

# Sustainability Annual Report 2021







## **Bundjil Statement**

RMIT University is a public-sector organisation under Victorian law, which stands on the 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 of the 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.

**Bundjil Womin Djeka ngarna-ga –  
Bundjil asks you to come and asks  
what is your purpose for coming  
and understanding.**

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# 1. About this report



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## 1.1 Report Scope

This is RMIT University's seventh annual sustainability report, spanning the calendar year from 1 January to 31 December 2021. The report documents progress and highlights key achievements as the University continues its journey as a leader in organisational sustainability.

Public reporting is central to the University's commitment to transparency about the impact of our 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 when available (as 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
- Balance
- Comparability
- Clarity
- Reliability
- Timeliness

## 1.2 Impacts on Business Continuity

### COVID-19 Impacts

2021 marked another significant year in the RMIT community's pandemic journey and the history of our University more broadly. The start of the year was marked by optimism that a new way of living and working was close – a world where sensible precautions and vaccinations would see us return to a life much as we knew it before COVID-19 hit in 2020. What was not envisaged were the repeated lockdowns in Australia, the depth of COVID-19 impact on life in Vietnam and the on-going effects across the world.

Throughout another extraordinary year, and as the realities and personal impact of the pandemic caused grief, anxiety and disruption, so many at RMIT worked tirelessly to support our students to progress, to keep our community safe and to ensure that our culture of care extended to all.

In addition to rigorous on-campus safety protocols and measures, RMIT's COVID-19 response in 2021 focused efforts on encouraging uptake of vaccinations, in line with local government guidance and direction.

### Cyber Security

In February 2021, an IT cyber-attack tested the resilience of our technology and demonstrated the commitment of people. The attack had a significant and widespread impact on the University's operations. The University took immediate steps to protect our systems and resolve issues that impacted access to some of our supported applications and systems. Rectification from the incident was swift and complete and as a result, there were no data breaches and minimal disruption to student progression.

The Sustainability Annual Report for 2021 features datasets that were impacted by these issues. Commentary has been provided to contextualise the changing conditions experienced by the University throughout 2021.

## 1.3 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 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 covered a risk review, peer review, media scan and interviews with internal and external stakeholders. As part of this process there was a strong focus on the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The materiality assessment provided a list of topics that were identified as being core University impacts and/or of interest to stakeholders. Topics were also mapped to the RMIT University's risk register for their potential to impact the University's functions or the broader society and environment.

Following the content determination and materiality assessment, the following key issues were identified and ranked from most material:

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)

Material Topic	Definition
Research	The outcomes of RMIT University's research and the impacts they have on the wider world.
Learning and teaching	Learning, teaching and education – current and future RMIT students.
Environmental footprint	RMIT building and infrastructure across all campuses and sites prioritising energy and greenhouse gas emissions and including water, waste and staff travel.
Health, safety and wellbeing	The physical and mental health, safety and wellbeing of all students, staff, employees and the general public.
Diversity & inclusion	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.
Governance and values	Policies, systems and approaches to the governance and implementation of the core values of the University in its relationships.
Staff capability	Staff at all campuses, including attraction and retention, labour relations and workforce casualisation.
Climate change	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.
Partnerships	Collaborative relationships with industries, institutions and organisations to meet challenges in sustainable development.
Public policy & leadership	Adopting a leadership position among our peers and influencing our stakeholders on challenges in sustainable development.
Procurement	How the University procures from and engages with suppliers of consumer and construction-based goods and services, aiming to minimise negative and maximise positive impacts on the environment and society.
Responsible investment	Responsible investment refers to implementing investment strategies consistent with the University's commitment to sustainability and its financial and legal obligations.



# Highlights



RMIT was ranked number three overall in the 2021 Times Higher Education (THE) University SDGs Impact Rankings. This included ranking 2nd in the world for its efforts to reduce inequality within and among countries (SDG 10) and 3rd for strengthening partnerships for the goals (SDG 17).



RMIT maintained its citation as an Employer of Choice for Gender Equality since 2018 and was re-accredited as a Disability Confident Recruiter.



RMIT investments went fossil-free from March 2021, minimising investments with a material impact on climate change.



RMIT was recognised in the top five organisations for accessibility and inclusion with the Australian Network on Disability in 2021.



RMIT secured significant funding under the Victorian Higher Education State Investment Fund (VHESIF), with \$44.6M for the CBD North Precinct: Activation and Innovation Spine; Social Innovation: Health, Justice and Community Services; Digital and Business Transformation; and Future Industry Transformation.



RMIT won two Green Gown Awards – winning the Climate Action and Leading the Circular Economy categories.



74% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions across Australian operations in 2021, compared to 2007 levels.

\*Influenced by COVID restrictions on University operations.



Vice-Chancellor's Leadership Award for Courage awarded to the Sustainability Team.



## 2. Vice-Chancellor's Statement



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**Universities play a vital role in society and at RMIT we take our civic responsibility very seriously. In 2021, we continued to navigate the challenges of COVID and its impact on our own community and the communities we serve, while maintaining focus on our goals for sustainable development. We have made our own operations steadily more sustainable, supported pioneering research and developed the next generation of leaders who will bring their own insight to global challenges.**

Our Sustainability Annual Report demonstrates our continued support for the United Nations Global Compact and its principles. This report describes the practical actions taken to meet the principles and measures our performance against them. I'm proud to share some of our progress.

RMIT was ranked number 3 overall in the 2021 Times Higher Education (THE) University SDGs Impact Rankings. Standout results across the SDGs included the University being placed 2nd in the world for its efforts to reduce inequality within and among countries (SDG 10) and 3rd for strengthening partnerships for the goals (SDG 17).

We demonstrated global best practice in our commitment to diversity and inclusion. This was recognised by a range of external accreditations and benchmarking, including being named a top five organisation for accessibility and inclusion by the Australian Network on Disability and maintaining our citation as an Employer of Choice for Gender Equality since 2018. RMIT was also re-accredited as a Disability Confident Recruiter in recognition of our commitment to accessibility at every stage of the employee lifecycle.

Two Green Gown Awards were proud recognition of our best practice in sustainability within the education sector across the region. We were specifically awarded for Climate Action and Leading the Circular Economy, two areas which demonstrate a whole-of-University commitment and reflect our important contribution to the wider region.

It was an honour to act as Interim Vice-Chancellor through the second half of 2021. Now in 2022 we are pleased to be joined by our new Vice-Chancellor and President, Professor Alec Cameron and our new Chancellor, Peggy O' Neal AO, both passionate about our role as a sustainable and values-driven University. Together, the RMIT community will continue to contribute, to innovate and to partner in ways that create positive impact and lasting change.

**Dionne Higgins**

Senior Vice-President Strategy & Operations  
(Interim Vice-Chancellor RMIT 2021)





# 3. About RMIT





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### 3.1 Organisational profile

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

With strong industry connections forged over 134 years, collaboration with industry remains integral to RMIT's leadership in education, applied and innovative research, and to the development of highly skilled, globally focused graduates.

RMIT is redefining its relationship in working with and supporting Aboriginal self-determination. The goal is to achieve lasting transformation by maturing values, culture, policy and structures in a way that embeds reconciliation in everything the University does. RMIT is changing its ways of knowing and working to support sustainable reconciliation and activate a relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people.

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

#### Locations

RMIT has three campuses in Victoria – Melbourne City, Brunswick and Bundoora. As a global university, 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, Sri Lanka and mainland 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 110 buildings in Australia, with over 485,000m<sup>2</sup> of space and a further 21 buildings on overseas campuses providing an additional 60,000m<sup>2</sup> of space.

#### 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 recognises and respects the unique culture and contribution that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people bring to our communities. To further explore our commitments please visit: [rmit.edu.au/about/our-values/respect-for-australian-indigenous-cultures](https://rmit.edu.au/about/our-values/respect-for-australian-indigenous-cultures)

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://rmit.edu.au/about/our-heritage)

#### Financials and Subsidiaries

The consolidated 2021 net operating result for RMIT University and its controlled entities was a surplus of \$117.1 million (7.5 per cent of revenue). RMIT University's operating result was a surplus of \$71.3 million (5.2 per cent of revenue). These figures include a \$58.6 million one-off gain on sale of property, plant and equipment during the year.

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 of December 2021 were:

- RMIT Holdings 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://rmit.edu.au/about/governance-management/annual-reports)

## 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. 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 14 members, including one elected staff representative and one elected from the student body. Its chair, Dr Ziggy Switkowski AO stepped down in 2021 after 11 years as Chancellor, to focus on new Board responsibilities. Ziggy was recognised for bringing significant positive change and as an influential voice for RMIT and the sector across government and industry. RMIT is compliant with the Voluntary Code of Best Practice for the Governance of Australian Universities.

### The Vice-Chancellor’s Executive

Vice-Chancellor and President, Professor Martin Bean CBE stepped down from his role in June, following six years leading the University’s evolution from a traditional dual-sector university into a multi-sector leader in contemporary tertiary education.

Under his leadership, a focus on students and providing them with exceptional experiences as the heart of RMIT was key.

Dionne Higgins, the Chief Operating Officer became interim Vice-Chancellor for the remainder of 2021 to allow the University to continue seamlessly while the recruitment and handover process took place.

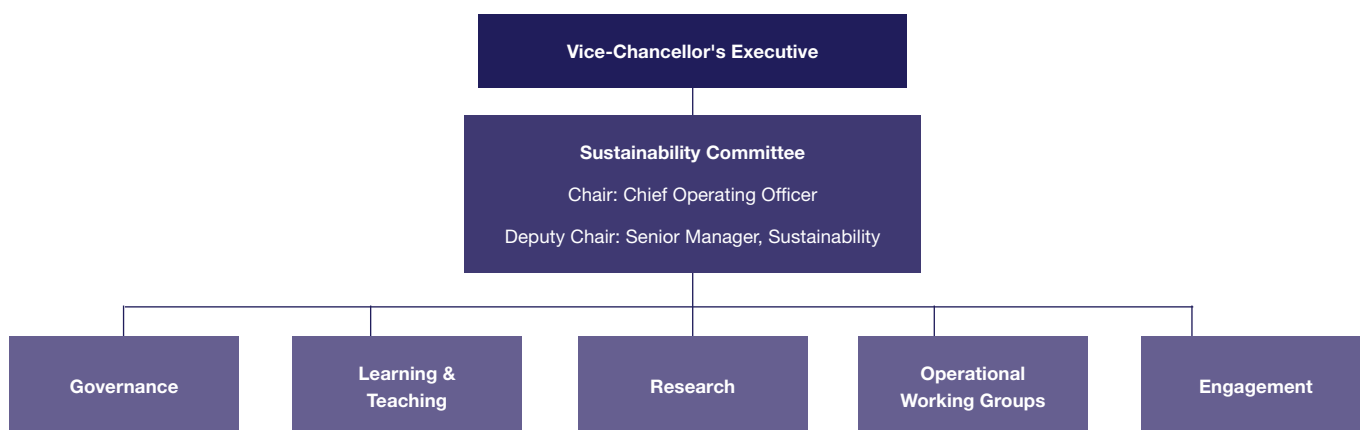
The Vice-Chancellor is responsible for ensuring the University has strong and effective leadership and a clear direction. They are supported by the Vice-Chancellor’s Executive (VCE) who provides strategic advice across the University’s portfolios.

For further information about the RMIT governance structure, please visit the website: [rmit.edu.au/about/governance-and-management](https://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. It is also responsible for oversight of the University’s commitment to the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

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. Michael Vanderheide, the Interim Chief Operating Officer, held the position of Sustainability Committee Chair while Dionne Higgins was interim Vice-Chancellor.





### 3.3 Key documents

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

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

2021 marked the final year of RMIT's Ready for Life and Work strategy, developed with the goals of providing everyone with the tools and experiences to be their best, shape their future and belong.

The strategy proved a game-changer for the University, uniting and connecting the community and creating transformational change that could not have been envisaged when it was first endorsed six years ago.

In 2021, led by our Policy Strategy and Impact team, work was undertaken to support the development and execution of our NEXT Strategy, including the University's vision, values, goals, and priorities for 2022 and the years ahead.

In 2021, RMIT's Sustainability Committee worked with the University's leadership team to incorporate sustainability and apply the SDGs lens to RMIT's next five-year strategy to ensure sustainability remains an organisational priority.

RMIT's 2021 Annual Report provides a further update on how the University is progressing against its strategic objectives: [rmit.edu.au/about/governance-management/annual-reports](https://www.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 governance, tertiary education, impact, infrastructure and operations.

Two key mechanisms sit under the **Sustainability Policy**:

- **The Corporate Social Responsibility Framework** provides a screening methodology to identify individuals, businesses, or organisations that have the potential to create an ethical or reputational risk to the University to enable RMIT to implement appropriate risk mitigation and ensure Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) obligations are met as a signatory to the UN Global Compact.
- **The Responsible Investment Principles** guide RMIT's investment managers, to ensure that our portfolio minimises activities that have material impact on climate change, including involvement in fossil fuels, while screening for issues relating to public health and wellbeing. We will also monitor the portfolio in relation to globally accepted norms on corporate sustainability behaviours to ensure we meet our sustainability commitments.

RMIT takes its obligations to the health of the planet seriously, to keep the global temperature rise under two degrees. The entire RMIT portfolio had no exposure to fossil fuels from 31 March 2021. The University's fund managers must also be a signatory of the UN Principles for Responsible Investment (UN PRI).

For more information visit: [rmit.edu.au/about/our-values/sustainability/governance](https://www.rmit.edu.au/about/our-values/sustainability/governance)

#### Graduate Attributes

The RMIT graduate attributes outline the broad skills that the University expects its graduates will have acquired and can demonstrate to an appropriate level whatever their program of study. Two of the key graduate attributes directly related to 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

The RMIT Risk Management Framework is based on the International Standard AS/NZ ISO 31000:2018 Risk Management – Principles and Guidelines.

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

The Council Audit and Risk Management Committee (ARMC), 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.

In 2021, RMIT reviewed and updated the Key University Risks (KURs) to include two risks relating to sustainability:

- KUR 2 – Regulation and Compliance
- KUR 9 – Environmental and Social Sustainability

The elevation of sustainability in the University risk profile reflects the prominence and importance of key issues, such as climate change and modern slavery. The updated Key University Risks were endorsed by the Vice-Chancellor's Executive in December 2021.

## Modern Slavery

In June 2021, RMIT formally reported under the Modern Slavery Act 2018 (Cth). In compliance with the Act the statement described:

- The RMIT structure, operations and supply chains
- Our consultation processes with controlled entities
- Potential risks of modern slavery across our operations and supply chains
- Actions taken to assess and address risks of modern slavery across our operations and supply chains
- How we assess the effectiveness of our actions

In 2021, RMIT continued to build upon the progress outlined in the previous statement. The focus for the year was on enhancing core capabilities for the identification of, and response to, modern slavery risks. This primarily comprised improvements in governance and risk oversight, greater integration into the risk and audit programs, and enhancements in procurement systems.

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

## RMIT Policy Framework

RMIT delivers tertiary education in multiple regions and countries including Spain, Vietnam and Australia, and so operates in an international regulatory environment. RMIT is also subject to requirements related to traditional business functions including finance, information technology, human resources and general regulatory affairs. As a university, a high standard of social responsibility and commitment to sustainability is expected.

The University's policies, procedures and resources are designed to support the RMIT Group's regulatory and strategic objectives, values, and operational requirements. They provide RMIT staff, students, researchers and affiliates with the information required to understand their roles and responsibilities.

RMIT policies aim to minimise risks and maximise opportunities associated with strategic and operational activities in a consistent, quality-focused approach to operations.

The Policy Governance Framework is designed to enable identification, development and implementation, review and revision of policy documents across all functions. The Framework defines the hierarchy and types of policy documents that exist to support the good governance of the University. It applies to all policy documents developed for and on behalf of the RMIT Group.





In 2021 a number of policies were updated, including:

### **RMIT Research Policy**

A review and revision of the RMIT Research Policy suite was conducted to reaffirm RMIT's commitment to research integrity, research ethics and the responsible conduct of research. The revision included related procedures for animal and human research ethics, authorship, centres, data management, dissemination, funding, management of research integrity breaches and research with genetically modified organisms.

### **Academic Integrity Policy**

The new Academic Integrity Policy and supporting Academic Integrity Procedure came into effect on 5 August 2021.

The policy suite sets out key principles to guide a whole-of-institution responsibility and approach to upholding academic integrity and managing associated issues, and:

- promotes ethical academic scholarship and a positive culture of academic integrity
- adopts an educative approach to academic integrity with shared responsibility amongst staff and students
- defines staff and student roles and responsibilities with respect to academic integrity outcomes
- supports staff to think about academic integrity, enact their responsibilities and take necessary action where breaches are suspected
- acknowledges the established research integrity principles and practices within the Research Policy
- outlines actions and behaviours that constitute breaches and provides guidance on how each should be addressed having regard to the circumstances, students' experiences across their learning journey and the primacy of an educative response.

### **Student Conduct Policy**

Academic Board approved the revised Student Conduct Policy suite following extensive consultation with key stakeholders.

The Student Conduct Regulations form part of the Student Conduct Policy Suite which would come into effect on 1 January 2022.

The Student Conduct Policy was reviewed in accordance with the Policy Governance Framework requirement for cyclic review and responds to recommendations by the Vice-Chancellor's Changing the Course advisory group which was convened to address the 2017 Australian Human Rights Commission's national report on sexual assault and sexual harassment at Australian universities. The policy suite:

- aligns with the new Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure in terms of what constitutes a breach of academic integrity and academic misconduct and the management of breaches and misconduct
- employs a trauma-informed approach based on principles of harm minimisation when addressing matters relating to sexual harm
- recognises students' rights to freedom of speech and freedom of expression in accordance with the Intellectual Freedom Policy
- recognises that matters related to potential breaches of research integrity are reported to the Research Integrity Office to be managed in accordance with the Research Policy and Student Conduct Policy concurrently as required
- documents RMIT's commitment to supporting the welfare and wellbeing of students and persons affected or involved in conduct matters.

## 3.4 External Recognition

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### Australasian Green Gown Awards

Hosted by Australasian Campuses Towards Sustainability (ACTS), the Green Gown Awards recognise best practice in sustainability within the education sector across Australia and New Zealand. The Green Gown Awards provide benchmarks for excellence and are aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

In 2021, RMIT won two prestigious Green Gown awards, ensuring the University remains the most highly decorated Higher Education institution in its region:

- The 2021 Green Gown Awards Australasia for Climate Action: The University took out the Climate Action award for *The RMIT Journey Towards Carbon Neutral*. The judges commended RMIT's practical steps and innovative projects as a global leader in climate action, including having the largest carbon emission reductions (before offsets) of any university in Australia and ensuring its philanthropic investments have no exposure to fossil.
- 2021 Green Gown Award Australasia for Leading the Circular Economy. – The University was awarded for its project *Weaving together a circular economy at RMIT*. The award recognised the collaborative work the Circular Economy Hub, the ARC Industrial Transformation Research Hub for Transformation of Reclaimed Waste Resources to Engineered Materials and Solutions for a Circular Economy (TREMS), RMIT Activator and the Sustainability Team in Property Services are doing in leading the shift to a circular economy.



### Times Higher Education Impact Ranking

RMIT was ranked number three overall in the 2021 Times Higher Education (THE) University SDGs Impact Rankings. Standout results across the SDGs included the University being placed 2nd in the world for its efforts to reduce inequality within and among countries (SDG 10) and 3rd for strengthening partnerships for the goals (SDG 17).



### Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility

RMIT maintained its citation as an Employer of Choice for Gender Equality (EOCGE) from the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) in 2021, for the fourth year. This recognition acknowledges RMIT's effort to develop a gender-balanced workforce, support pay equity, provide supports for parents and carers, mainstream flexible ways of working and prevent gender-based harassment.

RMIT was also recognised for the third year as one of the Top Performers in the Australian Network on Disability's (AND) 2020-2021 Access and Inclusion Index and was re-accredited as a Disability Confident Recruiter in recognition of its commitment to supporting accessibility in every stage of the employee lifecycle.



### Leadership Award

The Sustainability Team, based in Property Services, was awarded the Vice-Chancellor's Leadership Award for Courage. The award recognised the team's courage in responding to issues of importance to our community and our world. The award speaks to the team's work implementing policies, plans, initiatives and partnerships which have positioned RMIT as a global leader in sustainability.







