

# **FUTURE FOCUSED**



# **APPLIED**



# **INNOVATIVE**



# **RESPONSIBLE**



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

La Trobe University acknowledges our campuses are located on the lands of many Traditional Custodians in Victoria and New South Wales. We recognise their ongoing connection to the land and value their unique contribution to the University and wider Australian society.

La Trobe University is committed to providing opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, both as individuals and communities, through teaching, learning, research and partnerships across all our campuses.

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# LA TROBE BUSINESS SCHOOL 2023 - 2025

## STRATEGIC PLAN 2023 - 2025

The La Trobe Business School (LBS) develops people, organisations, and communities through its innovative and applied education and research, providing the skills and knowledge required for positive social impact and sustainable futures. Through deep engagement with its regions and communities of practice, LBS delivers business and policy acumen, promoting prosperous and sustainable futures. LBS uses its resources and capabilities to transform business and policy thinking and practice in a world, where people, business, governments, and communities face increasingly complex challenges that also create opportunities for experimentation, innovation and improved ways of working and living.

This strategic plan is the culmination of a review of LBS performance over the past five years. This plan seeks to refocus, revitalise, and rebuild LBS into a powerful force among Australian Business Schools. LBS seeks to establish itself as a leading business school

renowned for its education and research in the South-East Asia and Pacific regions, deeply rooted in local and regional communities, while generating national and international influence, respect and recognition. Grounded in data-informed decision making, LBS will go beyond meeting the changing needs of people, business, governments, and communities, and focus on problem-solving and opportunity creation. It will take a leading role in responsibly nurturing change and the transformation of business and policy thinking and practice through its education, research, and outreach.

Through our network of regional, national, and international collaborations with our strategic partners we are uniquely positioned to deliver, innovative solutions to a range of complex problems, to act on opportunities, to educate the next generation of ethical business leaders and to produce cutting-edge and impactful research that benefits business, policy, and society.

We view this period as a key milestone in the history of LBS. Our review and strategic thinking gives us the opportunity to refocus, revitalise, and redefine our mission and vision of our future. Our choices, and the strategy we pursue, will affect us significantly moving forward. Our strategic plan for the future of LBS is intended to help guide our thinking and motivate our actions. Small and cautious steps that constrain and lock us into our 'past' comfort zone are not enough to push us forward and create a dynamic, aspiration school. We aim to be risk-taking, experimental, and bold in creating a new path for our contribution to education and research that is authentic, clear, and decisive in its future focus. We will be innovative, applied, and responsible in seeking to make transformational contributions to business, policy, and society.

# STRATEGIC QUESTIONS

Our strategic planning was informed by specific questions:

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**WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR BUSINESS, POLICY, AND SOCIETY TODAY AND IN THE FUTURE, AND HOW CAN OUR EDUCATIONAL OFFERINGS AND RESEARCH CONTRIBUTE TO APPLIED, INNOVATIVE, AND RESPONSIBLE SOLUTIONS?**



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**WHAT KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS WILL BE NEEDED BY LEADERS OF BUSINESS AND GOVERNMENT IN THE FUTURE?**



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**HOW DO WE EQUIP OUR STUDENTS (GRADUATES) WITH KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLSETS TO ADDRESS CURRENT AND FUTURE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES?**



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**WHAT DISTINGUISHES LBS AND HOW CAN WE BEST LEVERAGE OUR RESOURCES AND CAPABILITIES? HOW CAN WE FURTHER DEVELOP OUR RESOURCES AND NEW ONES THROUGH OUR OWN EFFORTS AND THROUGH COLLABORATION WITH OUR PARTNERS? HOW DO WE CREATE A SCALABLE, SUSTAINABLE, HIGH-PERFORMANCE, FUTURE-FOCUSED BUSINESS SCHOOL?**



# PURPOSE AND VISION

La Trobe Business School is a key contributor to La Trobe University's vision and mission. In seeking to set LBS on a path toward a sustainable, high performing, future-focused trajectory we have reset our purpose and vision. Our purpose and vision reflect the School's commitment to the University Strategic Plan, and university values. Our school is committed to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME). Defining our purpose and vision has guided our objectives and the initiatives and actions that serve that purpose and vision.

