-2 The management approach and its components 103-3 Explanation of how the organization evaluates the management approach.	Section 8
405-1 D&EO	Diversity of governance bodies and employees	Section 8.1 Section 8.3
<b>Staff capability</b>		
GRI 103 Management Approach 2016	103-1 Explanation of the material topic and its Boundaries 103-2 The management approach and its components 103-3 Explanation of how the organization evaluates the management approach.	Section 8.1
404-3 T&E	Percentage of employees receiving regular performance and career development reviews	Section 8.1
<b>Public policy and leadership</b>		
GRI 103 Management Approach 2016	103-1 Explanation of the material topic and its Boundaries 103-2 The management approach and its components 103-3 Explanation of how the organization evaluates the management approach.	Section 4 Section 7.3 Not Applicable

GRI 103-2 and 103-3 are not applicable due to the nature of the material topic, as RMIT University's role in sustainability is in thought-leadership rather than direct influence.



## 10.3. SDG Content Index

The following table identifies examples of Sustainable Development Goals and respective main targets addressed by our sustainability agenda and published in our Sustainable Annual Report 2019.

SDG	Target	Location
SDG 1	1.5 By 2030, build the resilience of the poor and those in vulnerable situations and reduce their exposure and vulnerability to climate-related extreme events and other economic, social and environmental shocks and disasters	Section 9.4 Section 7.3 (Improving the financial wellbeing of vulnerable Australians) Section 7.3 (Improving the financial wellbeing of vulnerable Australians)
SDG 2	2.a Increase investment, including through enhanced international cooperation, in rural infrastructure, agricultural research and extension services, technology development and plant and livestock gene banks in order to enhance agricultural productive capacity in developing countries, in particular least developed countries	Section 7.1
SDG 3	3.4 By 2030, reduce by one third premature mortality from non-communicable diseases through prevention and treatment and promote mental health and well-being	Section 8.8
SDG 4	4.3 By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university	Section 8.3
SDG 4	4.4 By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship	Section 6
SDG 4	4.5 By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations	Section 8.7
SDG 4	4.7 By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development	Section 4.2 Section 6.4 Section 5.3 (City Challenge) Section 5.2 (Sustainability ambassador program) Section 3.3 (Graduate attributes)
SDG 5	5.1 End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere	Section 8.4
SDG 5	5.5 Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision making in political, economic and public life	Section 8.2 Section 8.3
SDG 6	6.3 By 2030, improve water quality by reducing pollution, eliminating dumping and minimizing release of hazardous chemicals and materials, halving the proportion of untreated wastewater and substantially increasing recycling and safe reuse globally	Section 9.1 (Water)
SDG 7	7.2 By 2030, increase substantially the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix	Section 9.1 Section 7.1 Section 7.3

SDG	Target	Location
SDG 7	7.3 By 2030, double the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency	Section 9.1 Section 7.1 Section 7.3 (RMIT Europe)
SDG 7	7.a By 2030, enhance international cooperation to facilitate access to clean energy research and technology, including renewable energy, energy efficiency and advanced and cleaner fossil-fuel technology, and promote investment in energy infrastructure and clean energy technology	Section 7.1 Section 7.3 Section 2 Section 9.1
SDG 8	8.3 Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial service	Section 9.2 Section 4.2 (RMIT Europe and One Planet)
SDG 8	8.5 By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value	Section 9.2 Section 8
SDG 8	8.6 By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training	Section 6.1 Section 6.2 Section 4.2 (UNEVOC) Section 5.2 (Sustainability ambassador program)
SDG 9	9.5 Enhance scientific research, upgrade the technological capabilities of industrial sectors in all countries, in particular developing countries, including, by 2030, encouraging innovation and substantially increasing the number of research and development workers per 1 million people and public and private research and development spending	Section 7.1 Section 7.2
SDG 10	10.2 By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status	Section 8
SDG 11	11.2 By 2030, provide access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all, improving road safety, notably by expanding public transport, with special attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations, women, children, persons with disabilities and older persons	Section 7.3 (New suburbs project) Section 9 (Public transport) Section 5.2 (Sustainable transport app, green travel planning)
SDG 11	11.4 Strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage	Section 9.3
SDG 11	11.A: Support positive economic, social and environmental links between urban, per-urban and rural areas by strengthening national and regional development planning	Section 4.2 (Global Compact Cities Program, One Planet Network, Jean Monnet Network)



SDG	Target	Location
SDG 12	12.3 By 2030, halve per capita global food waste at the retail and consumer levels and reduce food losses along production and supply chains, including post-harvest losses	Section 9.2
SDG 12	12.5 By 2030, substantially reduce waste generation through prevention, reduction, recycling and reuse	Section 9.1 (Materials and waste) Section 5.2, 5.3
SDG 12	12.6 Encourage companies, especially large and transnational companies, to adopt sustainable practices and to integrate sustainability information into their reporting cycle	Section 1 Section 4.2 (SDG Report Collaboration)
SDG 12	12.8 By 2030, ensure that people everywhere have the relevant information and awareness for sustainable development and lifestyles in harmony with nature	Section 5.2 (Green Impact Engagement Program, Sustainability Space Curation) Section 5.1 Section 4.2 (Jean Monnet Network) Section 4.1
SDG 13	13.2 Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning	Section 9.1 Section 9.4 (Russell Investments Low Carbon Global Shares Fund) Section 7.3 (Turning carbon dioxide back into coal)
SDG 13	13.3 Improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning	Section 5.2 (Living Lab Projects) Section 5.3 (Annual program)
SDG 14	14.1 By 2025, prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, in particular from land-based activities, including marine debris and nutrient pollution	Section 5.3 Section 6.4
SDG 15	15.1 By 2020, ensure the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services, in particular forests, wetlands, mountains and drylands, in line with obligations under international agreements	Section 5.3 Section 5.2 (Green Impact Engagement Program)
SDG 16	16.6 Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels	Section 3.2 Section 3.3 (policy Governance)
SDG 17	17.16 Enhance the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development, complemented by multi-stakeholder partnerships that mobilize and share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources, to support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in all countries, in particular developing countries	Section 4.1 Section 4.2 Section 5.4



A wooden display stand with a sign and fresh produce. The sign is a small chalkboard with a wooden frame, featuring the text "ETHICAL is the new NORMAL" in white chalk. The stand is filled with various fresh vegetables and herbs, including a bunch of green leafy herbs, a head of cauliflower, a head of lettuce, and a bunch of green beans. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with trees and a blue sky.

ETHICAL  
is the new  
NORMAL





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**Seven Shapes and Seven Seasons**  
of the Kulin Nation artwork design was  
created by Marcus Lee, a proud Aboriginal  
descendant of the Karajarri people.