## 4. UN Sustainable Development Goals



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**RMIT has been using the SDGs as a sustainability framework for transformational change since 2017 when the University signed a public commitment to support, implement, foster and contribute to the SDGs agenda through the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN).**

**The SDGs have been applied as a lens to improve the University's sustainability performance in strategies, processes, programs and practices including curriculum, partnerships, research, governance and operations.**

#### **4.1 Goals into actions**

The Sustainability Committee has been working to deliver on the University's public commitments to the SDGs through an action plan approved by the Vice-Chancellor's Executive.

The key actions are:

- To demonstrate RMIT's global leadership by embedding, where appropriate, the SDGs into relevant processes, policies and practices.
- To use measurement and reporting mechanisms to transparently disclose performance toward achieving the goals and be held publicly accountable for the University's SDG performance.
- To incorporate the SDGs into the next five-year strategy, providing an integrated approach for SDGs throughout the University.
- To expand and clarify the Sustainability Committee's remit 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.

In 2021, important key SDG initiatives were delivered by RMIT, including:

#### **The Times Higher Education – SDG Impact Ranking**

RMIT was ranked number three out of 1,240 universities overall in the world in the 2021 Times Higher Education (THE) University Impact Rankings. Standout results across the SDGs included the University being placed:

- 2<sup>nd</sup> in the world for its efforts to reduce inequality within and among countries (SDG 10)
- 3<sup>rd</sup> in the world for strengthening partnerships for the goals (SDG 17)
- 5<sup>th</sup> in the world for supporting decent work and economic growth (SDG 8)

This strong performance is important international recognition of RMIT's genuine commitment to implement the SDG agenda across its strategies, policies and practices and an important example of the University's global sustainability leadership.

#### **RMIT SDGs Research Network**

The **SDGs Research Network** aims to bring together RMIT academics to share their ideas about engaging with the SDGs in their research, discuss experiences and challenges, and foster collaboration across the University. Ultimately it is hoped the SDGs Research Network will help grow and deepen SDG-engaged research at the University to enhance its collective research impact. RMIT's recent success in the SDG Impact Ranking reflects the work many researchers have been doing on the SDGs across the University. Network members come from the Colleges of Business and Law, Design and Social Context, STEM and Vocational Education, as well as RMIT Europe and RMIT Vietnam.

Crosscutting themes emerged from the launch of the network in 2021 and specific working groups are currently working on the following topics:

- Biodiversity
- Climate Justice
- ECRs (Early Career Researchers)
- Education
- Fair Work
- Measuring Contributions to the SDGs
- Open access and resources
- Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises



## SDGs Appraisal Toolkit

RMIT has developed an SDG Appraisal Toolkit which enables the University to assess its projects, plans, research and policies for their contributions toward the Sustainable Development Goals. The toolkit assists in increasing awareness of the SDGs and sustainability more broadly, as well as:

- Providing an integrated approach to identify contributions to the SDGs.
- Allowing a holistic approach to identifying opportunities to enhance positive social and environmental outcomes.
- Highlighting areas of negative impact and allowing mitigation measures to be developed.

This innovative toolkit is helping RMIT to showcase qualitative benefits that may usually be less visible. In 2021, the SDGs Appraisal Toolkit was successfully piloted on a range of initiatives across the University, with a view to further develop and expand its use in 2022.

## SDGs Mapping

Building on the SDG mapping process, which commenced in 2018, RMIT continued to map research, publications and curriculum contributions to the SDGs using qualitative and quantitative analyses. Results of the mapping provide a clear picture of SDG impact across the University and support internal decision-making processes and improve accountability. The outcomes from this work have been published in the RMIT's **SDGs Impact Reports**.

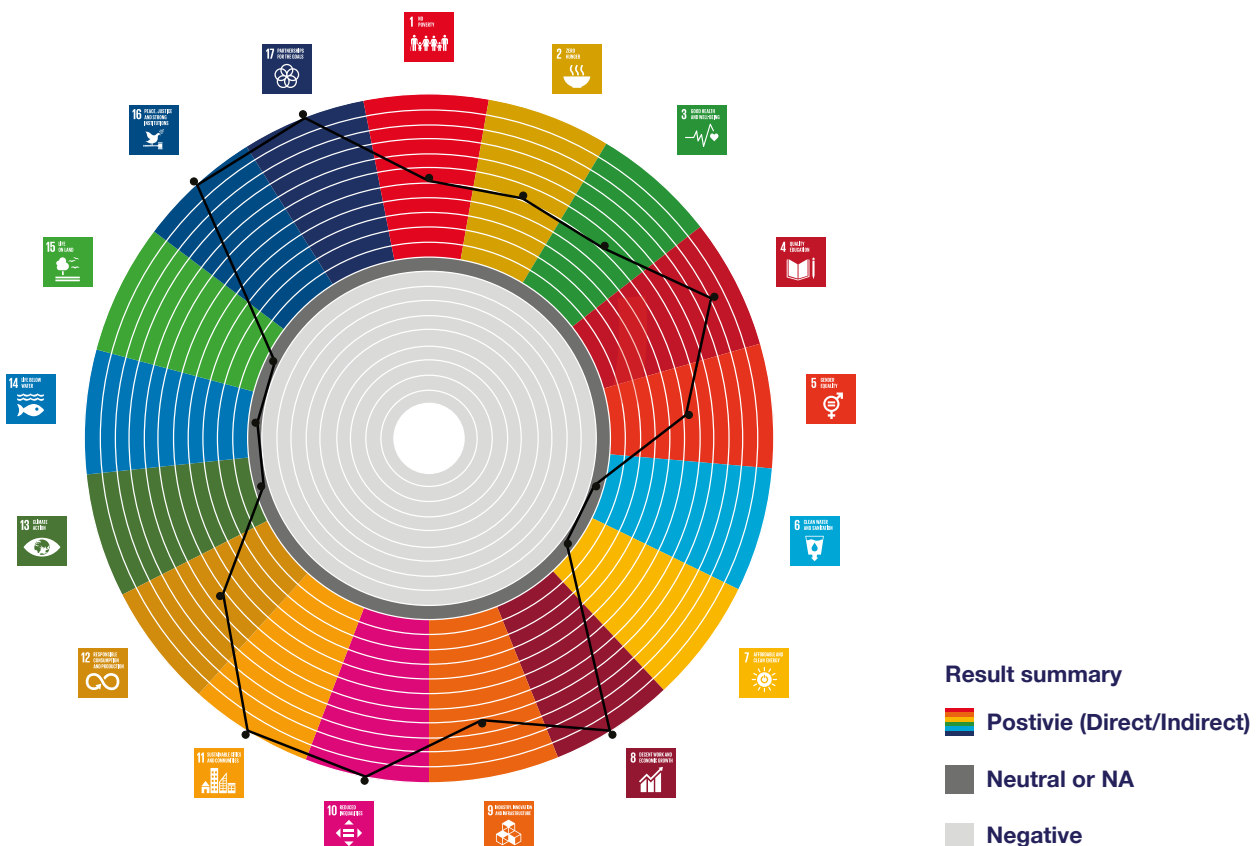


Image: Example application of the SDG Appraisal Toolkit

## 4.2 SDG Events

In 2021, to support RMIT's SDGs agenda, the University hosted a range of roundtables, panel discussions, webinars and seminars. Free and open to the public, these events are part of our strategy to positively influence and increase awareness of SDGs across the University's internal and external stakeholders. Key SDGs events in 2021 included:

- **Jean Monnet SDG Network Graduate and Early Career Researchers (ECR) Workshop** – hosted by the EU Centre at RMIT, it included panellists from RMIT University and the National University of Singapore. This workshop aimed to highlight and interrogate questions of global governance for transformation, discussing the capacities and relevance of global governance in an era of intersecting and compounding crises, focusing on questions of climate, values, and democracy, at the global, regional, national and local levels. (27 January 2021)
- **Partnership Goals for Sustainable Development** was a free seminar run by RMIT's Centre for Urban Research and Social and Global Studies Centre. The seminar aimed to increase the understanding of the SDG agenda and the importance of partnerships in delivering the goals, including panellists from RMIT and the UN Global Compact. (19 April 2021)
- **Embedding SDGs into Curriculum and Research** was a webinar bringing together a panel of experts to provide insights on embedding SDGs into curriculum and research. This webinar was hosted by RMIT's School of Accounting in the College of Business and Law and had the participation of academics from Australian and international universities. (13 August 2021)
- **SDGs Masterclass: How games can help address the SDGs** was hosted by RMIT as a pre-festival masterclass as part of the Games for Change Asia-Pacific Festival and Melbourne International Games Week. The festival, held entirely online and free for all participants, featured over 100 keynote Australian and international speakers. This masterclass focused on how games can support the global implementation of the SDGs by 2030. (5 October 2021)
- **Good Global Governance and the Geopolitics of Climate** was a webinar to explore Australia's role in global climate negotiations and the global governance that underpins the Paris Accords and action to deliver on SDG13 and 16. The webinar was hosted by the EU Centre at RMIT and included panellists from RMIT, the University of Glasgow, the International Council of Adult Education and the National University of Singapore. (27 October 2021)
- **SDGs and Higher Education: A transformative Agenda** was a panel discussion on the transformative role universities can play to implement and achieve the SDGs, including panellists from RMIT University, the Monash Sustainable Development Institute and the University of Arizona. (25 November 2021)
- **Global Student Community Dialogue 2021** was an online three-hour bite-sized event hosted by RMIT Global Experiences in collaboration with Common Purpose. This community dialogue involved students from different countries discussing and exploring global impacts to create a more sustainable world. (30 November 2021)

### SDG Interview Series

In 2021, RMIT kicked off a series of SDG Interviews, to demonstrate the wide range of activities across the University, the diverse ways individual staff contribute to the SDGs and to share knowledge.

Key leaders and influencers across RMIT were interviewed throughout the year including:

- Professor Ralph Horne (Associate Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research and Innovation, College of Design and Social Context) who spoke about using the SDGs as a common language for stakeholders to share and the significant opportunity the SDGs provide for universities and RMIT as a catalyst of change.
- Professor Anne-Laure Mention (Director, Global Business Innovation Enabling Capability Program) who spoke about how her work is influenced by the SDGs using them as a lens to view new projects, shaping research agendas and the alignment of the SDG agenda with the RMIT ethos.
- Dr Mahi Narayanan and Dr Bradley McConachie (both from the Research Services Office in Vietnam) who spoke about their work with the SDGs at RMIT Vietnam, striving to develop a research culture that supports high-quality research impact, partnering in international research projects and promoting cross-disciplinary research that attains maximum benefit to plant, people and profits.

### 4.3 Partnerships for the Goals

RMIT recognises the importance of local and global partnerships to achieve the SDGs. Improving and developing partnerships is an important way to foster innovation for sustainable development and positively influence our community. Key SDGs partnerships in 2021 included:

#### Jean Monnet Sustainable Development Goals Network

Based in the EU Centre of Excellence, the Jean Monnet SDG Network formalises relationships among 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, 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-based forum for EU institutions to engage with nations in the region to implement the SDGs. Key Network activities in 2021 included:

- An international conference which enabled researchers to report their findings on initiatives that advanced progress towards the Goals of the UN Agenda, and to engage in dialogue with other researchers working in this field;
- An Early Career Research workshop; and
- A range of publishing activities, including presentations at conferences, various articles and the preparation of four monographs.

The EU Centre of Excellence also initiated a new Network, the Jean Monnet Network on Scientific and Social Innovation to Achieve the SDGs. This Network will focus on the urgent priority of supporting place-based innovation necessary to deliver the United Nations Global Agenda to 2030. It brings together partners from RMIT, the National Centre for Research on Europe at the University of Canterbury, the University of Glasgow, the National University of Singapore, INGENIO in Valencia, and the European Union Centre in Singapore.

#### RMIT and Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN)

RMIT is contributing to the SDSN to support universities to implement the SDG agenda. As part of SDSN's strategy to support and guide universities to prioritise and accelerate actions to address key global and local challenges using the SDGs as a framework, RMIT was part of the SDSN webinar University SDG Reports: What is (current) best practice?

This webinar brought together leading experts on SDG reports from global universities to share their experiences, learnings and recommendations. RMIT was considered one of the global leaders in SDGs reporting together with the University of Bologna (ITA), University of Pretoria (SA) and University of Manchester (UK). The webinar aimed to help newcomers get started and help identify and encourage more consistent good practices in SDG reporting across the sector.

#### SDG Measurement and Disclosure 3.0

RMIT led the development of the *SDG Measurement and Disclosure Report* in collaboration with CPA Australia, providing an analysis of the SDG disclosure practices by the top 150 Australian public-listed companies (ASX150) (by market capitalisation as of 1 July 2019). It was the third report in the *SDG Measurement and Disclosure* by ASX150 series of reports and includes analyses of SDG disclosure trends over a three-year period (2018 to 2020).

The report found that SDG disclosures by the ASX150 have significantly improved over the past three years, with an upward trend in terms of the number of companies mentioning the SDGs in their annual reporting. It found that 83% mention the Modern Slavery Act in their reporting, while only 11% of companies have achieved carbon neutrality, with only a further 25% committing to carbon neutrality.



## Policy@RMIT

Funded by the Urban Futures Enabling Capability Platform, Policy@RMIT (P@R) aims to study and enable collaborations between researchers and policy practitioners in co-producing research that supports evidence-informed policy in addressing major policy and societal issues.

P@R is working to achieve its aims through four main work packages:

- an overarching research program exploring key questions about the policy impact agenda
- capability building activities for RMIT researchers
- a partnership with the Victorian Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP)
- publications, discussion papers, and policy briefs

The group actively seeks to engage with diverse knowledge systems through mutually respectful relationships. This engagement seeks to co-identify and co-define research problems, and then co-identify subsequent research questions, approaches, and outputs that stem from a shared and/or pluralistic view of a problem, place, and land.

## Sustainable Buildings and Construction United Nations One Planet Network

RMIT is the co-lead of the United Nations One Planet Network (OPN) **Sustainable Buildings and Construction** (SBC) programme. The SBC programme aims to improve the knowledge of sustainable building and construction by supporting and mainstreaming sustainable building solutions. The work involves sharing good practices, launching implementation projects and creating cooperation networks around the world to advance sustainable construction.

Building on its focus on circularity over the last few years, the programme is now working on a legacy book to capture the learnings and key messages arising from their work. The programme has developed tools, case studies and indicators and reports on circularity in the built environment. They have also formed a network of over 100 organisations in 50 countries and will continue project activities on responsibly sourced materials in India, Bangladesh, Ghana and Senegal to 2025.

The programme will be in its final year in 2022, the final year of the Rio+20 timeline. But there are ongoing discussions to extend beyond 2022 to the 2030 timeline of the New Urban Agenda.



# 5. Engagement



## 5.1 Stakeholder Engagement

For RMIT the purpose of stakeholder engagement is to ensure the University's goals, commitments and activities reflect its stakeholder expectations and values. Building meaningful partnerships with internal and external stakeholders is essential for making real progress toward the Sustainable Development Goals and adopting these as a lens for transformation.

RMIT's engagement activities are guided by the Sustainability Engagement Plan. This plan enables the University to craft a narrative that inspires, provides transparency, keeps the conversation going and ultimately builds a community around sustainability. Through storytelling, the Sustainability Team increases awareness of sustainability initiatives, educates stakeholders, forms partnerships and works collectively towards achieving common goals.

The engagement plan weaves together objectives from the Strategic Plan, Sustainability Story, Policy and the Operational Plans to provide platforms, partnerships, programs, campaigns and events to deliver these objectives.

The three focus areas for sustainability engagement activities in 2021 were:

- **Circular Economy** – How do we embed circular thinking and reimagine waste as a valuable resource?
- **Climate Change** – How do we bring students and staff on the journey to Carbon Neutral?
- **Sustainable Contractors & Retail** – How do we support retailers and contractors to transition to more sustainable models?

Each year stakeholders are engaged through sustainability initiatives including events, behaviour change programs, social media campaigns and living lab projects.

## 5.2 Engagement mechanisms

As a global multi-sector university, RMIT has a wide range of stakeholders that interact with or are influenced by the University and its operations. RMIT identifies key stakeholders based on the following key criteria:

- **Representation:** those who represent or who can legitimately claim to represent key interests with which RMIT interacts.
- **Dependency:** those who are dependent on RMIT and those on whom the University depend for operations.
- **Responsibility:** those to whom RMIT has direct responsibility such as legal, financial, operational or contractual links.
- **Influence:** those who have the ability to impact RMIT'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> <li>▪ Student services and support</li> <li>▪ Events</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>▪ Vendor 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> <li>▪ Events</li> </ul>	As required



### 5.3 Let's Lead the Way

The RMIT Sustainability Team has published the *Sustainability Story* which details its work to date and direction going forward. Under the tagline *Let's Lead the Way* the team conveys how its work is designed to demonstrate global sustainability leadership through the initiatives it undertakes and in the way it empowers RMIT's students, staff, community and industry.

The work is captured under impact areas, connected to four core pillars, all aligned to the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Progress on these impact areas is detailed throughout this report and on RMIT's website [rmit.edu.au/sustainability](https://rmit.edu.au/sustainability)



## 5.4 Memberships

RMIT maintains meaningful partnerships that allow the University to scale up impacts across social, environmental and economic outcomes beyond the University's boundaries. RMIT is a member of key local and global organisations which provide access to free resources, training and support to students and staff. They include:

### United Nations Global Compact Network Australia

Membership of the **United Nations Global Compact Network Australia** (UN GCNA) assists RMIT in sector-based collaboration, leadership advocacy and global connections on sustainability. The GCNA has been provided office space on the RMIT 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 five of the most innovative and enterprising universities in the nation: RMIT, University of Technology Sydney, University of South Australia, Curtin University and Deakin University. 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 that aims to inspire, promote and support change towards best practice sustainability within the operations, curriculum and governance 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 eight projects rated under the Green Star system and the most recent achievement was the fit out of the OurPlace project which was awarded a 5 Star Green Star v1.2 Interiors rating.

### Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN)

The Australia, New Zealand & Pacific Network of the **Sustainable Development Solutions Network** (SDSN) brings together SDSN members in the region to develop and promote solutions, policies and public education for sustainable development. RMIT collaborates with the SDSN to provide practical solutions for sustainable development and to share best practice teaching and research in sustainability and the SDGs.

### Supply Chain Sustainability School

RMIT is a knowledge partner of the **Supply Chain Sustainability School**. The School is a not-for-profit initiative that aims to create more sustainable supply chains for the property, construction and infrastructure industries in Australia. It provides targeted learning and support to address all the main sustainability issues including materials, carbon, environmental management, waste, water, biodiversity, ethics, community, climate adaptation, procurement, as well as human rights and modern slavery.

### Tertiary Education Facilities Management Association (TEFMA)

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



## 5.5 Key Activities

Given COVID-19 restrictions, the sustainability engagement program again moved online in early 2021 with a range of different events throughout the year. Through partnerships RMIT co-hosted and cross-promoted a significant number of online events and programs, with some of the key highlights outlined below:

### ACTS of Connection Series

RMIT partnered with the Australasian Campuses Toward Sustainability (ACTS) to host an annual online events series centred around building social and environmental sustainability knowledge and skills, for staff and students.

With over 30 events designed to provide connections and support to the wider RMIT community, themes ranged from minimising plastic use, to tackling supply chain traceability during Fashion Revolution Week.

To round out the year-long program, a panel event titled *The Future of Sustainability* brought a wide audience together for a thought-provoking discussion featuring RMIT Research Fellow, Dr Emma Shortis and other industry leaders.

### National Sustainable Living Festival

For over two decades, the National Sustainable Living Festival has provided community events and an education platform to encourage widespread cooperation in the pursuit of social and ecological sustainability. From its early beginnings in regional Victoria, the Festival has grown into Australia's largest and most comprehensive platform for showcasing the community, commercial, and technological responses to the environmental challenges of our time.

Now the country's longest-running celebration of sustainability, the Festival has helped to push sustainable living into the mainstream and continues to present unique and creative opportunities for diverse audiences to connect with a positive and empowering social movement.

Since 2012, RMIT has been a proud partner of the National Sustainable Living Festival. In February 2021, RMIT was again a Major Partner of the Festival and provided the iconic Capitol Theatre as a venue to showcase key events throughout the festival.





## RMIT Activator

Activator's purpose is to unlock entrepreneurial potential to create sustainable impact. Through its programs, participants build knowledge, capabilities and networks for future impact and success. Key programs delivered by RMIT Activator in 2021 include:

### LaunchHUB

Iconic program 'LaunchHUB' is a free 12-week pre-accelerator program designed to help founders take their startups to the next level by refining customer insights and progressing towards product-market fit. The startups accepted into LaunchHUB are selected for their potential to change the world at scale – through the circular economy, technology for good, global connections and more. The SDGs are a central framework within the program that enables participants to view their impact both socially and environmentally. In 2021 Activator partnered with Circular Economy Victoria to ensure sustainability and circular thinking were embedded into the program and hosted sessions focused on reviewing start-up impact metrics such as 'System Thinking & Circular Models' as well as 'Customer Research & Social Impact Models'.