## OUR PURPOSE

La Trobe Business School sees its purpose through the lens of the complex challenges our communities are facing and the emerging opportunities that stem from a rapidly evolving business world. Our purpose is to:

***Develop and mobilise the knowledge and skills of people, organisations, and communities to create positive social impact and sustainable futures.***

Our purpose reflects our strongly held view that through our support of business and government a better, more sustainable world can be created. Our purpose places LBS as a central partner in working to transform how business and government think about our world and how transforming their practices can create positive impacts on our communities.

## OUR VISION

Our vision is grounded on three critical assumptions about our role and relationship with the University and our communities. First, the University is committed to implementing, and maintaining a business model that supports growth and reduces inefficient activities. Second, the University acknowledges the positive longer-term benefits in our intended 'rightsizing' of Melbourne (Bundoora) and regional programs to bring ourselves more in line with the business schools we aspire to outperform. Third, the University will provide LBS the latitude and support to set and manage strategy in a fashion that more effectively serves our students (graduates), prospective employers, industry, government, and

academic partners (both domestic and international), and our priority communities. We seek to be a catalyst for positive change in people, business, and government to advance the economic and social well-being of our communities by mobilising the power of transformative business and policy education and research that create a prosperous and sustainable future for all.

Therefore, to fulfill our purpose, LBS has set a bold vision for the next five years:

***To be a leading Business School in the South-East Asia and Pacific regions, recognised for our work in transforming business and policy thinking, and promoting the well-being and sustainability of people, business, government, and communities.***

We aspire to be one of the region's (South-East Asia and Pacific) leading business schools grounded in a focus on transformative education and research that delivers social impact for people, business, government and communities and strategic partners.

To fulfill our purpose and vision, we seek through our endeavours to:

- Provide a transformational educational experience, driven by equity, engagement, and excellence, enabling our stakeholders to realise their full potential.
- Contribute to business and policy through applied, innovative research that advances the transformation of business and policy thinking and practice.
- Work in partnership with our communities of practice to mobilise and advance responsibly positive social impact and sustainable futures locally and globally.

## WE PURSUE OUR PURPOSE AND VISION:

- Through being future focused, applied, innovative and responsible in learning and teaching, and research.
- By engaging with our communities, students, business, government, and academic partners to maximise our social impact.
- By committing to making positive contribution to improving society through authentic and ethical leadership in our fields and being dedicated to creating social impact through all our endeavours.
- By delivering business and policy transformation through our focus on the UN SDGs and PRME in our teaching and research.

## OUR CORE VALUES AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES, WHICH UNDERPIN OUR PURPOSE AND VISION, DRIVE EVERYTHING WE DO.

Our aspirations and ethos of working are rooted in the La Trobe values and cultural qualities:



### WE ARE ACCOUNTABLE

We strive for excellence in everything we do. We hold each other and ourselves to account, and work to the highest ethical standards.



### WE ARE CONNECTED

We are a locally rooted and globally connected Business School. We harness our global reach and engagement to the benefit of our local and regional communities and businesses.



### WE ARE INNOVATIVE

We undertake innovative and impactful research to solve the big challenges of our time. We turn theory into practice to educate and prepare highly employable graduates and transform business and policy.



### WE CARE

We care about what we do and why we do it. We believe in the power of authentic education and collaborative partnerships that make a difference in the lives of our students and communities

We place great emphasis on and use the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to guide our educational, research and external engagement programs. However, while we support and work to underpin our work through all SDGs, we specifically give attention and direct action to the specific goals:

- SDG 3: Good health and wellbeing
- SDG 4: Quality Education
- SDG 8: Decent work and economic growth
- SDG 9: Industry, innovation, and infrastructure
- SDG10: Reduced inequalities
- SDG12: Responsible consumption and production
- SDG 13: Climate action
- SDG16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions.

Our future focused – applied – innovative – responsible values align with the PRME and signal our support of the UN SDGs. In our teaching and vision for graduates we promote responsible management and reflect the United Nations PRME in subject and course delivery and learning outcomes, as well as assurance of learning processes. In our research we adopt responsible research principles to transform business practice and make a difference in our own and our communities' understanding and practice of business. In our community engagement we enable adoption of responsible and inclusive practices, as well as sustainable technologies, to be a Business School for a better future.