2021 LaunchHUB startup founders include:

- **Swapsies** is an app designed by Sweeping Success for children to assist in the swapping of their unwanted toys, clothes, stationery and more! Their application aims to create a toy swapping community that teaches the value of sharing and reducing waste. They are changing the way children think, one swap at a time whilst promoting a sharing economy.
- **Mindful Milk** is looking to cut plastic waste from the dairy to cafe/business supply chain by providing a reusable vessel and promoting a circular economy for the distribution of fresh milk in Australia.
- **Biophilic Soundscapes** aims to transform motorway noise barriers. Their innovative 'ecological buffers and corridor' product is an answer to the rising temperatures, air pollution, and noise pollution in Melbourne caused by exponential growth.
- **Forkful** is leading the way to a more sustainable society where food that is produced, is consumed. Forkful provides a solution to food waste in our hospitality industry by providing a platform for venues to list and sell their surplus and unsold food, with consumers collecting it as a takeaway.

## Circular Campus Programme 2021:

The Circular Campus Programme was a two-month program designed to stimulate sustainability and circular innovation in the Asia-Pacific region. Three RMIT University Vietnam teams made the top 10 in the 2021 Circular Campus Programme. The teams, JAMB, Food Fertilizer and The Cirmiteese proposed a variety of circular initiatives embracing technologies such as 3D printing and a closed-loop for food waste.

The winners were Cirmiteese who stood out amongst the crowd, with their idea to use advanced 3D printing to supply campus food vendors with reusable cups. The 'rCup', with the support of RMIT Activator and RMIT Sustainability Vietnam, is on its way to becoming a reality and being used widely on the Melbourne and Vietnam campuses. rCup has also attracted the interest of external organisations who are ready to help kick-start the project.

## Victorian Circular Activator:

In 2021, Victoria Circular Activator (VCA) was launched. The VCA is a brand-new physical space and digital infrastructure to support the Circular Economy (CE) transition in Victoria.

The hub will strengthen and complement RMIT Activator, along with existing digital platforms such as ACE Hub and CEBIC by providing a physical hub, where stakeholders can come together to create impact.

The VCA creates practical support pathways for CE innovation by connecting businesses, entrepreneurs, researchers, government, and the community to transition to CE.

VCA developed the 'Circular Economy Innovation Frameworks' as a tool to help businesses navigate the emerging circular economy body of knowledge in order to accelerate both disruptive and iterative innovations, that help accelerate the transition towards a more circular economy in Victoria.

### Plastic Free July Campaign:

The 2021 Plastic Free campaign 'My Plastic Action Counts' was launched to remind people that their actions count for more than just avoiding waste. Over 300 million people worldwide participated in Plastic Free July to collectively create a healthier planet and healthier communities. To celebrate Plastic Free July, RMIT Sustainability ran an online campaign to promote awareness of the scale and impacts of single-use plastic and encourage people to limit their use of plastic. This campaign was delivered on RMIT's social media platforms promoting practical tips on how individuals can reduce their plastic footprints in July and beyond #PlasticFreeUni.

### Walkin' Country, Walkin' Birrarung

The three-hour cultural heritage walk, organised by the Global Experience Team, in RMIT's Students group commenced at Enterprize Park and led students through the heartland of what we now call Melbourne. Tour leader Dean Stewart shared his deep knowledge of Victoria's Indigenous history, educating groups with stories of the people and land.

The walk was an ecological look at peeling back layers of colonisation and western evolution to see the last 300 to 100,000+ years whilst standing on the edge of Birrarung River (largely mistaken as the 'Yarra' river). It was an educational experience designed to increase knowledge and challenge pre-existing ideas of First Nations history in Naarm (Melbourne).

The tour sought to have participants understand the convergence of four pillars in Naarm, Indigenous people, and western colonisation, land and water ecosystems. It dived into the rich history of the indigenous people of Naarm and educates attendees with stories of the people and land. This tour allowed participants to gain an eye-opening perspective of the city through a different lens.



## RMIT Europe: How Do We Make Our Cities Ethical? Webinar

In July experts in the UK, Europe and Australia presented at a global webinar on ethical cities hosted by RMIT Europe. As cities around the world transition to a low carbon future, how do we ensure our places and communities remain fair for all? Experts from Australia, Europe and the UK shared their insights on how cities can approach a decarbonised future in an ethically informed way. Presenters concluded that it is often the most vulnerable who are impacted by the effects of climate change as well as the sometimes negative and unintended consequences of decarbonisation – from economic inequality through to social exclusion.

Current COVID-19 recovery responses call for the world to come out of the pandemic in a green and clean way. The session explored how we ensure that the people who will benefit from these green investments are those who most need them.



## YourMelbourne 2021: Your City, Your Vision

BMW Group Australia and RMIT University co-hosted the second edition of #YourMelbourne, a future-focused sandbox where students imagine, research, design, and present their vision of Melbourne in the year 2030, in line with the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

From a vibrant CBD to sprawling suburbs each filled with unique character, Melbourne presents a unique challenge for future mobility designers. How will technology change the way we work and live? How will this beautiful city survive and thrive into the future? Students were tasked with finding creative solutions.

All entries not only aligned with fulfilling the SDGs by 2030, but they also demonstrated strong creativity and innovative thinking for sustainable mobility for Melbourne in 2030.

The individual winner was Jade Armstrong, 'Melbourne Green' – Radical results require radical action. 'Melbourne Green' proposes to transform the city from a grey and dull space into a vibrant environmentally conscious, carbon positive and social zone. Personal and public mobility will be achieved by transitioning some roads to be car-free, with a focus on sustainable transport and environmentally conscious energy sources. Sustainability through urban planning will also be maximised in these areas, as well as affordable job and housing creation. Lastly, connectivity will be found through the creation of recharge zones and improving mental health through nature.

The winning group was Brittany Keyworth & Ruchitha Gummadi – Their proposal focused on six core pillars:

- Renewable energy generation
- Personal mobility
- Emergency mobility
- Urban Agriculture
- Transformable modular city
- Integrated city and mobility app



## 6. Education



**To meet future challenges and shape the world, RMIT expects all graduates to demonstrate a wide range of practical skills and expertise whatever their program of study. RMIT's graduate attributes are:**

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

RMIT are now proposing a set of distinctive Learning Capabilities that will replace the graduate attributes. These capabilities reflect a set of aspirations for RMIT graduates and value proposition to learners; explicitly identifying the knowledge, skills and attributes to support lifelong learning, successful careers and wellbeing for all learners. They also outline a set of values that we aspire to for our learners with a focus on Indigenous perspectives and reconciliation; active global citizenship and contributing to a more sustainable world through the SDGs. These capabilities will be embedded in our curriculum and assured via aligned program learning outcomes.

These capabilities are:



- 1 Actively engage with Indigenous perspectives and participate in action towards reconciliation and self-determination of First Nations. Contribute to a more sustainable world through engagement with the Sustainability Development Goals.
- 2 Actively establish meaningful connections with professional, peer, government, industry and/or community networks. Collaborate with diverse, multidisciplinary and cross-functional teams to solve complex problems.
- 3 Employ intellectual agility, knowledge and skills to develop solutions in a fast-changing world. Utilise self-awareness to reflect on learning and experiences to build transferable skills and grow personally and professionally.
- 4 Create and utilise a blend of digital and human skills, tools and emerging technologies to learn, solve problems, innovate, communicate and collaborate.
- 5 Establish and continue to grow and apply disciplinary and/or interdisciplinary knowledge and expertise in real life contexts and as life-long learners.
- 6 Employ intellectual independence and judgement to engage critically with information, make sound evidence-based decisions, actively challenge assumptions, and undertake research.

## 6.1 SDGs in the Curriculum

As part of RMIT's public commitment to the global 2030 sustainable development agenda, we are proud to demonstrate our global sustainability leadership by supporting and fostering education for sustainable development. The diagram below provides a snapshot of the 1,107 active course units in 2021, that address one or more of the SDG targets. This number considers all undergraduate and postgraduate course units.

This is the first time RMIT has been able to measure SDG impact in the curriculum and this methodology will serve as a baseline for all future curriculum development and reporting.



## STEM for Sustainable Development (ONPS2702)

In 2021 a new course was developed focusing on sustainable development within the Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) College. This course aims to provide students with both an understanding of key sustainable development topics and drivers within the context of STEM and health and to inspire and challenge our students to bring a sustainability focus and agency to their ongoing studies and into their future careers.

The course is comprised of three modules:

**Module 1:** Explores key introductory topics in sustainable development, including the Sustainable Development Goals, circular economy and the climate crisis.

**Module 2:** Considers sustainable development topics within STEM disciplinary settings with students preparing a conservation-style news article to demonstrate their understanding of specific topics.

**Module 3:** Provides an opportunity for students to work in teams to propose solutions to real life, sustainable development challenges provided by industry partners, with opportunities to engage and get guidance from an industry partner halfway through the project and feedback on the final showcase.

Through a combination of interactive and self-directed activities, students explore key topics in sustainability and appreciate the importance of diversity, inclusion, Reconciliation and equity as driving forces in developing a sustainable future. Students also have the opportunity to design, develop and promote solutions to real-world sustainability challenges.





## RMIT College of Business and Law, Gamification and SDGs

RMIT's School of Accounting, Information Systems and Supply Chain (AISSC) is currently developing innovative educational approaches through gamification to provide students with authentic learning and engagement with the SDGs. Games, as a digital educational intervention, can bring wicked or cognitively challenging problems to the forefront. Together RMIT research and teaching teams are involved in specific areas of games research and learning to provide evidence of the benefits of games in the classroom. Led by Prof Gillian Vesty, RMIT has been developing important partnerships supporting the game industry and education, including an SDGs masterclass in partnership with Games for Change Asia-Pacific and the development of an assessment tool to help students learn and apply SDGs to business ideas (WritePal). The value of using games in education is in the ability to continue to play and replay until mastery. Being dynamic and flexible in game play choices, they provide powerful tools for classroom discussion, sharing of ideas and different approaches to deal with industry challenges.

To date, games have been used with hundreds of students within RMIT, both in Melbourne and on offshore campuses. Examples of the use of games in our curriculum include the budgeting game called Lucro Island, in which students compete to create, build and manage their hotels on an island. Complex algorithms that underpin the gameplay where winners and losers are not necessarily determined by the amount of profit they earn – but on their ability to improve the branding of their hotel – through attention to their employees, maintenance, purchases, choice of amenities and so forth. A further iteration of the game, which extends the notion of sustainability and care for the environment, is underway.

Bogart is another game developed to teach students ethics and build resilience to cope with ethical dilemmas. This game covers unethical actions in accounting and has a powerful message about ethics and workplace values.

## 6.2 Open Scholarship

As a global university of technology, design and enterprise, RMIT is committed to intellectual inquiry that enriches our diverse communities through open scholarship. We embrace the principles of open scholarship and the free flow of research and learning, transforming how our community discovers, accesses, uses and creates knowledge.

Open scholarship is the practice of applying the principles of openness in what we do as a university. It encompasses both open research and open educational practice. To meet the principles of open scholarship, RMIT will work to make its research outputs visible and accessible and our learning collaborative and flexible to maximise the impact and benefit for our communities.

Examples of open scholarship include:

- Open research: Publishing in an open-access journal, depositing a copy of a research paper in an institutional repository and making research data available via a repository.
- Open education: Co-creation of learning experiences with students, online peer communities and creating and sharing open educational resources.

Open Scholarship importantly contributes to SDG 4 in seeking to “ensure inclusive and equitable, quality education, and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.”

## 6.3 Learning@RMIT

Learning@RMIT is a multi-year program of work, led by the Education Portfolio, made up of five educational initiatives: Curriculum Architecture, Blended Learning, Assessment, Learning Pathways and Expectations for Educators, and Curriculum Mapping and Management.

Aligned to our strategic directions, we are redesigning our curriculum, teaching methodologies and systems to support a uniquely RMIT learning experience. The program gives RMIT a distinct point of difference in the sector and ensures our students are equipped to thrive now and into the future. Key benefits of this work are that:

- Our program suite is streamlined and leverages our strengths to drive outcomes for our community.
- Our student learning experiences are consistent and coherent across the University; students are provided with flexibility and choice.
- Our commitments to sustainability, reconciliation and fostering ethical citizens are embedded in curriculum.
- Research excellence is leveraged to build networks, shape curriculum and build the research capability of our students.
- Our students are equipped with a distinctive set of in-demand and future-focused capabilities, employability skills and experiences that drive better graduate outcomes.
- Our students are equipped with the knowledge, skills and experiences they need to thrive in a complex world. They are lifelong learners with an enduring connection to RMIT.
- Our staff are supported in their academic and career aspirations, to design and deliver relevant and insightful learning. They are engaged with industry and community and build interdisciplinary connections for teaching and research.



## 6.4 Employability and Industry

RMIT's purpose is to help students to succeed in an era of rapid change, ensuring relevance to contemporary society. Employability is key to ensuring RMIT students are ready for life and work. In 2021 RMIT reported that 83.4% of all higher education graduates were in employment four months after graduation, with 5.1% in enterprise formation.

### Work-Integrated Learning

The Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) student placement program is a cornerstone of RMIT's approach to industry-relevant education and training. WIL placements are discipline-specific and take many forms. Each discipline's placement component is determined by the accrediting governing body and is often compulsory for graduation. Placements can be short term, long term or take the form of an industry-based student project.

While many WIL activities remained fully online due to the impacts of COVID-19, this offered students flexibility with timing and approaches to the program and also allowed students to develop online collaboration in a workplace setting.

In 2021, there were more than 4,700 placements within the STEM College, taking place across 16 countries with almost 360 new industry partners. There were also close to 700 placements and internships in the College of Business and Law.

RMIT also developed a new framework for Health, Safety and Wellbeing due diligence for WIL placements ensuring our student placements are safe to attend and our students are set up for success and safety.

### Victorian Higher Education State Investment Fund

In 2021, the Victorian Government awarded RMIT \$44.6 million as part of the Victorian Higher Education State Investment Fund (VHESIF) to establish and expand industry-linked initiatives to ignite our economy and bring life back into the city of Melbourne.

The initiatives being delivered include:

- Construction of a Multifaith and Wellbeing Centre to better serve the needs of RMIT's diverse community.
- An Asia Trade and Innovation Hub designed to support local businesses operating in the Asia-Pacific.
- A Social Innovation Hub to foster collaborative and industry-focused research on social and economic challenges, including gender equality, cultural diversity, and crime prevention.
- A Digital Infrastructure and the Digital CBD project focused on the ways COVID-19 has accelerated the adoption of digital technology and reshaped Victoria's geography.
- PlaceLab Research Centres that link with the community to create a more sustainable, liveable and people-focused Victoria.
- A Space Industry Hub to connect Victorian businesses with global space technology opportunities.



## 6.5 Supporting Students

RMIT provides students support and opportunities to thrive educationally and personally during their studies. When students study at RMIT, they join a vibrant and welcoming university filled with social, cultural, sporting and recreation activities, and a range of services and programs to support their access, participation and success.

In Australia, the coordination and provision support and engagement is led by the Students group, working in partnership with the RMIT University Student Union (RUSU); in Vietnam, it is led by the Student Experience and Success group, with support from the RMIT Vietnam Student Council.

### Students group

The RMIT Students group connects with the global community of students, staff and industry to create transformative experiences and outcomes for our students. The Students group provide a broad range of services summarised below.

Students group supports the Sustainable Development Goals through a commitment to ending poverty and fighting inequality, supporting good health and wellbeing, ensuring access to quality education, and responding positively to climate change. In 2021, we:

- Supported access to affordable housing: We maintained relationships with a quality assured network of purpose-built student accommodation providers, providing more than 8,200 beds in locations near to RMIT campuses. In 2021, 595 students stayed in student accommodation (significantly lower than the more than 2000 students in the previous year, and due to international students being unable to travel to Australia for much of 2021)

Student Service and Support		Student Engagement and Development	
Accommodation, tenancy and legal advice	Wellbeing case management	Orientation and transition programs	Work Integrated Learning operations governance
Counselling and Mental Health support	Multi-faith chaplaincy support	Access, diversity and inclusion programs	Personal, professional and leadership development
Financial aid and coursework scholarships	Accessibility and equitable learning support	Student activities, clubs and communities	Sport and fitness plus creative engagement
International student support	Careers advice and employment services	Global exchange and study experiences	Student voice and student partnership development



## Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry Art Prize

RMIT virtually hosted The Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry (SETAC) Conference in August and September 2021, bringing together scientists from around the world to share learnings in the disciplines of Ecotoxicology and Chemistry.

To promote sustainability through creative practice, RMIT School of Art students were invited to submit work around the conference theme – resilience and recovery amidst global change. The online exhibition represented a selection of artworks that respond to and highlighted themes of the environment, water, sustainability or addressed challenges such as pollution and waste.

Two prizes were awarded:

The SETAC Art Prize Award (\$300) to Kat Parker for “LD50 (14 pieces of plastic)”

The People’s Choice Award (voted by conference participants) (\$200) to Dan Su for “Over packaging”.

Honourable Mentions went to Lidia Byrne & Carys Norwood for “Looking forward to our meeting” and to Terisa Ercoles for “Honey Catching the Air”.

Pieces can be viewed on the SETAC Gallery.

- 
- Improved access to a range of financial welfare services: In 2021, we supported 2,498 students in need with welfare advice and support, including financial assistance and advice, taxation and legal advice, and emergency hardship payments. The latter included an initiative to improve the access and timeliness of response using a streamlined online application form and the provision of a pre-loaded gift card for students in need to use at a range of vendors to meet living and study costs.
  - Supported inclusion and participation in health and wellbeing activities: In 2021, RMIT University Sport achieved gold tier status (the highest benchmark level) in the Australian Pride in Sport Index recognising efforts in making sport more inclusive for LGBTQ people. We also developed and promoted the Sport Inclusion Ambassador program and Pride Pledge to promote an inclusive culture that stands together as visible allies in the sports community. We also supported 61 student sport, recreation, and creative clubs, engaging more than 4,500 students
  - Supported mental health and wellbeing: In 2021, we provided mental health counselling appointments for 2,226 students, and equitable learning support appointments for 1,898 students with a disability, medical condition, or caring responsibilities
  - Ensured access to quality education: We supported student equity access, diversity, and inclusion (as reported in section 9.2 Student Access, Retention and Success) and responded to more than 230,000 enquires from current students, across the University
  - Responded to climate change: We embedded the RMIT Sustainable Events Guide into on-campus, student-facing engagement activities, and continued our commitment to Fair Trade practices and implemented an ethical procurement framework in our RMIT Store operations. We also supported an ‘up-cycle’ art challenge focusing on the innovative repurposing of RMIT’s 2021 Open Day wristbands which was cancelled due to COVID-19.

## RMIT University Student Union (RUSU)

RUSU is a 100% student-run organisation whose purpose is to advance the education of students of RMIT and enhance the student experience through a range of actions including:

- Representing students within and outside the University, including safeguarding the interests of students in matters affecting their interests and rights.
- Endeavouring to achieve changes to the University's structure, policies and procedures so that all of these encompass the principles of equal opportunity and affirmative action.
- Facilitating the effective coordination of student representation on all University bodies, including student representation on portfolio/College/School Board and Student Staff Consultative Committees.

Throughout 2021 RUSU had a vast array of achievements across events, food, clubs, volunteering, advocacy and communications. RUSU have mapped these achievements against the Sustainable Development Goals, demonstrating the breadth and depth of the impact.

<p><b>2</b> ZERO HUNGER</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 9,995 healthy breakfast bags for student housing</li> <li>▪ 1,000 (approx) free Realfoods breakfasts</li> <li>▪ 4,500 healthy Realfoods meals delivered to student housing</li> <li>▪ 2,785 free lunches served on campus</li> </ul>
<p><b>3</b> GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 1,000+ on-campus events, including 30+ social events</li> <li>▪ 97 affiliated clubs, including 9 newly affiliated clubs</li> <li>▪ 116 in-person club events and 166 club grants</li> <li>▪ 4,883 students reached in Compass outreach events</li> </ul>
<p><b>4</b> QUALITY EDUCATION</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 471 HDR student engagements in events &amp; outreach</li> <li>▪ 300+ new student rights cases supported</li> <li>▪ 631 student email queries addressed</li> </ul>
<p><b>10</b> REDUCED INEQUALITIES</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Specific themed engagement covering Pride Week, Indigenous Week and <b>Be a Better Human campaign</b></li> <li>▪ Disabilities &amp; Carers Office role created in RUSU</li> <li>▪ International student tuition fee bursary (10% fee discount) for overseas students</li> <li>▪ No fails listed on transcripts</li> </ul>
<p><b>16</b> PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ RUSU annual elections are held every year</li> <li>▪ Special general meeting to approve RUSU's incorporation and a new constitution</li> <li>▪ Student Rights Officers attended 74 hearings to support &amp; represent students</li> </ul>



In 2021, there were four RUSU affiliated sustainability groups in action on campus:

- **Environmental Engineering Student Association (EESA):** Hosts social and industry events, in what is the longest-running engineering student organisation at RMIT.
- **Planning and Environment RMIT Student Society (PERMITSS):** create a platform for Planning and Environment postgraduate students to network and socialise by facilitating meaningful connections between prospective employers and students
- **Student Association for Sustainable Systems Engineering (SASSE):** Helps students adjust to University life and encourages connections between other SSE students.
- **Fossil-Free RMIT:** Provides a space for RMIT students to explore campaigns, training and grassroots activism to pressure companies divest and remove their association with the fossil fuel industry.

The RUSU Sustainability Department also drives sustainability initiatives on campus with coordination from a dedicated Sustainability Officer.

### RMIT Vietnam Student Council

The RMIT Vietnam Student Council is the key advocacy body for all RMIT Vietnam students and represents students across all Vietnam campuses. The Student Council is the conduit for communication between students and the University. By listening and considering students' concerns, the Student Council aims to improve the education experience, personal welfare, social life and cultural activities for students.

Executives and officers of the RMIT Vietnam Student Council are current RMIT Vietnam students who are elected for a one-year term. Voting is undertaken in a transparent and democratic election organized annually on semester 1. Council members represent students on the Hanoi and Saigon South campuses respectively.





# 7. Research Impact

**RMIT's collaborative approach to research aims to work together with our partners to develop and apply knowledge to shape a better world. Despite the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic, in 2021 RMIT continued to shape the world by focusing on high impact research and innovation. We continued to increase the impact of our research with cross-disciplinary partnerships and collaboration to advance the sustainable development agenda.**

### 7.1 Research Contributions to the SDGs

As part of our public commitments to the global 2030 sustainable development agenda, RMIT is proud to demonstrate our global sustainability leadership by supporting and fostering research projects contributing to the SDGs. The diagram below provides a snapshot of the 1,116 active research projects in 2021, that address one or more of the SDG targets.



### 7.2 Enabling Capability Platforms

RMIT's eight Enabling Capability Platforms (ECP) bring together whole-of-university capability of our research staff and students from different research disciplines collaborating with industry, government and the community to address significant opportunities and challenges in the economy, environment and society through the conduct and translation of excellent research. The ECPs provide leadership in developing and deploying capability from across the University to deliver research outcomes with a strong focus on creating value and impact, collaborating with Colleges, Schools, the Research and Innovation (R&I) Portfolio and external stakeholders.

The eight multidisciplinary platforms are:

1. Advanced Materials, Manufacturing & Fabrication
2. Design and Creative Practice
3. Information and Systems (Engineering)
4. Social Change
5. Sustainable Development Technologies and Systems (newly established)
6. Urban Futures
7. Global Business Innovation
8. Biomedical and Health Innovation



The connected and interdisciplinary nature of the ECPs helps RMIT produce research relevant to the Sustainable Development Goals.

Throughout 2021, the Post COVID-19 ReStart Initiatives delivered research projects, workshops, panels and roundtables in partnership with internal and external stakeholders. For 2020-21, more than 2,800 industry experts, researchers and stakeholders from government and the community met at 90 ReStart events and industry roundtables to discuss the impacts that COVID-19 is having on our society, and to problem-solve solutions and strategy.

Additionally, there were 40 roundtables and workshops; 38 reports and outputs; 10 Concept Briefs; 6 Policy Briefs; five news and media stories; and substantial external funding awarded for projects born from the initiative. These outputs produced with our partners were designed to inform policymakers and the wider community relevant to advancing the sustainable development agenda.

## New Sustainable Development Platform

The new **Sustainable Development Technologies and Systems** ECP was a culmination of a year of planning by an internal team of dedicated RMIT staff. Led by the Director, Professor Gary Rosengarten, it will support research and development driving impact in the areas of Energy, Food and Agriculture, Water, Circular Economy, Pollution Mitigation and Transport. These areas bring together RMIT's capability and strengths and use inter-disciplinary research to solve real and critical problems facing society in the wake of dramatic negative human impact on our environment. Activities will include:

- Inter/cross-disciplinary internal team capability formation, formalisation and strengthening.
- External engagement through strategic industrial and government consultation and collaboration.
- Support of ideas and projects that solve critical short and long-term problems demonstrating clear paths to impact.
- Integration and dissemination of key knowledge, concepts, and technologies into RMIT's learning and teaching, and operations.



## 7.3 Research Partnerships and Translation

RMIT is strongly committed to generating societal benefit from its research in partnership with industry and the community. The Research Partnerships and Translation team supports our researchers in identifying research capability and applications that respond to specific industry and community needs, and foster connections with government, industry and community partners. Cross-disciplinary, challenge-focused research teams are supported in planning pathways to research impact and effective research translation to deliver tangible benefits to society. A specialist Intellectual Property and Commercialisation team provides expert advice to researchers seeking to develop and market new technologies or services.

RMIT's ability to cluster and focus its research capability on environmental challenges in the areas of energy, water, food and infrastructure has been bolstered by the establishment of a Sustainable Development Technologies and Systems Enabling Capability Platform. New research infrastructure is also being established that will enable deeper collaboration with industry to develop solutions in critical areas such as Circular Economy and Transport Electrification.

## 7.4 Research Integrity

Responsible research, or research integrity, is the coherent and consistent adherence to a set of principles that underpin the trustworthiness of research. Principles and responsibilities for responsible research are outlined in the **Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2018)**. RMIT's Research Ethics, Integrity, and Governance team upholds these principles through:

- Management of allegations of potential breaches of research integrity.
- Training and education in research integrity.
- Operations of the Research Integrity Advisors' Network.
- Facilitating a Research Integrity Review.
- Review and revision of RMIT's Research Policy suite.

In 2021, the Research Ethics, Integrity, and Governance team ran 45 education sessions attended by more than 3,700 attendees and 2,917 staff and student researchers have completed the research integrity training and education online course.

The Research Ethics, Integrity, and Governance team supported an independent and external review of research integrity at RMIT to ensure the University's adherence to the principles and institutional responsibilities of the Australian Code. In 2021 the iThenticate plagiarism detection software was introduced at RMIT to support academic writing skills and facilitate responsible research publications. iThenticate is being used in researcher-centric ways to help RMIT researchers meet their responsibilities in the Australian Code.

The Research Ethics, Integrity, and Governance team and the Research Integrity Advisors' Network continues to apply the **Hong Kong Principles for assessing researchers** to RMIT and recognise and reward responsible research practices that make research trustworthy and showcase RMIT as a strong, accountable, and transparent institution.

## 7.5 Examples of Research Projects

### **Vaccine information hubs for people with disability in Vietnam and Indonesia (RMIT Vietnam)**

Global Impact is the Fund Manager for the Vaccine Confidence Fund. It works with charitable ventures to inspire greater giving, serving as a trusted advisor, intermediary and implementing partner across the private, non-profit and public sectors.

Dr Abdul Rohman from the School of Communication and Design at RMIT Vietnam leads a team of RMIT researchers and external collaborators across Vietnam, Indonesia, and Malaysia to support vaccine uptake for people with disabilities. This project is modelling vaccine-related information to create hybrid information hubs for people with disability in Vietnam and Indonesia.

The research team, in collaboration with local community organisations, has delivered a series of information sessions intended to address the limited availability of COVID-19 vaccination-related information and communication channels that specifically cater to the different needs of people with disability. The project in Vietnam has reached nearly 300 people with disability and the partnered organisations have submitted a policy recommendation to the Ministry of Health in Vietnam.

While meeting the information needs of groups who have been historically marginalised during the peak of the pandemic, the sessions also serve as venues for gathering qualitative insights for the creation of equitable pandemic preparedness, response, and recovery plans, primarily in lower-middle-income countries where disability rights are inconsistently implemented. The project advocates for centring the health and wellbeing of people with disability in future pandemic responses as the current COVID-19 pandemic has magnified the inequalities that they must endure before the pandemic.

### **RMIT European Doctoral Innovators (RMIT Europe)**

RMIT has launched an innovative new global PhD offering from Europe set to prepare the next generation of researchers to tackle the needs of our fast-changing world. RMIT European Doctoral Innovators (REDI) is a global €9 million doctoral training initiative co-funded by the European Union, RMIT and over 25 European research and industry partners.

REDI will offer over 40 talented researchers the opportunity to fast-track their careers through international experience, exclusive research opportunities (some directly hosted by industry leaders), financial support, extensive peer networks and transferable skills.

REDI gives candidates the choice of more than 120 industry-supported projects across 11 countries, and the chance to set themselves apart from the rest and address real-world challenges across a wide range of disciplines, including architecture, aeronautics and medicine.

This initiative will spark a global legacy of research and enterprise networks encompassing Europe and Australia, laying the groundwork for fruitful, long-term cross-regional collaborations, and instigating positive societal change through impactful research.

### **New AI centre to partner with Australian business (STEM)**

RMIT's **Centre for Industrial AI Research and Innovation** (CIAIRI) brings leading researchers in AI together with industry partners to help them harness the latest digital technologies, and develop new ones, to meet their business needs.

CIAIRI Research Director, Professor John Thangarajah said the centre works with partners to find tailored and innovative ways to translate research into impact within their organisation. He said the main aim is to translate the latest research into practice, so innovation is at the centre of all activities. Australia has a strong focus on upskilling the workforce so the team is also developing people's skills and understanding of evolving and exciting new digital technologies. CIAIRI's focus areas include:

- Autonomous decision systems
- Robotics and human collaboration
- Machine learning
- Augmented reality and games
- Computer vision
- Data science and business models
- Natural language processing
- Ethics of AI technologies



### **New Digital Platform maps liveability in our major cities (DSC)**

An Australian-first **new digital platform is set to transform how we map liveability in major cities across the country.**

The Australian Urban Observatory is an essential new online tool for government and industry – from policymakers wanting to improve their city’s health and liveability to developers looking for suburbs to invest in.

Developed by RMIT health and urban researchers, the Observatory is based on research knowledge about public health and urban environments and brings together critical data on easy-to-use maps. Lead investigator Dr Melanie Davern, from the RMIT Centre for Urban Research, said the simplicity of the data could help anyone from policymakers, planners, developers and students to members of the general community develop a clear understanding of real liveability. “They have been designed so that all Australians can learn more about the connection between health and urban planning, and how they support the planning of healthy, equitable and sustainable cities.”

### **Four ways to guide Australian business to net zero (COBL)**

A new report says business needs more support to achieve **net zero emissions**, including more stringent and consistent reporting, re-introducing carbon pricing, and reforming the carbon credit systems. Australian businesses are calling out for the Australian Government to give more clarity and guidance on how to reduce emissions.

The RMIT report shows how Government can support, regulate and incentivise businesses to effectively work towards net-zero carbon emissions by 2035 target. The report highlights how the Australian Government could draw on the latest scientific expertise and existing knowledge to provide a clear path forward for businesses to reduce their emissions.

Lead author of the report and climate change theme leader at RMIT’s Business and Human Rights Centre, Dr Leanne Morrison, said that while many Australian businesses are developing their own policies, they would welcome clearer Government guidance and more consistent nationwide regulation. “Strong policies at the national level would actually be really helpful and help their bottom line too,” Morrison said.

### **Essendon Football Club and RMIT offer a pathway to a business career (VE)**

Essendon Football Club and RMIT have joined forces to offer a new and innovative education program that will give students a pathway to a career in elite sport and business management.

The new dual Diploma of Business/Diploma of Leadership and Management will give students access to Essendon’s world-class, high-performance facilities and industry experts. Students will also gain extensive and practical insights into the operations of an AFL club, across the men’s and women’s football programs.

Throughout the full-time program, students will build a network and develop connections in the sports industry as they complete 100 hours of real-life work experience across Essendon’s various departments and partner network.





## 8. Our People

At RMIT our people are core to the vision of being a global university of technology, design and enterprise.

By empowering all people to thrive, we can achieve our 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 – students and staff 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, with close to 10,000 employees located around the world underpin the University's reputation and enhance its contribution to the wider community.

Table: Employment Statistics

2021	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	77	75.0	18	0	18.0	59	57.0
Female (total staff)	5,506	3,521.2	1,830	403	2,109.1	3,273	1,412.1
Male Executives	70	67.5	13	2	13.3	55	54.2
Male (total staff)	4,367	2,841.2	1,512	129	1,598.9	2,726	1,242.4
Self described	52	18.2	10	0	10.0	42	8.8
<b>Age</b>							
15-24	507	136.6	39	7	43.6	461	93.0
25-34	2,639	1,469.0	590	55	627.5	1,994	841.5
35-44	3,042	2,133.2	1,149	178	1,276.0	1,715	856.9
45-54	2,044	1,477.8	891	147	991.3	1,006	486.5
55-64	1,318	956.8	566	117	644.0	635	312.8
64+	375	207.2	117	28	135.4	230	71.9
<b>Total Employees</b>	<b>9,925</b>	<b>6,380.0</b>	<b>3,352</b>	<b>532</b>	<b>3,717.8</b>	<b>6,041</b>	<b>2,662.6</b>

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

Data as at 31 December 2021. All employees have been correctly classified in the workforce data collections.



2020	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	54	53.8	15	0	15.0	39	38.8
Female (total staff)	5,173	3,339.1	1,795	393	2,062.8	2,985	1,276.2
Male Executives	50	49.4	13	0	13.0	37	36.4
Male (total staff)	4,319	2,766.7	1,522	108	1,593.7	2,689	1,172.9
Self described	18	5.8	4	0	4.0	14	1.8
<b>Age</b>							
15-24	374	105.1	16	5	18.9	353	86.3
25-34	2,367	1,270.5	487	35	510.7	1,845	759.8
35-44	2,954	2,042.8	1,114	180	1,239.3	1,660	803.6
45-54	2,021	1,470.6	938	150	1,040.3	933	430.4
55-64	1,386	995.0	637	108	708.8	641	286.2
64+	408	227.5	129	23	142.8	256	84.7
<b>Total Employees</b>	<b>9,510</b>	<b>6,111.5</b>	<b>3,321</b>	<b>501</b>	<b>3,660.6</b>	<b>5,688</b>	<b>2,451.0</b>

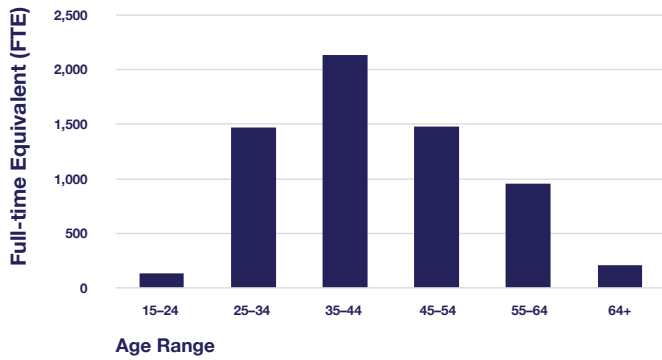
FTE: full-time equivalent (two people both working 0.5 time fraction = 1 FTE).

Data as at 31 December 2020. All employees have been correctly classified in the workforce data collections.

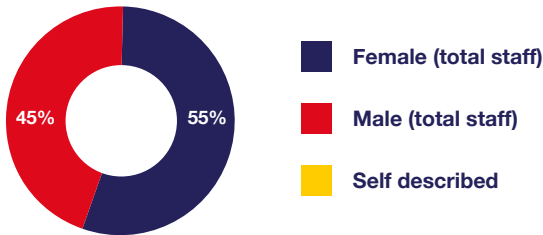
All on-shore Australian employees are covered by Enterprise (Collective) Bargaining Agreements.

## Key University Workforce Statistics

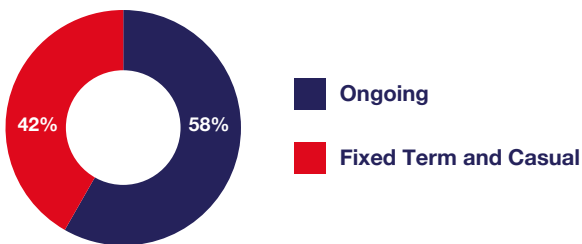
Graph: RMIT Workforce by Age 2021 (FTE)



Graph: RMIT Workforce by Gender 2021 (FTE)



Graph: RMIT Workforce by Contract Type 2021 (FTE)



RMIT supports staff in undertaking intentional learning that develops skills and ensures success within roles and careers. Learning is achieved by experience (doing), exposure (observing) and education (training). To support this learning staff undertake regular performance and career plans.

RMIT offers all staff regular learning opportunities from compliance education, online learning, face-to-face learning, peer-to-peer learning and mentoring programs. All professional development opportunities have been linked to specific capabilities to ensure tailored development choices are available to help build careers and enhance contributions to the University.

We also provide staff with the opportunity to personalise their professional development experience which aims to support them at all stages of their career within the organisation. This supports staff to excel in their professional development and builds communities of practice across the organisation. The variety of delivery modes for professional development enable equitable access to learning.

## 8.2 Flexibility

RMIT is committed to supporting its people with fit-for-purpose flexible working arrangements that foster and encourage a diverse and adaptable workforce. Several resources, professional development opportunities and services are in place to support flexible ways of working.

At RMIT, more than one in four staff choose a formal form of flexibility, including working part-time, purchasing leave or working a compressed work week. Other forms of flexible working include flexible start and end times, time-in-lieu, job-sharing or other creative forms of working arrangements that suit the work and life needs of staff.

All forms of flexibility have continued to evolve with the move to primarily remote working in 2021, with more men working formally flexibly than ever before. In 2021, RMIT continued to review hybrid ways of learning and working in many customer and student facing areas taking into account slight variations between between the experiences of men and women, and managers and non-managers. Over this time, we have seen movement in reduction in the gendered gap of formal flexibility as more men are taking on reduced time fractions or purchased leave.

RMIT's Parental Leave provisions have been updated to provide even greater support to staff who are balancing work and family responsibilities. Effective from 29 August 2021, partner leave provisions increased from a two-week entitlement to four weeks. Additionally, the eligibility period to access primary parental leave has been removed. Employees are now eligible for 18 weeks of paid leave from the time they start employment at RMIT, progressing to 24 weeks pro-rata after one year and up until three years of service for all eligible employees. Staff taking parental leave will continue to receive superannuation for the paid period of parental leave.

Parental leave options are available to staff regardless of sex, gender, gender identity, relationship status or other personal attributes.

**Table: RMIT staff with formal flexibility arrangements in place**

Formal Flexibility Rates	2020	2021
Men	19.3%	18.4%
Women	34.0%	31.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>27.5%</b>	<b>26.0%</b>

Source: As of June 2021, RMIT's Business Intelligence dashboards.

**Table: Parental leave taken by RMIT workforce**

2021	Primary Carer's Leave		Secondary Carer's Leave	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
Managers	12	4	1	13
Non-Managers	180	11	1	45
<b>Total</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>58</b>

Source: WGEA metrics reported as staff headcount for the full year ending 31 March 2021.



### 8.3 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce

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 increasing the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and implementing initiatives supporting employment.

A key focus for 2021 was the development of RMIT's workforce through the implementation of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Plan 2021-2022 and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Future Workforce Strategy 2021-2025. The strategy and plan implemented a whole of university approach to employment, development and retention and embedding hybrid accountability with each College and Portfolio.

Individual Indigenous Employment Action Plans were developed by the Colleges and Portfolios and endorsed by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Committee.

In 2021, RMIT reframed its approach to an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employee Value Proposition, which included recruitment videos, an Indigenous careers page, and candidate prospectuses. Targeted guidelines for the Employment and Retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were developed to promote a cultural shift in the practices of hiring managers and the People team to ensure Indigenous recruitment was encouraged across all roles.

RMIT exceeded its Indigenous workforce retention target, recording 90 per cent retention in 2021 (compared to a target of 80 per cent). In addition, seven Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff received promotions or internal transfers as part of internal mobility initiatives, which was an increase on pre-pandemic levels. RMIT also invested in professional development for members of the Indigenous Staff Network and scoped trainee, graduate and apprenticeship programs that will continue to be developed in 2022.