# OUR SCHOOL WILL:

- Take pride in the social mission of our School and University as we use our expertise and knowledge to engage with organisations, partners, and communities.
- Focus our teaching and research on areas where we can have the greatest social impact on individuals, organisations, and our communities.
- Engage meaningfully with our colleagues across La Trobe, alumni, business, and government to create positive experiences with significant social impact.
- Develop mindsets for solving the challenges facing society and take advantages of the opportunities of today and the future.

At LBS, we have an applied orientation to our thought leadership, educational programs, and research. We are well positioned to advance business and policy thinking during ongoing changes in society. Our pursuits are meaningful if they advance our own, our partners' and our communities understanding of the forces that shape the behaviour of people, organisations, markets, and communities and contribute to improving business and society.

# LA TROBE BUSINESS SCHOOL STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Our strategic priorities are presented as three strategic pillars that form the foundations of our purpose and vision and a set of two broad based strategic enablers focusing on the behaviours and support necessary to achieve our strategic priorities. Our ways of working are underpinned by our belief in the La Trobe cultural qualities and we seek to embed the foundations of PRME and UN SDGs into our strategic priorities.

## THREE STRATEGIC PILLARS AND TWO STRATEGIC ENABLERS

The three strategic pillars are our essential focus. From these, the enablers underpin how we will be supported.

### STRATEGIC PILLAR 1: FUTURE FOCUSED TEACHING AND LEARNING

We will foster an applied innovative and responsible approach to teaching and learning. We will do this by prioritising applied and authentic educational experiences to connect students with business, government, and community and equip our graduates to be ethical leaders of the future.

### STRATEGIC PILLAR 2: RESEARCH WITH SOCIAL IMPACT

We will focus on our research strengths and build new strengths, encourage our researchers to be innovative, responsible and take calculated risks to identify grand challenges and optimise the impact of our research upon academia, business, government, and the community.

### STRATEGIC PILLAR 3: DEEP ENGAGEMENT WITH PARTNERS AND COMMUNITIES

We will engage responsibly and innovatively with our partners and communities to co-create education and research that has real-world application and social impact. We will promote engagement to ensure delivery of applied and authentic learning experiences and applied research with impact. Our approach to education, and research will focus on translation from practice and innovation to practice through deep engagement with external communities of practice.

### STRATEGIC ENABLER 1: CULTURE AND PERFORMANCE - OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS

We will develop a high-performance culture grounded in personal accountability, peer-to-peer mentorship, collaborative work, and responsible decision-making. We will pursue efficient and effective business operations to support teaching and learning, research, and engagement. We will foster an open, collaborative, and caring environment that promotes diversity and inclusiveness, and that recognises quality, rewards success, and hard work, and promotes creativity and innovation.

### STRATEGIC ENABLER 2: INFRASTRUCTURE AND RESOURCES

We will develop an environment and infrastructure that supports and fosters authentic teaching and learning, innovative research, and responsible community engagement. We will work to acquire, co-develop (with national and international partners) and utilise resources and capabilities to support our three strategic pillars.

## STRATEGIC PILLAR 1:

# FUTURE FOCUSED TEACHING AND LEARNING

Societal challenges are increasing at an increase rate, through climate change, war and conflict, global migration, technological advancements, and the changing nature of work itself. Looking to the future, we realise the skills and knowledge that business school graduates will need to possess must be future focused and they will face increasing pressure to be agile and innovative. The rise of freelancing and portfolio careers, personal brands, 'peer-to-peer' and 'gig' economies, and the ubiquity of technology, all have significant implications for the form, function, and timing of their educational requirements. We are committed to meeting these challenges and prepare our graduates for the opportunities a changing future will bring. Our programs, curriculum, and delivery modes will respond accordingly to the needs of our students, and their career values and aspirations.

As a business school we commit to delivering a positive social impact. We will strive to offer students opportunities outside of the classroom and continue to cater to and support students from diverse backgrounds and abilities. We are committed to ensuring that our curriculum and teaching methods remain future focussed, applied, innovative and responsible, and to ensuring that, by embedding the relevant SDGs, that sustainable business practice remains a priority. This will require increased

investment in the capabilities of our staff, and, in partnership with both the university and our partners, and a concerted effort to raise the profile of teaching within the School is our priority.