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

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce (Headcount)			
	2019	2020	2021
<b>Total</b>	34	39	54

\* Workforce headcount includes continuing, fixed term and casual staff.

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.

**“Making parental leave more accessible to all, regardless of personal attributes or length of service, shows every employee that they are a valued member of our University community from their very first day.”**

**Meegan Marshall, Chief People Officer**



## 8.4 Gender Equality

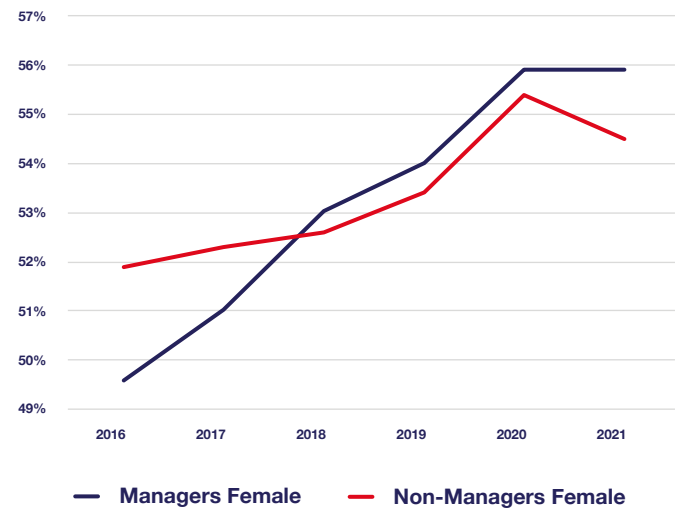
Led by the Gender Equality Action Plan, RMIT continues to identify and address barriers to women’s inclusion and career progression. The University remains focused on delivering strategic, sustainable and meaningful change across the priority areas: leadership and governance, employment conditions and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

The Victorian Gender Equality Act 2020 (GE Act) requires RMIT to run assessments of our current gender equality standings and develop a four-year action plan to continue progress (RMIT Gender Equality Action Plan 2022-2025). Throughout 2021, RMIT’s GEAP was developed through high level university-wide consultation and co-design. This has required deep analysis and review of gender and intersectionality, resulting in embedding the lens of intersectionality in our new plan. The Victorian Gender Equality Agency will be publishing our Gender Equality Action Plan and related metrics in 2022, post Council endorsement.

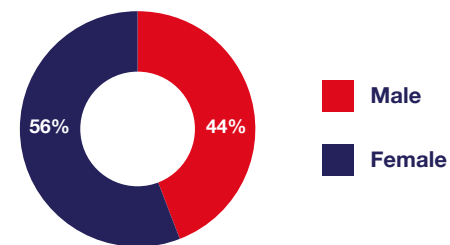
RMIT was recognised as an Employer of Choice for Gender Equality (EOCGE) citation from the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) in 2021 for the fourth consecutive year and re-submitted for certification for 2021 – 2023. The citation demonstrated a continued commitment to best practice in promoting gender equality in Australian workplaces.

RMIT reports under the Workplace Gender Equality (WGEA) Act 2012 and the Victorian Gender Equality Act (2020). 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.

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



**Graph: Gender composition of RMIT Managers by gender**



**Table: Women in leadership roles**

	Total		Female		% Female	
	2020	2021	2020	2021	2020	2021
Governance bodies	14	13	6	7	42.9%	53.8%
Managers	850	734	475	410	55.9%	55.9%
Non-managers	7,841	6,962	4,347	3,796	55.4%	54.5%

Source: As of 31 March 2021, RMIT WGEA Compliance Report

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

	Promotions		Appointments		Resignations	
	2020	2021	2020	2021	2020	2021
Managers	58.3%	60.8%	60.5%	54.7%	48.7%	59.1%
Non-managers	64.2%	61.6%	63.5%	56.6%	61.1%	56.1%

Source: As of 31 March 2021, RMIT WGEA Compliance Report





## 8.5 Health, Safety and Wellbeing

RMIT is committed to creating a values-based culture of care that provides a safe and healthy place to work and learn for the RMIT Community.

Our work in this area is framed by the RMIT Health Safety and Wellbeing Strategy, which is now in its third year of transforming our organisational health, safety and wellbeing culture to one that aligns with the University's values and leverages the deep sense of care that our people have for each other across our student and staff communities. A key feature of this strategy is the Mental Wellbeing Strategic Action Plan to strengthen the University's approach to student and staff mental wellbeing.

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic continued to require a significant health, safety and wellbeing response with the HSW team working across the University, the sector and with external stakeholders to provide a rapid response which minimised both the physical and psychosocial impacts of COVID-19 for our community. RMIT has established its own Public Health Team of experienced practitioners who conduct contact tracing and case management to ensure risks to our community and business continuity are minimised.

RMIT is committed to developing a values-based health, safety and wellbeing (HSW) culture and seeks to enhance the health, safety and wellbeing of its people so they can thrive in work and life. RMIT cares about everyone's mental and physical health, safety and wellbeing, and believe that no task or activity is so important that it cannot be done safely.

The following is summary of some of the key activities undertaken in 2021:

- Finalised review and validation of HSW hazard profiles and critical risks across several key Colleges and Portfolios.
- Developed a new framework for HSW due diligence for Work Integrated Learning (WIL) ensuring our student placements are safe to attend and that our students are set for success and safety
- Developed HSW principles for safe research and recommendations to uplift HSW across key research policies and procedures.
- Finalised testing of the HSW framework for third party engagement and review by external lawyers to ensure RMIT's responsibilities for the health, safety and wellbeing of third parties are accurately reflected and captured in the framework.
- Reviewed and realigned our HSW committees, governance framework and new ways of working with HSRs, including recruitment of new HSRs.
- Updated HSW KPIs to include new metrics including, employee total recordable injuries, student total recordable injuries and total WIL recordable injuries which combined as a community injury frequency rate will replace lost time injury frequency rate as a more inclusive measure of safety performance.

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



**Table: Key Occupational Health and Safety Statistics**

	2019	2020	2021
Lost time injury frequency rate*	1.92	1.13	1.47
Change to previous year	+7%	-41%	+30%
WorkCover claims submitted	27	19	15
Change to previous year	-18%	-30%	-21%
OHS incident reports	1056	347	117
Change to previous year	+8%	-67%	-76%
WorkSafe notifiable incidents	19	14	13
Change to previous year	+19%	-26%	-7%
WorkSafe improvement notices	4	1	0

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

**Table: OHS Hazards, Incidents Standard Claims, Associated Costs**

	2019	2020	2021
Number of lost-time standard claims per 100 FTE	0.26	0.23	0.32
Average cost per claim (payment to date + estimate of outstanding claim cost)	\$75,171	\$70,696	\$82,395
Hazard and incident reports per 100 FTE	17.22	9.35	6.81

# 9. Living Our Values





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## 9.1 Diversity and Inclusion


Led by the values of inclusion, passion and courage, RMIT is focused on creating an environment where everyone can contribute, grow and succeed. Diversity and inclusion are celebrated and equal opportunity is paramount.

The RMIT Diversity and Inclusion Framework is the high-level statement of RMIT's aspirations. The Framework outlines the University's commitment to increase access, build a more diverse student and staff community, and provide equitable, inclusive experiences and outcomes for all students and staff.

The Framework outlines:

- **Students from low socio-economic backgrounds:** Improve the access, retention and success of domestic students from low socio-economic backgrounds.
- **Gender equality for staff:** Drive progress towards gender equality and ensure diverse and balanced representation at every level of the organisation.
- **Students and staff of diverse genders, sexes and sexualities:** Promote a culture of inclusion and respect, through leadership actions, communications, events, training, and professional development for staff.
- **Staff and students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds:** Promote a culture of inclusion and valuing diversity, through leadership actions, communications, events and training.
- **Staff, students and visitors with disability:** Provide an equitable and inclusive experience and outcomes for all students and staff with a disability

RMIT continues to make significant progress in recognising, embracing and growing diversity, and living by its values to ensure the University remains an inclusive place to study and work. RMIT recognises the inherent value of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander traditions, heritage, knowledges and perspectives to the University



“RMIT has a core commitment to equality. We embrace the diversity of our staff and students, and we are determined to ensure our people are not held back by prejudice of any type. Our future success will be dependent on attracting and retaining the best people and providing the opportunity for all our staff and students to fulfill their potential. Standing up for diversity and inclusion is not just what we do, it’s integral to who we are and that’s what makes RMIT such a wonderful place to work and study.”

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Chief People Officer Gaynor Witts

## 9.2 Student Access, Retention and Success

RMIT recognises that students from priority cohorts identified for our Diversity and Inclusion Framework agenda bring a unique range of skills and capabilities but often face greater external pressures including less familiarity with university and the benefits tertiary study can bring. These students remain under-represented in tertiary education, constraining their access to diverse professions and careers and their capacity to contribute to the life of their communities.

RMIT has a particular focus on improving access for Indigenous students, those from low socio-economic, regional or remote communities, or from refugee backgrounds, students with disability, women in programs in which they are under-represented, and students who have experienced other socio-educational disadvantages.

- RMIT partners with 235 Victorian secondary schools in the Schools Network Access Partnership (SNAP) – an equity access scheme that gives priority entry to RMIT for eligible applicants.
- In 2021, 2,106 students enrolled in a degree or vocational program through SNAP Access Schemes, accounting for 61% of all low SES enrolments made through the Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre.
- 23 students from asylum seeker backgrounds were provided with fee-waiver access, cash living allowance scholarships, student services and career development, including industry experience in 2021, with 78 student participants and 32 graduates in total 2018-21.
- The 'I Belong' equity outreach program continued online delivery methods during school closures associated with COVID-19, connecting 792 students from SNAP secondary schools from across 10 regions in Victoria with staff and industry professionals to build aspiration and awareness for tertiary education.
- Feedback from participants was positive, with post-program evaluation comments indicating that 'I Belong' achieve positive shifts in building student understanding of the University:
  - Of 506 responses, 84% of participants answered “strongly agree” or “agree” to the statement I have a strong understanding of the study options that are available to me after secondary school
  - Of 492 responses, 74% of participants answered “strongly agree” or “agree” to the statement I feel confident about making decisions about my future study options.

The RMIT needs-based coursework scholarship program helps eliminate the financial barriers that prevent students from pursuing tertiary studies, enabling them to devote more time to their studies, and therefore supports retention and completion.

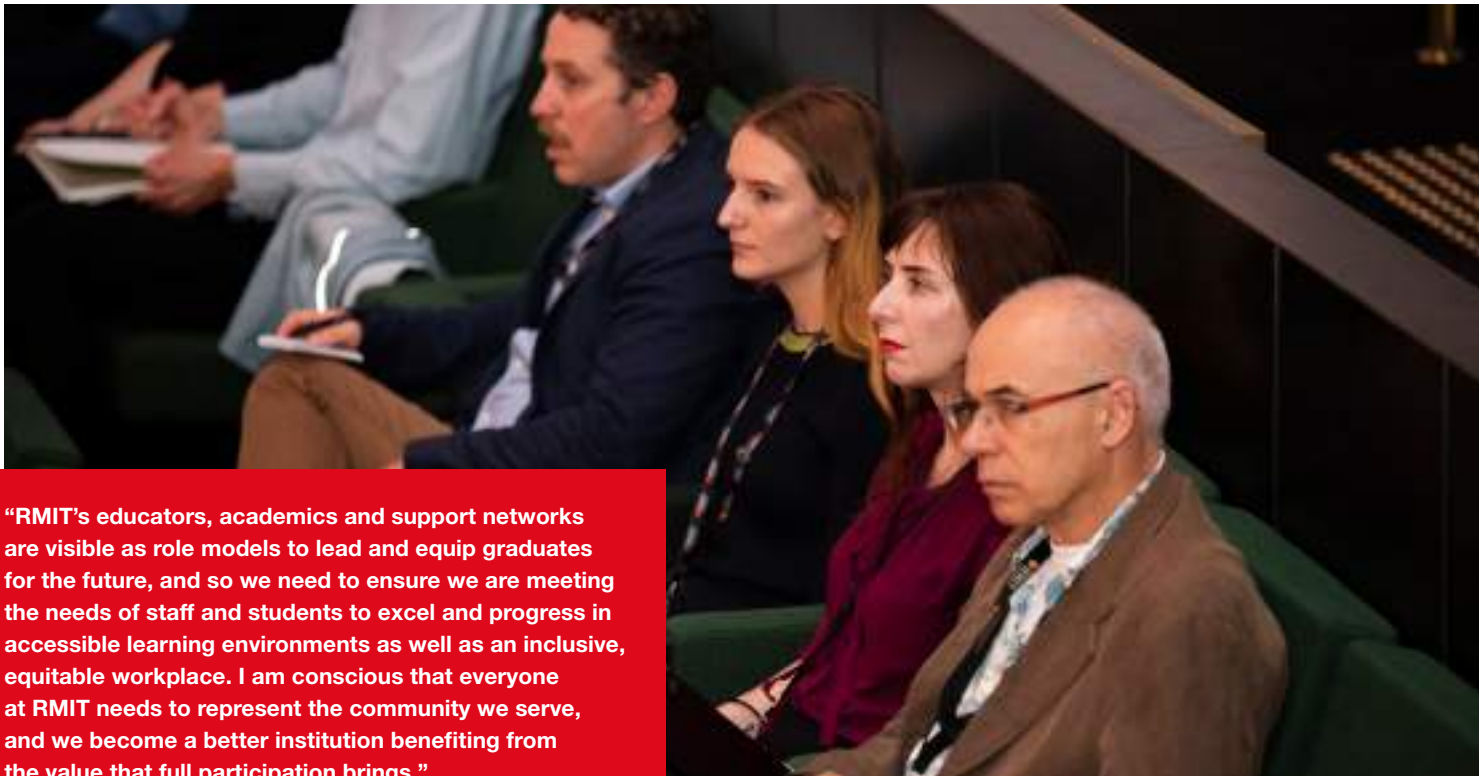
In 2021, RMIT awarded more than 5,000 scholarships and grants to VE and undergraduate HE students, valued at over \$9m, with 96 per cent of scholarships provided to students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

The retention rate of commencing students with scholarships from 2020 was higher at 92% compared with non-scholarship holders at 88%. Continuing students of low socio-economic backgrounds who have a scholarship have a retention rate of 92% in comparison to non-scholarship holders at 88%.

RMIT also provides individualised career development services for low socio-economic background, Indigenous and regional/remote students, with 1,054 career consultations in 2021, a 156% increase from 2020. 95% of students indicated they were more confident in their career skills post intervention.

**“Being an inclusive place to work and study is what makes RMIT special. RMIT ensures our approach and services remain accessible, relevant and measured so we can constantly improve to make a difference for everyone.”**

**Dionne Higgins,  
Senior Vice-President Strategy & Operations**



**“RMIT’s educators, academics and support networks are visible as role models to lead and equip graduates for the future, and so we need to ensure we are meeting the needs of staff and students to excel and progress in accessible learning environments as well as an inclusive, equitable workplace. I am conscious that everyone at RMIT needs to represent the community we serve, and we become a better institution benefiting from the value that full participation brings.”**

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**Chaminda Ranasinghe,  
Executive Champion for Accessibility**

### 9.3 Accessibility

Ensuring RMIT is physically, technologically and culturally accessible for people with a disability remained a key area of focus in 2021.

RMIT was proud to be recognised as the leading organisation for accessibility in the Australian Network on Disability Access and Inclusion Index. RMIT was also the highest-ranked organisation for ‘Work Adjustments’, ‘Premises’ and ‘Products and Services’ for provisions for staff and students with disability.

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 provides individual consultations to students with a disability, long-term illness and/or mental health conditions and primary carers of individuals with a disability. In 2021, 2,954 students registered for an individualised Equitable Learning Plan gaining access to advice, services and adjustments to ensure their equitable participation and support their success in their studies. An ELP can provide students with equitable adjustment arrangements, including 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. In 2021 for the second consecutive year, RMIT achieved Disability Confident Recruiter Status. As a signatory to the Disability Confident Recruitment Charter, RMIT offers advice and support through recruitment processes to ensure inclusive applicant management. RMIT also took part in the Australian Network on Disability Stepping Into internship program, and PACE mentoring program which involved the University engaging with AND to identify candidates for both programs want to engage in the education sector.

The AND Access and Inclusion Index report for 2020 submission informed 2021 priority actions. In 2021, in recognition of our sustained achievement as a leading organisation in the Index, AND invited RMIT to join its Advisory Group to review the Index and as a result, we have maintained recognition as a leading organisation.

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. We continue to work on training and development and evaluation of our services as a key opportunity to create disability confidence for our staff and student community.





## 9.4 Reconciliation and Indigenous Engagement

The RMIT University dhumbali (commitment) to reconciliation is a whole of university responsibility. Aligned with this responsibility is our dhumbali to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' self-determination and a commitment to creating an RMIT community that studies and works respectfully on Kulin country.

2021 was the final year of RMIT's second Reconciliation Plan, Dhumbah Goorowa, and the University will report publicly on its performance relative to its commitments in the first half of 2022. RMIT did not achieve the target of 85% of actions completed, as several aspects of the Plan were impacted by ongoing COVID-19 lockdowns and the absence of senior Indigenous leadership during 2021. Several strategically important initiatives that commenced but were not completed under Dhumbah Goorowa have been carried into 2022 in the RMIT Annual Operating Plan. These include the development of an Indigenous Research Strategy, the continuation of the RMIT-wide policy review and the ongoing implementation of Indigenous workforce development initiatives.

Following on from the development of the RMIT Reconciliation Capability Development Framework in 2019-20, the Framework was soft launched across RMIT in 2021. This included the development of a series of professional development learning modules that combine as part of a Reconciliation Capability staff program. The development of these offerings for staff was complemented by the creation of a Truth Telling: Racism and Reconciliation micro credential for students. Truth Telling ran four times between April and September 2021 and had 744 applications for the 464 places available.

In October RMIT appointed Professor Gary Thomas as the University's first Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Indigenous Education, Research and Engagement. Professor Thomas commenced in February 2022 and works with the Indigenous Governance Committee, the Indigenous Staff Network and the University community to set a new strategic agenda for Indigenous Education, Research and Engagement at RMIT.

The University launched and awarded the first recipient of the Jillian Weaven Memorial Scholarship. The Scholarship was established as a tribute to Jillian Weaven, a passionate Aboriginal advocate and a trusted Senior HR Business Partner to the College of Design and Social Context. The annual scholarship is intended to create valuable career pathways for First Nations women and will be awarded to an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander who identifies as a woman and is a post-graduate student in Human Resources at RMIT.

RMIT strengthened its commitment to supporting the Indigenous Vocational Education cohort by consolidating relationships with staff across Vocational Education (VE) programs. Fortnightly meetings were held between the College of VE Leadership and the Ngarara Willim Centre to ensure the continued implementation of student success initiatives. RMIT also appointed a College of VE Reconciliation Advisor and recruited for a Manager of Indigenous Pedagogies to support the College's focus on creating culturally safe classrooms, curriculum and assessments. Reconciliation Advisors were also appointed in each of RMIT's remaining three Colleges to support Indigenous student success outcomes and the continued implementation of RMIT's reconciliation dhumbali.

Given the impacts of COVID-19 throughout the year, RMIT continued with a comprehensive approach to supporting all students, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, to ensure continuity in their learning. This saw an uplift in digital platforms, online quality guidelines, increased learning support, as well as a diverse range of wellbeing support for impacted students, inclusive of hardship funds, career and employability support and specific engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students through Ngarara Willim, our Indigenous education centre. Overcoming the impacts of COVID-19 on the academic year, 104 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students graduated in 2021.

RMIT Student Life and RMIT's Student Union (RUSU) also collaborated to deliver the Solidarity Art Project titled 'The Journey of Mapiyal' – providing staff and students with the opportunity to create a four-metre-long platypus sculpture. RMIT Diploma of Visual Arts alumnus Indianna Hunt, a proud Wemba Wemba, Gunditjmarra, Jardwadjali, Wergaia woman was the artist behind the 2021 project, which creatively explored the value of respect and solidarity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and for people from all backgrounds on campus.