### **STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1A: TECHNOLOGY-ENABLED, ACTIVE, AND STUDENT-CENTRED LEARNING**

We will offer students the ability to curate their own learning experience through combinations of face-to-face, online, and blended delivery. In keeping with the range of student preferences we will cater for various modes and timings of the learning experience.

While face-to-face interactions between academic staff and students, is a traditional and valuable aspect of a high-quality learning environment, technology enabled learning is vital. We will build our expertise in technologically enabled learning to enhance and complement our traditional teaching and learning activities. We will use technology to provide ways for students to adjust the pace and mode of their learning to match their own needs. Through technology we will enable more in-class and online engagement, collaborative learning, authenticity in assessment, invite more industry into our classrooms (e.g., businesses and speakers located abroad), and facilitate the sharing of knowledge, interests, and resources within our student cohort. We aim to maximise the ability of our online platforms to provide students a high quality, seamless and consistent blended learning experience by integrating the face-to-face and online learning environments into our courses.

Where appropriate, we will deliver purely online courses reaching new geographies and demographics, broadening access, and bolstering our ability to secure new markets. To continue to grow our course offerings and access new markets and better serve existing ones we will invest

in teaching and learning innovation, and partner with the University and industry to develop world-class, technology-enabled business education.

Developing the technology capabilities of our students and staff is a high priority. Our aim is to enable greater engagement of student and staff with a wide range of technologies. We will work to deepen our students' learning experience via digital technologies. The deep immersion of our staff and students in the application of digitally enabled learning practices and key industry and business applications will promote active and professional teaching and learning experiences. High level technological capabilities will also promote flexibility in learning in order to advance students' discipline knowledge and skills and develop their awareness and preparedness for the future of work. This will enable better engagement with the technology and an understanding of its impacts on business and society. Through effective use of technology, we can bolster and enhance the delivery of transformative applied and authentic learning experiences that will prepare our graduates for strong careers and promote their employability.

To drive this ambition, digitally enabled learning spaces and teaching strategies that place the student at the centre of their learning experience will be utilised. Our applied and authentic learning model grounded in active learning where both self-directed and collaborative learning activities take place in technologically enabled environments that reflect professional contexts is a key pillar of our learning and teaching strategy. Our focus on developing digital capabilities will present students and staff with an improved digital interface, experience, and support, to ensure all students and staff are digitally skilled and capable.

We will work with LTU ICT, Education Services, AV, and I&O units to deliver seamless digital experiences and assessment. Digital upskilling and maintenance of capabilities will be an ongoing focus to uplift staff in all aspects of digitally enabled learning and teaching. Beyond industry standard platforms, software and tools, capacity building will include educational design, development and delivery (including online, blended and hybrid delivery, and industry-based platforms for discipline development). Ongoing benchmarking of industry and other university standards will ensure we measure the extent to which LBS digital learning and teaching aligns with and exceeds our delivery standards.

Our success will be measured by our course rankings, such as Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) rankings and others, and student feedback provided through various mechanisms, including the annual QILT surveys [top 10 student experience surveys for teaching quality and overall experience] where we seek to be within the top 10 for business schools.

## **STRATEGIC PRIORITY IB: STUDENT EMPLOYABILITY – CAREER-RELEVANT PROFESSIONAL AND COMMUNITY EXPERIENCES**

While it is true for many students, perhaps especially business students, success in higher education means achieving a desired career, yet many students also enter university unsure of their career path and perhaps with limited awareness of the range of opportunities that may be available. The latter student cohort does form a large part of the La Trobe University community, and it is therefore vital that we maintain a clear focus on employability and provide opportunities for our students to engage with industry. We will work to raise aspirations and awareness of potential opportunities and do all we can to facilitate our graduates' career paths. Many of our courses are professionally aligned and we must strengthen this aspect with deeper engagement of the professions. We will ensure we continue to co-design our courses with business and government partners, and enable the sharing of professional knowledge, interests, and resources within our student cohort and industry.

We must ensure our students gain access to professional recognition, industry experience and international mobility as part of their learning. The need to expand opportunities will be particularly vital among our postgraduate courses, especially for international students. Our alumni and business partners will play a significant



role in our ability to provide such opportunities to our students.