For Ngarara Willim, the focus was providing online academic, cultural, and social engagement activities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. Students were encouraged to participate in a broad range of activities including, the Ngarara Willim Reading Club, weekly conversations with Boon wurrung Elder N'Arweet Dr Carolyn Briggs AO and engagement with Bambu Di Kerr as part of the Ngarara Willim Leadership and On Country Experience Program. The RMIT Counselling and Health and Wellbeing teams were also in attendance at the meetings to better understand how to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

In 2021, we piloted the On Country Indigenous Leadership Program to provide an opportunity for students to recognise their leadership potential. This program celebrated the value of the oldest continuing living culture in the world and highlighted the importance of accessibility and connection to culture within Australia. The program was offered to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student leaders, and later to all enrolled Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, bringing them together for a series of activities (online and in person) with Indigenous community leaders and Indigenous students from across the globe.

Indigenous Cultural Tours were made available virtually in 2021, led by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and alumni. The tours provided an opportunity for the RMIT community to build a connection to Country while away from campus. Five hundred RMIT staff and students registered, with 300 able to attend sessions throughout Semester 1 & 2 of 2021. Feedback from participants highlighted their ability to form a better understanding of cultural significance and place on campus and an increased understanding of the respect and responsibilities required as non-Indigenous people, all while considering the impacts of colonisation.

**“We aim to be a place where diverse genders, sexes, and sexualities are recognised and welcomed, everyone is free to be themselves, and where staff and students benefit from the diversity of our community.”**

**“Inclusion is a value that the RMIT community live and breathe each day and we are proud to celebrate our staff and students who identify as LGBTIQA+”**

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**Dene Cicci, Executive Director, Students**



## 9.5 Diverse Genders, Sexes and Sexualities Inclusion

RMIT submits to the Australian Workplace Equality Index (AWEI), recognising the University's commitment to celebrating the diverse genders, sexes and sexualities (DGSS) community.

In 2021, RMIT continued demonstrating the University's efforts in building a culture of inclusion and respect for staff and students of the DGSS community. We successfully proposed and delivered a Platinum Project in partnership with AWEI: Diverse Genders Sexes and Sexualities Research Network. Led by Dr Emily Brown, the network is a safe space to express identities and discuss work with peers and offers symposia and seminars, as well as social events. This project has a focus on building and developing a national research network, embedding DGSS inclusion focused learning material into university programs, and increasing the profiles of DGSS researchers, and DGSS-focused research.

The continued partnership and recognition from AWEI recognises 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.

As a University of Choice leading and promoting LGBTI inclusion, RMIT is proud of how the student and staff community work together to build a culture of care and belonging. As part of Pride Week, RMIT and GLOBE partnered on a well-attended career mentoring event for DGSS RMIT students. We continued to support inclusive recruitment, mobility and career development for RMIT staff and students, including through collaboration of events with our partners GLOBE and Out for Australia.

RMIT has an active staff and student Ally and DGSS network. We appointed a volunteer Ally Network Chair to provide support, strategic direction and drive communications for the staff network. We also provided opportunities for students to share their voice and lived experience with the RMIT community, including being profiled for Non-Binary People's Day.

This community continues to grow outreach beyond RMIT through partnerships with leading community organisations and events including Minus 18, the Melbourne Queer Film Festival, and Pride and Diversity, Midsumma.

## 9.6 Athena Swan

Athena Swan aims to embed genuine and sustainable gender equity, diversity and inclusion across the Australian tertiary education and research sector.

The University achieved Bronze status (highest available) in the Athena SWAN program for Women in Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics and Medicine (STEMM) in 2020 and commenced implementation of a five-year action plan across RMIT's eight STEMM schools (Accounting, Information Systems and Supply Chain; Architecture and Urban Design; Computing Technologies; Engineering; Fashion and Textiles; Health and Biomedical Sciences; Property, Construction and Project Management; Science; and Vocational Education).

While the Athena SWAN accreditation is related to increasing participation of Women in STEMM academia, there is a significant focus on Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility and Indigenous staff and student participation in STEMM.

Successful implementation of the Athena SWAN Bronze Action Plan, together with receipt of five intermediary Cygnet Awards for impact in our high-priority areas, will enable RMIT to secure Silver accreditation in five years. Four out of five key priority areas have been identified for RMIT's Cygnet Awards to date. In order of submission, these are:

1. Recruitment
2. Parents and Carers
3. Respectful Cultures and Behaviours
4. Career Progression
5. Local Cygnet, yet to be confirmed. This Cygnet focuses on a specific sub-group e.g. discipline or cohort

**"The privilege of gleaning insights around the impact of (initiatives in) other areas across the organisation and how these could/should be part of all academic practices."**

**Diversity and Inclusion Advocate: Feedback on 2021 membership of the Diversity and Inclusion Advocates Groups (DIAG)**



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

In 2021 the Athena SWAN Diversity and Inclusion Advocates gathered information from across their Schools to identify concerns and opportunities. As part of their induction program, they had the opportunity to participate in intersectionality training from SAGE and from RMIT – DGSS Ally training.

A professional development session in the form of an Intersectionality Walk was hosted by Science in Australia Gender Equity (SAGE). The workshop gave the opportunity to actively contribute to understanding and educating others in why intersectionality is important for innovative organisations as well as seeing intersectionality at work in individual lives and exploring how organisations can make the most of diverse perspectives to remove barriers to equity, diversity and inclusion.



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

▪ **Special Measure recruitment:** At RMIT, utilisation of Special Measures has included: women, trans and gender-diverse, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander targeted recruitment. This has been utilised in the recruitment of Vice-Chancellor's Research Fellows and specific advertised roles in under-represented disciplines in STEM College and the College of Business and Law, since 2019.

This approach has had a demonstrable impact in improving gender equality and the participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander within the academic workforce across RMIT, positioning us as a leading contemporary employer in the STEMM fields. In 2021, we expanded the use of Special Measures for Colleges and Schools to also include people with disabilities.

▪ **Supporting women career changing into technology:** RMIT STEM College announced a new partnership with MYOB as the education provider of the DevelopHer program designed to redress gender imbalance in the technology industry. For many it is a chance to upskill and change careers into technology. The program offers a paid full-time internship for women seeking a career in software development. MYOB DevelopHer participants studied in RMIT's innovative Programming Bootcamp to Studio Model focused on interactive, hands-on experiential learning and received supportive coaching sessions from RMIT and MYOB. On successful completion of the course, participants received a Graduate Certificate of Application Development, plus full-time employment at MYOB as a Graduate Developer.

RMIT was also awarded places in the Federal Government Women in STEM Cadetship and Advanced Apprenticeship Program. This program offers women in paid employment an opportunity to study a part-time higher education Diploma of Information Technology. Employers will receive grant funds of \$5,000 per employee per year to cover any costs incurred by studying.

▪ **College of Vocational Education Women in STEM Ambassadors:** The College of Vocational Education (VE) recruited 13 Women in STEM Ambassadors and two Women in STEM Officers.. The Women in STEM Ambassadors and Officers support and promote activities with external and internal stakeholders to encourage participation of women in STEM. Our Ambassadors and Officers were provided with training, exploring individual STEM journeys and an in-person event building relationships, confidence and knowledge.

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

We understand there are changes and barriers throughout careers for women in STEMM and intersectional communities. In 2021 we launched the new Women in STEMM Resource Hub, a collection of internal and external resources, opportunities and supports for women at different career stages or transitions. RMIT staff can access resources [here](#).

[rmit.edu.au/staff/our-rmit/diversity-inclusion/women-in-stemm-resources](https://rmit.edu.au/staff/our-rmit/diversity-inclusion/women-in-stemm-resources)

To help promote long term change, we are addressing inequity issues, initially, by offering Women in STEMM PhD scholarships to support female-identifying students who are seeking the opportunity to study a PhD and work on a research project supervised and led by at least one female-identifying academic staff member. In 2021, we offered four Women in STEMM PhD scholarships at mid-year to pilot the approach

The academic promotion framework ensures diversity and inclusion in the academic workforce and addresses unequal gender and cultural representations across academic disciplines. This aligns with RMIT's overall goals, including the University's commitment to Athena SWAN. A key element of the framework design contributes to enabling flexibility and diversity of academic careers.

Overall, there was a 73% success rate for women in academic promotion with 59 women applying which is higher than the 2020 application numbers.

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

The inaugural Career Reignite funding program was launched in 2021, providing coaching and funding at a crucial time in the careers of high potential academic staff to help reduce the impact of career breaks on research productivity and career progression. Of the 46 applications that were received, the Selection Panel recommended funding for 12 applications, 11 female and 1 male.

The Career Reignite Program in collaboration with the STEM College, also provided support for the VESKI Inspiring Women Career Recovery Grant winners by providing matching cash support. RMIT academics Dr Sam Grover and Dr Jessica Holien were both awarded VESKI grants in 2021.

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

Our global RMIT community continues to make an extraordinary contribution during difficult times. During 2021, ongoing lockdowns and restrictions had taken a toll on our people and their wellbeing. To help staff take a break, RMIT offered fixed-term and continuing staff five wellbeing leave days.

Our 2021 Women in STEMM Gallery launched in June with additional 9 female leaders across STEMM. The gallery is an initiative aligned to our Athena SWAN Action Plan, to create a visual representation of our female leaders and researchers at RMIT. The gallery illustrates RMIT's commitment to "bringing your whole-self to work". The gallery has been shared on Yammer, Twitter, with images being used by our leaders for personal profiles.

[rmit.edu.au/about/our-values/diversity-and-inclusion/gender-equality/women-in-stemm/meet-our-women](https://rmit.edu.au/about/our-values/diversity-and-inclusion/gender-equality/women-in-stemm/meet-our-women)

## Gender Equity Training free #TAFE

RMIT in partnership with the Victorian government will be supporting two new courses in gender equity and family violence under the free #TAFE scheme from 2022. The Gender Equity training is the first accredited training program of its type in Australia.

The Gender Equity Training was created in collaboration with Women's Health Victoria to help people responsible for services and programs, management and leadership build their skills to lead transformational change, and to address gender inequality and family violence.

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## Supporting and encouraging intersectional communities

A key focus for 2021 was the development of RMIT's workforce through the implementation of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Plan 2021-2022 and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Future Workforce Strategy 2021-2025. RMIT met both its employment and retention targets under the RMIT Scorecard 2021. Under Athena SWAN, STEM College also commenced a project to focus on increasing representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women in STEMM.

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

We have seen significant improvements to women's representation in leadership at RMIT. The STEM College Executive has comprised 50% women since mid-2021, moving from 0% women in 2020.

Our leaders have been supported to expand their inclusive leadership capability through interactive sessions on Psychological Safety and Boundary Spanning. These sessions aim to support and facilitate the creation of inclusive and safe working environments for all.





## 9.7 Changing the Course

### Our plan and prevention framework to reduce sexual harm

We have continued our work to create a culture of inclusion and respect, where every member of the community is safe and free from sexual assault and sexual harassment (SASH).

Guided by the tail-end of our three-year 'Changing the Course' framework and incoming Vice-Chancellors Prevention of Gender-based Violence Workplan for 2021-2022 we have continued to implement initiatives that focus on prevention and response.

In 2020, we strengthened both our reporting and governance on sexual harm risk management and adopted a whole of University approach to gender-based violence encompassing initiatives for both students and staff. The framework actions included:

- Communications and social marketing including the 'Be the Change' campaign, which aimed 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 recognise 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 recognises that sexual harm disproportionately affects women and fits within a spectrum of gendered violence.

Consequently, the Changing the Course Advisory Group (renamed in 2021 to the Vice Chancellor's Advisory Group on Gender-based Violence Prevention 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. We recognise that gender equality will serve to make the community, safer, healthier and more sustainable. RMIT will continue to work towards this goal through supporting the implementation of the Vice Chancellor's Prevention of Gender-based Violence Workplan for 2021-2022 and other strategic actions in the years to come.

Within our respect program of work, we have acknowledged that women's experiences of discrimination based on sex and gender and of family, physical and sexual violence have increased due to COVID-19 restrictions. These are further compounded by the impact of the loss of work and isolation on other intersecting forms of discrimination and disadvantage and we have strengthened our approach to reducing gender-based violence with specialist resourcing and initiatives.

Key activities in 2021 included:

- New governance arrangements for our gender-based violence initiatives are in place ensuring strong representation from all stakeholder groups and direct lines of accountability to the VCE.
- Significant progress in the development of a central repository for the collection, monitoring and reporting of data and reporting of data on gender-based violence across student and staff that will enable more effective analysis to inform future work.
- Participation in the Universities Australia 2021 National Student Safety Survey on gender-based harm.
- Delivery of Respectful Research training to HDR supervisors (432 have completed the module, 262 the webinar and 180 have completed both), and developed the student facing modules to support this program of work.
- Development of a specialist training and decision-making resource to support Senior Officers in the hearing of student conduct matters involving gender-based violence.
- Revision and finalisation of the Sexual Harm Risk Assessment tool for Safer Community.
- Re-design of the Gender Equity and Justice – Community, Teaching and Learning project ready for launch in 2022.

## 9.8 Mental Wellbeing

A key focus area of the HSW strategy is the Mental Wellbeing Strategic Action Plan to strengthen the University's approach to student and staff mental wellbeing.

RMIT aims to create a mentally healthy community in which everyone can realise their potential and feel safe and supported. Key action areas focus on culture, systems, skills, experiences and support.

Key deliverables in 2021 included:

- The first year of our whole-of-community mental wellbeing survey, a collaborative research project with the University of South Australia, who have expertise in organisational psychosocial safety climate. Four local areas are participating in a pilot process and have each formed a mental wellbeing action team.
- Communications and engagement activities for staff and students across important dates and events, including R U OK? Day, University Mental Health Day, Mental Health Awareness Month and Calm Zone and Stress campaigns. 1,144 staff and 788 student attendees at wellbeing webinars, workshops, and training throughout 2021.
- Partnered with batyr, a mental health provider specialising in programs for young people, who recruited 14 students into two executive groups (VE and HE) to guide batyr's wellbeing activities at RMIT. They conducted six lived experienced talks with a total audience of 129 RMIT community members.
- Established Mental Wellbeing governance groups to guide, advocate and champion MW strategic initiatives at RMIT. Worked with 58 Mental Wellbeing Staff Champions to share staff and student perspectives on mental wellbeing
- Developed a draft psychosocial risk management approach to prevent and mitigate risks to employee mental health and wellbeing. This will ensure we meet our obligations under the proposed changes to OHS ACT regarding psychological health.
- Developed the University's approach to psychological risk management of vicarious trauma, including focus groups and consultation with key stakeholders in the students' group and HSW, and co-facilitated education on vicarious trauma.
- Delivered the WorkWell Mentally Healthy Leadership Program for 91 members of the Executive Leadership Team and their direct reports, including rollout of an online interactive wellbeing platform open to all staff.
- Delivered professional development, resources and mental health promotion activities and events for all staff and students. Including tailored webinars for coping during this pandemic.
- Continued our program for capability building around supporting others (students and staff) in emotional or psychological distress.

# 10. Operations





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## 10.1 Energy and Emissions

RMIT is a global leader in climate action, taking practical steps and innovative projects to become carbon neutral by 2030 and adapting to climate risks. The University also supports local and international communities and partners to transition to a low carbon future.

RMIT is acutely aware of the need to become more resilient to a changing climate. Guided by the Climate Change Adaptation Plan, RMIT is addressing climate risks through adaptation measures across operations. Having a prepared response to extreme heat, severe storms, flooding events and prolonged drought will ensure that the University's campuses and people are safe and can continue to work with minimal disruption.

RMIT is committed to becoming carbon neutral across its global operations by 2030, covering scope 1 & 2. Guided by the Carbon Management Plan, we undertake a range of emissions reduction activities to meet this goal. The Plan is updated every two years and strives to represent best practice in emissions management.

### Australian Operational Emissions Profile

In 2021, RMIT achieved a 74% decrease in Australian operational emissions from a 2007 emissions baseline. The majority of this reduction has come from energy efficiency upgrades and renewable energy contracting. However, the ongoing impact of COVID-19 has also influenced the 2021 emissions profile, contributing an estimated 9% reduction.

RMIT saw the overall electricity consumption reduced significantly, correlating to the reduced on-site activities. Subsequently, the co-generation (City campus) and tri-generation (Bundoora West campus) plants also had a reduced operation, generating 20,000 MWh of electricity onsite and saving approximately 10,500 tCO<sub>2</sub>-e of emissions.

Our existing renewable energy contracts (**Melbourne Renewable Energy Projects 1 & 2**) provided 17,000 MWh of carbon-neutral electricity to the University in 2021. RMIT's existing solar 603 kW PV portfolio generated 584 MWh of renewable electricity which was entirely consumed onsite.

RMIT's energy savings working group continued its focus on tracking electricity demand across the campus throughout the COVID-19 lockdowns. As Victorian Government restrictions were implemented buildings were taken offline, the change in electricity demand was monitored to ensure all unnecessary equipment was off during these times.

Under the Australian operational emissions profile, RMIT accounts for all energy and emissions produced and consumed within the building profile. We calculate emissions from the building portfolio (Scope 1 and 2 emissions, intensity and reductions) according to the appropriate Australian Government emissions factors, aligning with those under the National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting Act 2007. All targets are based on a 2007 baseline when the RMIT Australian operational emissions were 78,120 tCO<sub>2</sub>-e. We report on the comprehensive global emissions profile in subsequent sections.

**Table: RMIT Australia Energy by Campus 2021**

	Natural Gas	Electricity
City	170,825 GJ	19,064,590 kWh
Bundoora	102,643 GJ	2,793,174 kWh
Brunswick	5,666 GJ	1,534,940 kWh
Bendigo	0 GJ	38,000 kWh
<b>Total</b>	<b>279,134 GJ</b>	<b>23,430,704 kWh</b>

**Table: RMIT Australia Energy and Emissions**

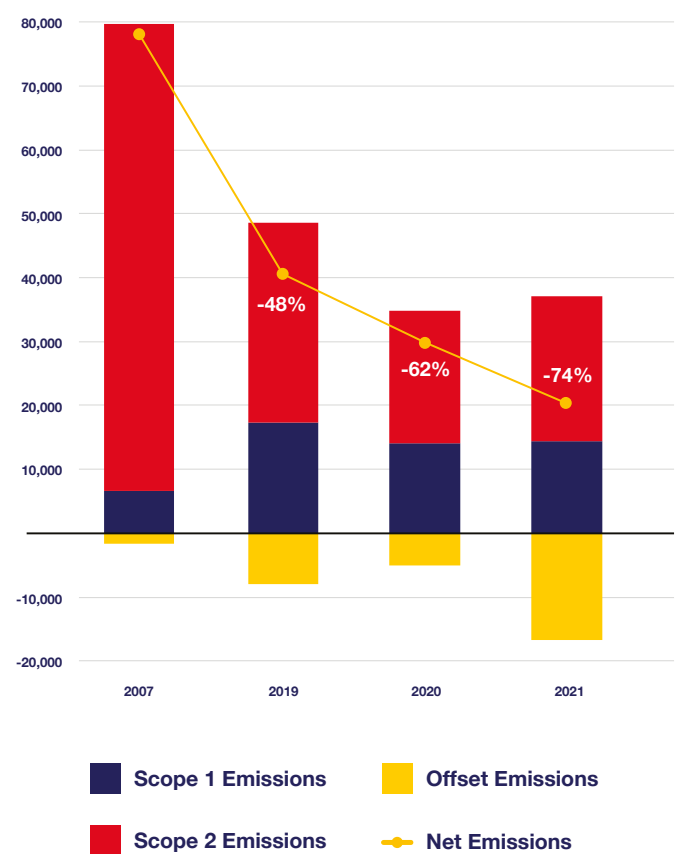
	2019	2020	2021
Electricity	29,929,563 kWh	20,797,353 kWh	23,430,704 kWh
Natural Gas	334,362 GJ	271,888 GJ	279,134 GJ
Emissions Offset	8,021 tCO <sub>2</sub> -e	4,996 tCO <sub>2</sub> -e	16,777 tCO <sub>2</sub> -e
Net Emissions	40,539 tCO <sub>2</sub> -e	29,853 tCO <sub>2</sub> -e	20,337 tCO <sub>2</sub> -e

**Table: RMIT Australia Emissions Attributable\* to Higher Education 2021**

	2021
<b>Total</b>	<b>16,951 tCO<sub>2</sub>-e</b>

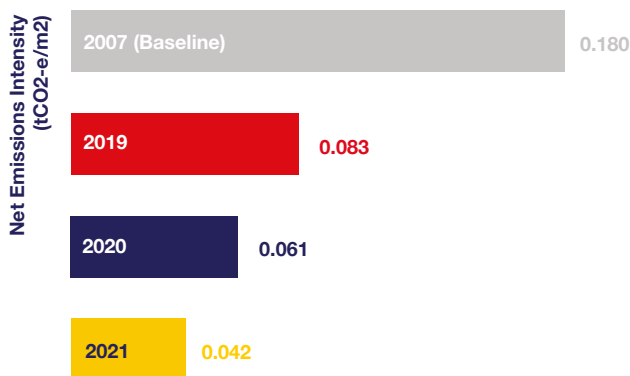
\*Emissions are attributable based on the on-site EFTSL (Equivalent Full Time Student Load) ratios between HE and VE student numbers.