Our success will be measured by our student employability performance being measured through a range of indicators including the top 10 in in the graduate outcomes survey and graduate salaries indicators being in the top 10 in Australia.

## **STRATEGIC PRIORITY IC: EXPOSURE TO MULTIPLE DEPARTMENTS AND/OR SCHOOLS – ENABLE MULTI-DISCIPLINARITY IN EDUCATION**

La Trobe University encourages students to engage with other disciplines to complement their chosen core focus. Within the Business School our course architecture supports this objective, and we believe it adds to the value proposition for students. Developing broad and deep knowledge and skills can help our students' employability, career success, and raise awareness of career opportunities in a rapidly changing world of work.

La Trobe's course architecture further extends opportunities for students to bundle majors and minors in their undergraduate course. We will seek to develop equivalent opportunities at the postgraduate course level. We refer to this path as "double horizontals" (i.e., double masters courses), we will bundle attractive postgraduate courses to position our graduates in the market for career success and to be future focused

and prepared for a changing world. We will work to capitalise on potential opportunities to enhance and extend the range of distinctive interdisciplinary programs we offer within the School and between schools across Bachelor and Master level courses. The School will work with our students and partners to ensure sustained career success by ensuring our graduates acquire broad and deep knowledge and critical skill sets. Our programs must offer opportunities that add value to our students' study that other universities do not and always priorities prioritise being future focused, applied, innovative and responsible.

## **STRATEGIC PRIORITY ID: FLEXIBLE AND ACCESSIBLE CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND CAREER SUCCESS**

The evolution of professional development through life-long learning and changing professional needs presents significant opportunities in relation to the development and delivery of credentialed offerings. Professional development through customised learning opportunities, taken individually or combined, and lead to higher academic awards are critical. Bundling and re-bundling elements of existing or new subjects and courses offers a mechanism to meet efficiently the changing needs of learners and of business and government who employ our graduates.

## STRATEGIC PILLAR 2:

# RESEARCH WITH SOCIAL IMPACT

In a dynamic and competitive higher education environment, it is essential that we strengthen our research to broaden and deepen its quality and impact. Our research will prioritise being applied, innovative, responsible, and always be oriented to understanding and solving problems of importance to our communities.

Increasingly, the challenges facing business and society cannot be solved within single disciplinary areas. We seek collaborative opportunities within the University, within our local stakeholder communities, and beyond our regional and national borders. The business school must become a key research partner to help solve the growing range of social challenges through the transformation of business practices and thinking. Advancing our research profile will require us to be more strategic in how we support and encourage research, to be more specific in what we ask staff to achieve, to set our expectations higher, and to become more focused in how resources are allocated.

### STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2A: RESEARCH EXPECTATIONS – PRODUCING WORLD-CLASS BUSINESS AND POLICY RESEARCH

Nationally and internationally business school research productivity has been accelerating. The School must continue to raise the bar and lift its research performance (measured via a targeted pursuit of publishing our research in ABDC A\*, A and FT50 and Scopus Q1 top 10% publications and impact as represented via high citations) while not lessening our aspirations of collaboration and social impact. We prioritise both the quality of our research and the depth of our collaborations both domestically and internationally.

In articulating and supporting the elevation of research excellence the school will be responsive to disciplinary input and encourage ongoing quality discussions. In addition to ranking indicators, the school values, and seeks to deepen, our national and international research collaborations and the application of innovative solutions. Our work to provide a positive benefit to partners across the world is an important part of our engagement. Our commitment to the UN SDGs provides a useful alternative framework for discussions of research value and impact.

Our strategy is grounded in the knowledge that poorly ranked journal articles, book chapters and other outputs often lack the visibility to be noticed and the rigor to be responded to. There is a significant benefit to focusing on the highest ranked journals. Equally, the pursuit of disciplinary excellence will also yield positive impacts on interdisciplinarity pursuits. However, considering the performance base the School is building from, these are considered vital ingredients (disciplinary expertise and highest quality journals) in refocusing and re-establishing the School as a premier business school.