**Graph: RMIT Australia Greenhouse Gas Emissions**



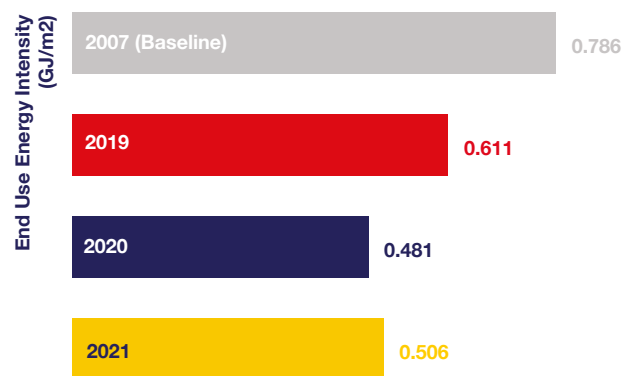
\*Percentage shown is the absolute emissions reduction against the baseline year (2007).

**Graph: RMIT Australia Net Emissions 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 only.

**Graph: RMIT Australia End Use Energy Intensity**



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

## Comprehensive Global Emissions Profile

RMIT continues to mature in reporting a comprehensive global emissions profile. RMIT aims to expand the reporting of emissions over time to encompass its global operations inclusive of scope 3 (upstream and downstream supply chain emissions).

- **Scope 1:** direct emissions, primarily fuel combustion on-site and fleet vehicles under the control of RMIT.
- **Scope 2:** indirect emissions from the purchase and use of electricity by RMIT.
- **Scope 3:** all other indirect emissions from RMIT activities, typically occurring in the supply chain, these emissions occur from sources that are outside the ownership or control of the University.

RMIT continues to source activity data and emissions factors, as well as developing environmentally extended input-output (EEIO) approaches to scope 3 emissions reporting. Over time, we are expanding the scope of published data and refining calculation methodologies as this area matures.





The following table captures the University's complete emissions profile including data from the RMIT Vietnam campus, fleet vehicles, employee travel, waste to landfill, water consumption, transmission and distribution losses. This marks the second full public disclosure of this extended profile in the Sustainability Annual Report.

**Graph: RMIT Group Comprehensive Emissions Profile**

<b>RMIT Group Comprehensive Emissions Profile 2021</b>	<b>Scope</b>	<b>tCO2-e</b>
<b>RMIT Australia</b>		
Natural Gas	1	14,386
Fleet Fuels	1	56
Aviation Fuels	1	787
Electricity	2	22,728
Electricity (Renewable)	2	-16,777
Transmission and Distribution Losses – Natural Gas	3	1,117
Transmission and Distribution Losses – Electricity	3	2,460
Water Consumption	3	134
Off-Site Waste Disposal – Municipal Solid Waste	3	697
Off-Site Waste Disposal – Construction & Demolition Waste	3	7
Office Paper	3	26
Capital Works (Construction)	3	844
Outsourced Datacentres	3	2,358
<b>RMIT Vietnam</b>		
Bottled LPG	1	15
Electricity	2	2,584
<b>RMIT Europe</b>		
Electricity	2	2
<b>Other</b>		
Air Travel – Short Haul	3	97
Air Travel – Long Haul	3	133
Hotel Stays	3	24
Taxis	3	0
Car Hire	3	1
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>		<b>31,677</b>

RMIT Group Comprehensive Emissions Profile 2021	tCO2-e	Percentage
<b>By Scope</b>		
Scope 1	15,244	48%
Scope 2	8,535	27%
Scope 3	7,898	25%
<b>Total</b>	<b>31,677</b>	<b>100%</b>

## 10.2 Materials and waste

RMIT is committed to leading the shift to a circular economy that values resources and thinks holistically about systems, processes and supply chains. The circular economy aims to transform the current mindset of the 'take-make-waste' linear model towards circularity, where waste and pollution are eliminated through good design, and the life of existing materials is prolonged through new and innovative ways of repairing, reusing and remanufacturing.

Guided by the Waste Management Plan, RMIT aims to improve waste management practices across campuses. The plan aims to divert waste from landfill by following the waste hierarchy of avoidance, minimisation and recycling.

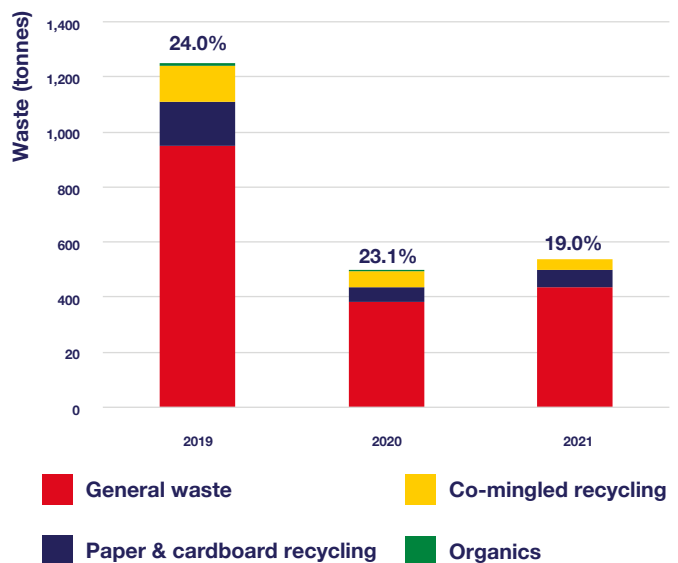
### Operational Waste

The RMIT Australian waste profile consists of operational waste from collection points throughout its campuses, as well as the construction and demolition (C&D) waste generated from projects. Data is collated from various third-party contractors throughout the year. Waste data does not include Vietnam operations, although Vietnam staff are introducing management systems that may result in greater levels of data capture in future (see case study below).

RMIT's operational waste collates contractor reports on waste to landfill, mixed-recycling, paper/cardboard and organic waste from all on-shore campuses. Operational waste excludes confidential paper waste which is collected separately.

In 2021, RMIT Australian operations produced a total of 538 tonnes of waste and had a diversion rate of 19 per cent. The overall waste profile was down 57% on 2019 levels, primarily due to the impacts of COVID-19 and the move to remote learning. The landfill waste produced is equal to 10.9kg per student.

**Graph: RMIT Australia Operational Waste Profile**



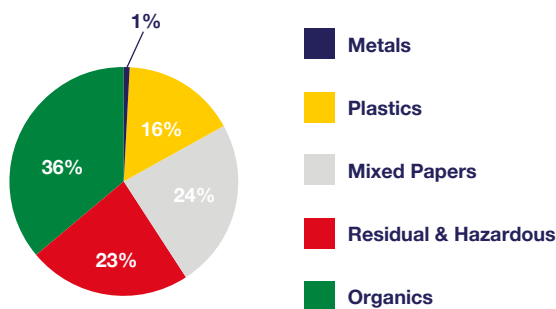
\* Percentage shows annual recycling rate

## Vietnam Waste Audits

In cooperation with Vietnam Zero Waste Alliance, a waste audit was conducted on the Saigon South (SGS) Campus in January 2022 as the first step toward a Zero Waste Campus.

This activity generated a domestic waste profile for the SGS campus outlining the main waste streams and composition to help assist with behaviour change programs for staff and students. The audit was undertaken by collecting waste from across the whole campus at a single point (including operational waste), trained volunteers then audit 25% of the total waste by segregating, weighing and recording. Waste was separated into five broad streams: plastics, metals, mixed papers, organics, and residual and hazardous waste.

Overall, organics are the dominant waste source by mass (kg), however, plastics are the dominant waste by quantity. Of note were significant numbers of single-use plastics and paper food containers that are being consumed on-site. There are promising that pose adaptive solutions to waste, as many waste streams can be avoided and others can be recovered and returned into the supply chain.



The next steps following the audit are to:

- Continue to raise awareness of waste on campus to avoid or minimise the overall generation of waste.
- Aim to recover all waste generated within the Saigon South campuses by recycling, recovering, remanufacturing and refurbishment where possible.
- Partner with organisations that are able to collect and recover waste.

Promote reusable cups, containers and cutlery for on-campus food and drink.

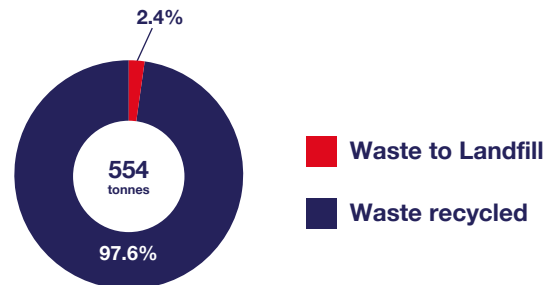
## Construction and Demolition Waste

RMIT collates Construction and Demolition (C&D) waste data from all capital development projects. RMIT has been applying circular economy principles to capital projects to continue avoiding waste and strengthen reuse, setting a benchmark to recycle 90 per cent of all construction and demolition waste.

C&D waste data is provided by the principal contractor on each of RMIT's capital projects. In 2021, RMIT had six active capital development projects providing C&D waste data. From these projects, 1,554 tonnes of waste was produced and 97.6 per cent was diverted, with only 37kg of waste sent to landfill.

RMIT reduces waste from capital development projects by putting circular economy principles into practice, such as prioritising the reuse and upcycle furniture before buying new items.

**Graph: RMIT Australia Construction and Demolition Waste Profile**



For more information please visit: [rmit.edu.au/about/our-values/sustainability/circular-economy](https://rmit.edu.au/about/our-values/sustainability/circular-economy)





### 10.3 Water

RMIT is committed to reducing water use intensity across the campuses, through a focus on water efficiency, harvesting and reuse. RMIT prioritises water efficiency in the RMIT Design Standards, by setting minimum standards for fixtures and fitting, encouraging water capture and storage and introducing water sensitive urban design in landscaping.

In 2021, RMIT consumed 173,488 kilolitres of potable water, this was significantly influenced by COVID-19 and the move to remote learning. The operational split between water consumption was:

- RMIT Australia operations consumed 119,628 kilolitres
- RMIT Vietnam operations consumed 53,860 kilolitres
- RMIT Europe (no data available)

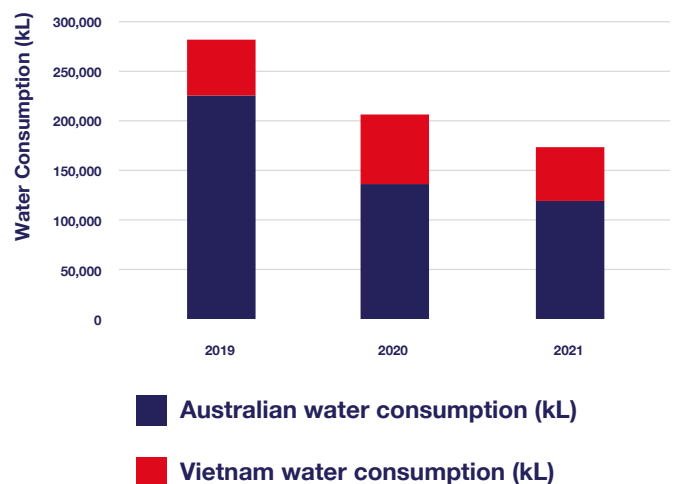
RMIT does not record consumption volumes from alternative water sources, such as those harvested from stormwater or captured from rainwater. While these sources are used, they are not directly measured, instead, their use offsets the University’s requirements for potable water and is reflected by lower potable water consumption levels.

The water efficiency levels in our Australian operations was 2,400 litres per EFTSL in 2021, this represents a 60% reduction in water consumption intensity per EFTSL compared to the 2007 baseline.

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, we have a total capacity of 1.3 million litres of on-site storage tanks, reducing requirements for potable water usage. The on-site storage allows for the capture of rainwater and stormwater, typically for use in toilet flushing or irrigation. At the Bundoora Campus RMIT captures stormwater in natural basins, when the water levels are high enough the excess water is used in cooling tower applications on the campus

In 2021, the University installed a further 441 sensors to existing bathroom taps, as part of the continued University response to COVID in reducing the number of touch points in high traffic locations. This project brings the total number of touchless taps to 965 and reduces the consumption of potable water as efficient taps are on for shorter periods of time.

**Graph: RMIT University Water Consumption**





## 10.4 Sustainable Transport

RMIT encourages healthy and active lifestyles through sustainable transport choices. The University generates significant travel with 50,000 staff and students travelling almost every day for work and study in a standard year. Our approach to sustainable transport is guided by the Integrated Sustainable Transport Plan which provides the framework to enable and motivate more staff and students to walk, ride and use public transport.

RMIT is well served by public transport (trains, trams and buses) at the three Australian campuses. We are also a key interface point with Rail Projects Victoria for the delivery of the Metro Tunnel project, which will provide more train services for students, staff and visitors while strengthening connections between RMIT campuses.

The University provides a range of high-quality cycling infrastructure to encourage students and staff to ride to campus. This includes secure bike parking and comprehensive change facilities, as well as many bike hoops available across all onshore campuses. RMIT has a total of 787 secure bike parks available:

### City campus

Building 51 Bike Hub – 400 spaces

Building 80 Bike Parking – 90 spaces

Building 100 Bike Parking – 12 spaces

Building 106 Bike Parking – 132 spaces

Building 108 Bike Parking – 24 spaces

### Brunswick campus

Building 514 Bike Cage – 57 spaces

### Bundoora campus

Building 202 Bike Cage – 40 spaces

Building 253 Bike Cage – 32 spaces

RMIT supports new staff and students to cycle through a series of bike workshops available throughout the year, run by student clubs and external providers. RMIT also support key cycling events throughout the year such as Ride to Uni day.

RMIT is working to develop methodologies to better assess the greenhouse gas emissions associated with staff and student travel and aims to publish these in future Sustainability Annual Reports.

## Air Travel

COVID-19 continues to have a significant impact on air travel around the world. In 2021, RMIT saw the number of flights remain at 96% below pre-pandemic levels. Consequently, RMIT's scope 3 emissions from domestic and international travel remain significantly low at 231 tCO<sub>2</sub>-e.

## 10.5 Management Systems

RMIT University Property Services is formally certified and externally audited against the following ISO standards:

- ISO 9001 Quality Management
- ISO 14001 Environmental Management
- ISO 45001 Occupational Health and Safety Management
- ISO 55001 Asset Management

Property Services is also externally audited against the ISO 41001 Facility Management Standard for the management of its building services. Alignment to these international standards provides greater assurance of service delivery outcomes to RMIT's students, staff, contractors and other stakeholders.

## 10.6 Procurement

As one of Australia's largest tertiary institutions, 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. 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 principles and to ensure that suppliers meet the minimum requirements regarding their own ethical practices. The CSR framework includes a comprehensive screening process for all prospective suppliers and the signing of the RMIT Supplier Code of Conduct as a requirement of the contract process.

All Australian tenders have a weighting for sustainability, Indigenous and student engagement outcomes. Sustainability outcomes are also driven through the contract management process with existing vendors.

RMIT expenditure in 2021 was similar to 2020 due to ongoing campus activity disruption by the pandemic. The largest categories of third-party spend continued to be in IT operations and projects, the implementation of the new Enterprise Resource Platform and the repairs and maintenance of University buildings.



In June 2021, RMIT implemented the Workday Enterprise Resource Planning System, incorporating a common supplier registration process for all new suppliers. The newly implemented Supplier Registration Form captures key information on each supplier during onboarding, including their acknowledgement of the RMIT Supplier Code of Conduct, and requests supplier responses on human rights obligation management, labour standards, and environmental practices. This information is then made visible in summary format to all RMIT staff who use the supplier search function in the Workday system, so they can better identify those that have acknowledged the Supplier Code of Conduct and considered their obligations on human rights, labour standards and modern slavery. RMIT staff are also able to use the same function to identify suppliers which identify as indigenous owned and social enterprises.

The RMIT Lab Consumables Panel Agreements, whole-of-university office supplies and stationery agreement and centrally managed printing services agreements were all updated in 2021 to explicitly require that the suppliers ensure their suppliers also comply with the RMIT Supplier Code of Conduct, relevant human rights and modern slavery obligations. RMIT has full right to access and audit operations and records to verify compliance.

The 2021 Furniture Panel procurement process required that furniture supplied to RMIT meet all relevant Australian Standards, and a range of third-party sustainable product certification schemes, as outlined in the new RMIT Furniture Standard. Assessments also take into account corporate social responsibility, labour standards and modern slavery risk management. The Panel, which is due to formally commence in 2022, includes two indigenous-owned enterprises and one specialising in the provision of refurbished 'up-cycled' furniture.

Other key sustainability highlights include:

- RMIT's major facilities management agreement with Airmaster Australia resulted in the employment of 27 apprentices in 2021.
- 11.7% of RMIT catering expenditure in 2021 was with Indigenous and non-profit enterprises on the RMIT Catering Panel.
- 99.4% of all RMIT office paper purchases in 2021 were from responsibly sourced timber with appropriate certifications.

## Office Consumables Australia

The overall purchase of office consumables remained low in 2021 due to the impacts of the pandemic and the move to online learning. COS Australia was RMIT's contracted supplier of office consumables – providing products such as notebooks, copy paper, hand towels, hand sanitiser, tissues and batteries.

In 2021 RMIT purchased \$260,000 in office consumables. 31% of this spend was on the in-house 'Planet Friendly' label by value, this label is given to products with an environmental certification within its relevant category – noting that not all product categories will have a planet friendly option.

The total office paper purchased last year was 6,708 reams, equalling 17.8 tonnes of paper. Over 99.4% of all paper purchased was from responsibly sourced timber with either the FSC or PEFC accreditation. Additionally, paper purchases were split evenly between either carbon neutral or recycled products, with over 92% of all purchases including either of these certifications.

More than a decade ago, RMIT moved its entire print fleet to multifunctional devices with swipe-to-print technology and default duplex. This action along with the shift to electronic document management has seen a significant reduction in printing and subsequently a 94.7% reduction in total paper purchases across the University.



### The RMIT Store's Ethical Sourcing Journey

The RMIT Store (formerly the Campus Store) has been on an ethical sourcing journey since 2019. The Store has committed to only source and use manufacturers who have documented their supplier traceability, and who have complied with RMIT's procurement standards.

As a result of this screening process, The Store has reduced the number of vendors it buys from as some were not able to supply clear documentation when supplier traceability practices were undertaken. The Store also follows supply chain management practices in conjunction with RMIT Procurement when a new vendor is onboarded.

Furthering its sustainability commitments, The Store continues to minimise its packaging waste where possible, and sources soft plastic packaging alternatives such as 100% biodegradable covers supplied by Yilay, a First Nations vendor. While it has been challenging to completely remove packaging from offshore purchases due to factory quality control during transit, The Store does prioritise sourcing locally and from renewable materials. The Store is committed to a 'just in time inventory' approach to buying, meaning it only buys the quantity that is needed, to avoid excess production and overstocking.

The Store donates un-useable stock to schools for educational purposes to reduce waste and promote reuse; most recently, first-year Bachelor of Fashion & Textiles students were given old stock to transform and upcycle as part of their studies and showcase at Orientation events.

## 10.7 Sustainable Buildings

### Sustainable Buildings on Campus

The RMIT Sustainable Design Principles provide specific guidance for designers and consultants in capital projects to ensure industry best practice sustainable outcomes are achieved throughout the lifecycle of RMIT's new and existing spaces.

RMIT aims to achieve sustainable outcomes in capital projects by encouraging design and operation practices that promote:

- **Reduce emissions** through energy efficiency and renewable energy.
- Assess and adapt infrastructure to **reduce climate change vulnerability**.
- Use **environmentally sustainable best-practice** design and technologies in all development and refurbishments.
- Pursue **precinct-based solutions** that minimise resource consumption and greenhouse emissions.
- **Responsible water management**, focusing on high levels of water efficiency in operations, water capture opportunities and water sensitive urban design to minimise the use of potable water sources.
- **Responsible use of resources** in considering the circularity of material flows in the built environment and developing progressive waste management systems.
- Deliver spaces which **encourage sustainable behaviours** including recycling, energy saving and water conservation.
- **Encourage sustainable modes of transport**, by providing safe pedestrian access, public transport connections and high-quality cycling facilities.
- **Respect, preserve and enhance heritage, cultural and natural assets**.
- Leverage infrastructure upgrades to provide a mechanism for student participation and research **creating living labs**.

These outcomes are embedded in the project management processes and the RMIT Design Standards.

As a founding member of the Green Building Council of Australia (GBCA), RMIT has a longstanding commitment to the Green Star rating tool. We ensure that changes to the built environment demonstrate leadership excellence in sustainable design and innovation.

Below is a list of all RMIT Green Star rated projects:

Project	Rating	Rating Tool	Year
Building 106, OurPlace	5 Star	Interiors V1.2	2021
New Academic Street (Buildings 8, 10, 12 & 14)	5 Star	Interiors (pilot)	2017
Building 231, Bundoora West Student Accommodation	5 Star	Multi-Unit Residential (legacy tool)	2015
Building 100, Design Hub	5 Star	Education Design Rating V1 (legacy tool)	2012
Building 80, Swanston Academic Building	5 Star	Education Design Rating V1 (legacy tool)	2012
Building 224, Bundoora West Lecture Theatre	4 Star	Education Design Rating V1 (legacy tool)	2011
Building 55, Advanced Manufacturing Precinct	5 Star	Education Design Rating V1 (legacy tool)	2011
Building 1, Francis Ormond Building	5 Star	Office Design Rating V2 (legacy tool)	2010

## Capital Development

RMIT Property Services is responsible for the refurbishing, planning, design and construction of facilities for academic and administrative purposes.

This includes the delivery of RMIT's Capital Development Plan, projects valued at \$1 million or above, to improve learning, teaching and research spaces so that students and staff can enjoy world-class facilities.

Property Services also manages annual works projects, valued between \$5,000 and below \$1 million, for services such as teaching space and infrastructure upgrades, sustainability projects and public artwork.

Example projects from the 2021 Capital Development Plan include:

### Digital Human Bioscience Facility

The School of Health and Biomedical Sciences (SHBS) focuses on teaching and research that is underpinned by an evidence-based approach and a commitment to translating fundamental science into better health outcomes.

The interdisciplinary approach, strong links with industry and government, and purpose-built facilities empower RMIT to meet the changing demands for global health solutions. Programs provide accredited pathways to professional careers or postgraduate research and produce health practitioners with skills that are valued in Australia and around the world. The study of Human Anatomy is a fundamental part of almost all programs in the SHBS. The majority of programs within the school include several units of human anatomy study, which leads to large courses of often greater than 300 students.

The previous facilities dated back to 1973 and comprised of several small spaces that were not contemporary, fit for purpose or capable of delivering a curriculum which uses modern technology as a core delivery medium.

The Digital Human Bioscience Facility refurbishment project transformed the student experience – creating state of the art student facilities supported by increased access to digital learning resources providing benefits to students and enhancing the reputation of the course, school and RMIT.







### **Gerson Gilrandy – “We are Slimy yet Satisfying”**

As part of the Digital Human Bioscience Project, students were briefed to create a visual and engaging design that reflected the nature of the courses undertaken in the building, and that aligned to the strategic aims of the redevelopment project.

RMIT Master of Communication Design student Gerson Gilrandy was selected to design the graphics for the foyer of Building 201. His illustrations are inspired by human organs. Gerson translated these in his distinct style – making them fun, decorative, and contemporary. He developed each organ into joyful elements building a vibrant and engaging atmosphere in the space. The message in his work is simple – inviting everyone who enters to discover that biosciences are enjoyable, colourful, and there is much to explore and discover.

Gerson is an interdisciplinary creative from Jakarta, Indonesia. He is currently living in Melbourne, Australia and undertaking his Masters at RMIT. With a background in street art, illustration, and visual communication design, Gerson has pursued his design passion since 2008, when he got into the scene painting murals on walls throughout Jakarta and Singapore. His style is mainly organic, inspired by the magical wonder of nature and the skateboarding culture.

Gerson’s design philosophy – “We are Slimy yet Satisfying” is his message to people that we are okay to be not okay and that there’s a magical value in human vulnerability.

For more information on Gerson’s work visit [gersongilrandy.com](http://gersongilrandy.com)

## Innovative Waste

At RMIT, **innovative Resources and Waste Technologies** (IRWT) research group, seeks to contribute to the sustainable engineered transformation of renewable resources, waste to energy and the creation of useful materials by developing technologically efficient and economically viable solutions.

One such solution was the creation of an Australian Research Centre (ARC) for the Transformation of Australian Biosolid Resources. Funded by the Federal Government, this **ARC Training Centre** focuses on transforming Australian biosolids into a valuable resource, providing new practices, technologies and products for improved land management and training. The training centre will attract a total of \$13.5M in cash and in-kind support and involve collaboration with 20 participating organisations across three countries.

The 2021 Capital Development Plan supported the development of an Innovative Waste Facility for this ARC Training Centre in Building 211 on the Bundoora West campus. The refurbishment of 246m<sup>2</sup> of existing vacant space was used to create laboratory areas with specialist equipment and adjacent supporting office and storage spaces including:

- Lab area to house specialist equipment.
- Write up desk space for lab users
- Shared cool room
- Office space for technical staff
- Consolidated sorting and storage area for adjacent stakeholders

The research performed in this facility will address social, environmental, health and economic issues related to the management of polluting biosolids and similar waste materials.

For more information about RMIT's sustainable buildings, please visit: [rmit.edu.au/about/our-values/sustainability/sustainable-buildings](https://rmit.edu.au/about/our-values/sustainability/sustainable-buildings)





## 10.8 Philanthropy and Investments

Tertiary education can transform the lives of students, providing them with the opportunity to access knowledge and pursue their passion.

### RMIT Philanthropy

RMIT Philanthropy builds and fosters an active, inspired community of donors and supporters; leveraging their generous support to help the University reach its strategic goals.

To effectively manage and further the impact of donations, the executive-led Philanthropy Committee is responsible for managing the RMIT Philanthropy Fund, including implementing the RMIT Responsible Investment Principles. These principles work to ensure that in addition to financial considerations, Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) issues are taken into account when making investment decisions.

Ninety-nine per cent of philanthropic funds are managed by Russell Investments, and the other one per cent is invested by RMIT in managed seed investment funds to support start-up companies. As a signatory of the UN Principles for Responsible Investment, Russell Investments has a sound awareness of ESG factors, allowing RMIT to benefit from their deep expertise in investment strategies and create a spectrum of investment opportunities.

Managed by the Philanthropic Fund Committee a total of \$2.9m of philanthropic funds were disbursed across RMIT in 2021. RMIT provided 678 philanthropic scholarships with a 10% increase in scholarship applications. Additionally, 146 students were supported through the Global Leader Experience online, 28 students were supported in the Global Innovation Sprint online and 69 philanthropic prizes were awarded.

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



## Responsible Investment

The RMIT Responsible Investment Principles guide the University's investment managers to ensure that the portfolio minimises activities that have a material impact on climate change, including involvement in fossil fuels, while screening for issues relating to public health and wellbeing.

RMIT also monitors the portfolio in relation to globally accepted norms on corporate sustainability behaviours to ensure the University can meet its commitments to the UN Global Compact. RMIT's investment manager Russell Investments is a signatory to the United Nations Principles of Responsible Investment.

As at 31 December 2021, RMIT held \$102.3m in philanthropic funds across a range of investments, including equities, bonds and cash. 100% of the equity component of the RMIT philanthropic funds are invested in two responsible investment products:

- **Russell Investments Sustainable Global Shares ex Fossil Fuels Fund:** a fund that invests in a broad range of global shares, with a 60% reduced exposure to carbon emissions compared to the MSCI ACWI ex Australia Index. Designed with Russell Investments' robust decarbonisation strategy, the Fund uses a combination of carbon footprint, fossil fuel reserves, a proprietary green energy ratio and ESG scoring to determine the companies and their weighting within the Fund. The Fund excludes companies with fossil fuel reserves, as well as companies with significant involvement in fossil fuels. In addition to the decarbonisation strategy, other controversial industries are excluded including tobacco, cluster munitions, anti-personnel mines and nuclear weapons. The Fund's portfolio is positively tilted towards companies with higher-than-average material ESG scores and will continue to evolve to reflect best practice in sustainable investing.
- **Russell Investments Australian Responsible Investment (RARI) ETF:** a fund that invests in Australian shares and trusts listed on the ASX that also excludes companies with fossil fuel reserves. The fund is weighted towards companies that demonstrate positive ESG characteristics after negatively screening for companies that have significant involvement in a range of activities including tobacco, gambling and controversial weapons. RARI has been certified by Responsible Investment Association Australasia (RIAA) to the strict operational and disclosure practices required under the Responsible Investment Certification Program.

The use of pooled funds means that direct investment decisions, such as whether to buy the shares in an individual company are not made by the University. Instead, RMIT has set parameters on the ESG requirements of its investments and actively works with its Investment Managers to ensure the products the University invest in have strong ESG outcomes.

RMIT worked with its investment managers to create the Russell Investments Sustainable Global Shares ex Fossil Fuels Fund, which was RMIT's final step in minimising investments with a material impact on climate change. Mid-year reporting from the University's External Fund Managers confirmed that the entire RMIT portfolio had no exposure to fossil fuels from 31 March 2021.

Additionally, RMIT utilises a small component of its 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. Since 2019, RMIT has been 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 investments 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)



# 11. Content Index

## 11.1 GRI Material Topics and SDG Mapping

Material Topic	SDG	GRI Indicator	Location	
<b>Research</b>				
The outcomes of RMIT University's research and the impacts they have on the wider world.	 	103-1 Explanation of the material topic and its boundaries	Section 7	
		103-2 The management approach and its components		
		103-3 Explanation of how the organization evaluates the management approach.		
<b>Learning and Teaching</b>				
Learning, teaching and education – current and future RMIT students.		103-1 Explanation of the material topic and its boundaries	Section 6	
		103-2 The management approach and its components		
		103-3 Explanation of how the organization evaluates the management approach.		
<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.	   	103-1 Explanation of the material topic and its boundaries	Section 10	
		103-2 The management approach and its components		
		103-3 Explanation of how the organization evaluates the management approach.	Section 10.1	
		302-1 Energy consumption within the organisation		
		302-3 Energy intensity		Section 10.1
		303-1 Water withdrawal by source		Section 10.3
306-2 Waste by type and disposal method	Section 10.2			
<b>Health, Safety and Wellbeing</b>				
The physical and mental health, safety and wellbeing of all students, staff, employees and the general public.	 	103-1 Explanation of the material topic and its boundaries	Section 8.5	
		103-2 The management approach and its components		
		103-3 Explanation of how the organization evaluates the management approach.	Section 8.5	
		403-1 Occupational health and safety management system		
<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.	 	103-1 Explanation of the material topic and its boundaries	Section 8	
		103-2 The management approach and its components		
		103-3 Explanation of how the organization evaluates the management approach.	Section 8.3 & Section 8.4	
		405-1 Diversity of governance bodies and employees		
<b>Governance and Values</b>				
Policies, systems and approaches to the governance and implementation of the core values of the University in its relationships.		103-1 Explanation of the material topic and its boundaries	Section 3.2	
		103-2 The management approach and its components		
		103-3 Explanation of how the organization evaluates the management approach.		

## Staff Capability

Staff at all campuses, including attraction and retention, labour relations and workforce casualisation.



103-1 Explanation of the material topic and its boundaries	Section 8.1
103-2 The management approach and its components	
103-3 Explanation of how the organization evaluates the management approach.	
404-3 Percentage of employees receiving regular performance and career development reviews	Section 8.1

## Climate Change

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.



103-1 Explanation of the material topic and its boundaries	Section 10
103-2 The management approach and its components	
103-3 Explanation of how the organization evaluates the management approach.	
305-1 Direct (Scope 1) GHG emissions	Section 10.1
305-2 Energy indirect (Scope 2) GHG emissions	Section 10.1
305-3 Other indirect (Scope 3) GHG emissions	Section 10.1
305-4 GHG emissions intensity	Section 10.1

## Partnerships

Collaborative relationships with industries, institutions and organisations to meet challenges in sustainable development.



103-1 Explanation of the material topic and its boundaries	Section 4.3 & 5
103-2 The management approach and its components	
103-3 Explanation of how the organization evaluates the management approach.	

## Public Policy and Leadership

Adopting a leadership position among our peers and influencing our stakeholders on challenges in sustainable development.



103-1 Explanation of the material topic and its boundaries	Section 3 & Section 4
103-2 The management approach and its components	
103-3 Explanation of how the organization evaluates the management approach.	

## Procurement

How the University procures from and engages with suppliers of consumer and construction-based goods and services, aiming to minimise negative and maximise positive impacts on the environment and society.



103-1 Explanation of the material topic and its boundaries	Section 10.6
103-2 The management approach and its components	
103-3 Explanation of how the organization evaluates the management approach.	

## Responsible Investment

Responsible investment refers to implementing investment strategies consistent with the University's commitment to sustainability and its financial and legal obligations.



103-1 Explanation of the material topic and its boundaries	Section 10.8
103-2 The management approach and its components	
103-3 Explanation of how the organization evaluates the management approach.	

## 11.2 GRI General Disclosures

GRI Disclosure	Location
<b>Organisational Profile</b>	
102-1 Name of the organisation	Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology
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 & Section 3.2
102-6 Markets served: geographic locations, sectors served, types of customers and beneficiaries	<a href="https://www.rmit.edu.au/about">rmit.edu.au/about</a>
102-7 Scale of the organisation	<a href="https://www.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 10.6
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 4.3 & Section 5.4
102-13 A list of the main memberships of industry or other associations, and national or international advocacy organizations	Section 4.3 & 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 5.2.
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 & Section 5.2
102-44 Key topics and concerns raised	Section 1.3










## Reporting Practice




102-45 Entities included in the consolidated financial statements	<a href="https://www.rmit.edu.au/annualreport">rmit.edu.au/annualreport</a>
102-46 Defining report content and topic boundaries	Section 1.1
102-47 A list of material topics	Section 1.3
102-48 Restatements of information	Section 1.1
102-49 Changes in reporting	Section 1.3
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 1.3
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

## 11.3 SDG Mapping (Target Level)

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

SDG	Target	Location	Type of contribution*
<b>SDG 1</b> 	1.1 Eradicate extreme poverty	Sections 6.1, 6.4, 7.1, 7.2, 8.2 and 10.8	Indirect
	1.2 Reduce people living in poverty		Indirect
	1.5 Build the resilience of the poor and vulnerable		Indirect
<b>SDG 2</b> 	2.3 Increase agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers	Sections 6.1, 7.1 and 7.2	Indirect
	2.4 Sustainable agriculture practices and food production systems		Indirect
	2.a Increase in agricultural research to enhance agricultural productive capacity in developing countries		Direct and Indirect
<b>SDG 3</b> 	3.4 Reduce mortality from non-communicable diseases and promote mental health and well-being	Section 6.1, 7.1, 7.2 & 9	Indirect
	3.b Research & development of vaccines and medicines		Direct and Indirect
<b>SDG 4**</b> 	4.3 Equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education	Sections 6, 7.1, 7.2 & 9	Direct and Indirect
	4.4 Increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship		Direct and Indirect
	4.5 Eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities and indigenous peoples		Direct and Indirect
	4.7 Ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development		Direct and Indirect
	4.b Scholarships for developing countries		Direct and Indirect
<b>SDG 5**</b> 	5.1 End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere	Sections 6.1, 7.1, 7.2, 8.1, 8.2 and 8.3	Direct and Indirect
	5.2 Eliminate violence against all women and girls		Direct and Indirect
	5.5 Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision making		Direct and Indirect
	5.c Adopt and strengthen policies for gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls		Direct and Indirect
<b>SDG 6</b> 	6.2 Access to safe and equitable sanitation and hygiene	Sections 6.1, 7.1, 7.2 and 10.3	Indirect
	6.3 Improve water quality		Indirect
	6.4 Increase water use efficiency		Direct and Indirect
	6.5 Integrated water resource management		Indirect
<b>SDG 7**</b> 	7.2 Increase the share of renewable energy	Sections 6.1, 7.1, 7.2 and 10.1	Direct and Indirect
	7.3 Improvement in energy efficiency		Direct and Indirect
	7.a International cooperation to facilitate access to clean energy research and technology		Direct and Indirect

SDG	Target	Location	Type of contribution*
<b>SDG 8**</b> 	8.4 Improve resource efficiency in consumption & production	Sections 6.1, 6.4, 7.1, 7.2, 8 and 10.6	Indirect
	8.5 Productive employment and decent work for all		Direct and Indirect
	8.6 Reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training		Direct and Indirect
	8.7 Take action to eradicate forced labour, modern slavery, human trafficking, child labour and child soldiers		Direct and Indirect
	8.8 Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments		Direct and Indirect
<b>SDG 9**</b> 	9.1 Develop quality, reliable, sustainable & resilient infrastructure	Sections 6.1 and 7	Indirect
	9.2 Promote inclusive & sustainable industrialisation		Indirect
	9.5 Enhance scientific research, upgrade the technological capabilities of industrial sectors		Direct and Indirect
	9.b Domestic technology development, research & innovation		Direct and Indirect
<b>SDG 10**</b> 	10.2 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	Sections 6.1, 7.1, 7.2, 8.3, 8.4 and 9	Direct and Indirect
	10.3 Equal opportunity and reduce inequalities – legislation, policies and action		Direct and Indirect
	10.4 Adopt policies and progressively achieve greater equality		Direct and Indirect
<b>SDG 11</b> 	11.3 Inclusive and sustainable urbanisation	Sections 6.1, 7.1, 7.2 and 10	Indirect
	11.4 Protect and safeguard the world's cultural & natural heritage		Direct and Indirect
	11.6 Reduce adverse environmental impact of cities		Indirect
	11.a Strengthening national and regional development planning		Indirect
<b>SDG 12**</b> 	12.2 Sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources	Sections 6.1, 7.1, 7.2, 7.2 and 10.5	Direct and Indirect
	12.3 Reduce food waste & food losses		Indirect
	12.5 Reduce waste generation through prevention, reduction, recycling and reuse		Direct and Indirect
	12.6 Adopt sustainable practices and integrate sustainability information into reporting cycles		Direct and Indirect
	12.8 Ensure information and awareness for sustainable development and lifestyles in harmony with nature		Direct and Indirect
<b>SDG 13**</b> 	13.1 Resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters	Sections 6.1, 7.1, 7.2 and 10.1	Indirect
	13.2 Integrate climate change policies into national policies, strategies and planning		Indirect
	13.3 Improve education, awareness and capacity on climate change		Direct and Indirect
	13.b Raising capacity for climate change related planning and management		Indirect
<b>SDG 14</b> 	14.1 Prevent and reduce marine pollution	Sections 6.1, 7.1 and 7.2	Indirect
	14.a Increase scientific knowledge, develop research capacity and transfer marine technology		Indirect

SDG	Target	Location	Type of contribution*
<b>SDG 15</b> 	15.1 Conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial & inland freshwater ecosystems	Sections 6.1, 7.1 and 7.2	Indirect
	15.9 Integrate ecosystem and biodiversity values planning, development and poverty reduction		Indirect
<b>SDG 16**</b> 	16.3 Promote the rule of law at national and international levels	Sections 3.2, 3.3, 4.1, 6.1, 7.1, 7.2 and 7.4	Indirect
	16.5 Reduce corruption and bribery		Indirect
	16.6 Effective, accountable and transparent institutions		Direct and Indirect
	16.b Promote non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development		Direct and Indirect
<b>SDG 17**</b> 	17.6 Regional and international cooperation on and access to science, technology and innovation and enhance knowledge-sharing	Sections 4.1, 4.2, 5, 5.1, 7.1, 7.2, 7.3 and 7.5	Direct and Indirect
	17.7 Promote the development, transfer, dissemination and diffusion of environmentally sound technologies		Direct and Indirect
	17.14 Policy coherence for sustainable development		Direct and Indirect
	17.16 Enhance the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development		Direct and Indirect
	17.17 Effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships		Direct and Indirect
	17.19 Develop measurements of progress on sustainable development		Indirect

\*Type of contribution: **Direct** – Outcomes directly contributing to the achievement of one or more SDG target;

**Indirect** – Research outcomes contributing to increase awareness, mobilise resources, influence policy and/or build capacity to the achievement of one or more SDG target.

\*\*SDG identified as relevant to our business and key stakeholders by our Materiality test. Details of RMIT's Materiality Test are provided in the section 1.3 Materiality.



## Notes