Thus, in articulating and supporting the elevation of our research excellence,

we must socialise and communicate that we neither accept simplistic assumptions or those not based on reality (e.g., high-ranked outputs are necessarily lower in their potential for real-world impact) nor being too narrow and inflexible regarding our research expectations (e.g., only A\* or FT 50 journals matter or where ABDC and FT50 does not cover a discipline or specific research area Scopus Q1 20% level is considered the quality benchmark). To facilitate quality research in our disciplines we will seek to strengthen our core research capacity in the first instance. We then need to leverage our core strength in collaborations contributing to the university's research themes and priorities.

### STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2B: AN ENVIRONMENT OF RESEARCH EXCELLENCE – BUILDING AREAS OF NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL STRENGTH AND IMPACT

In conjunction with raising our overall research quality, productivity and supporting emergent research strengths, we will identify and nurture specific research themes in which we seek a position of national and international prominence. Our commitment to the UN SDGs provides a highly relevant and applied guide to our work.

Strategically, these themes should attract and sustain significant external research funding and be relevant to our communities of practice. We are at an early stage of developing these key themes and will, over the course of 2023 and 2024, identify and prioritise them. The La Trobe Business School research themes will support the wider University Research Institutes and University Research Themes. We will develop and communicate clear expectations in relation to our own research centres and areas of excellence, provide clear resourcing and support and establish specific governance of the processes to make these strategic choices.

We will foster opportunities for international collaboration. We will build a visiting scholar program to increase the number of world renowned scholars visiting La Trobe and engaging with our staff and students. By exposing our staff and students to high profile international scholars we will increase their opportunity to collaborate and thus strengthen our international reputation.

## **STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2C: DEEPENING PROBLEM-ORIENTED AND IMPACTFUL RESEARCH - INDUSTRY AND POLICY PARTNERSHIPS THAT SUPPORT SCOPE AND SCALE**

La Trobe Business School is committed to positive social impact. We want to make a difference; be responsive to the needs of our stakeholders and communities; and focus attention on applications and solutions that lead to positive social change and advance the transformation of business and policy think and practice.

We will prioritise activities that fit with our focus on the SDGs and that translate these goals into infrastructure and practices. We will exemplify business engagement through targeted showcase relationships and collaborations. The best examples we have of current engagement are partnerships with Next DC, Optus, Cisco, and VicHealth. Such relationships are often situated in our Research Centres, and will be leveraged to fund, or co-fund sponsored activities and positions, and provide opportunities for collaborative research, internships, and employment. LBS is looking to consolidate the social impact our two research centres with

other areas within the School and thus build a comprehensive approach to positive social impact.

## **STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2D: INCREASE EXPOSURE OF RESEARCH – PUBLICISING AND TRANSLATING RESEARCH OUTCOMES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

Impact and reputation rarely arise unexpectedly from research. Rather, generating impact requires careful curation and support infrastructure to synthesise, translate and communicate research to impact policy and practice. We will maximise the translational and communication of the school's research to reach business, government, and community audiences. The school will use available technologies and university support to boost external communication of our research.

## **STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2E: SUSTAINABLY INCREASE EXTERNAL RESEARCH FUNDING**

Our research is funded by cross-subsidisation from teaching income, and therefore the extent we can sustain this over time is both unpredictable and raises issues for ensuring our research has impact. The School will develop processes, which will include infrastructure and knowledge resources, to assist staff to seek external funding and become more proactive in setting expectations and developing skills to ensure grant success. With effective and efficient support, we will increase our external research income through ARC funding – including DECRA, Discovery and Linkage grants – and

business, government, and not-for-profit sector income. We must effectively work to create systems to ensure research income interfaces effectively and efficiently with staff workload. The School will work closely with the University to manage financial sustainability. Our success will be measured in an increase in our category 1 to 4 grant income over the next 3 years increasing @ 20% per annum between 2023 to 2025.

## **STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2F: BUILDING RESEARCH CAPACITY – FUTURE ORIENTED STRATEGICALLY ALIGNED PHD PROGRAM**

PhD students are a strategic investment in the future. Our PhD students are our ambassadors. We will strategically align our PhD research to increase the number of HDR enrolments, including cotutelle students. We will pursue activities that improve the training and career paths of our PhD students. While we acknowledge that awarding research scholarships is primarily a central University decision, we will work to mitigate this with opportunities within the School.

We will work to improve our PhD pathways. The PhD program will be broadened, with more prominence afforded industry PhDs and joint PhDs with international partners. The PhD student experience will also be prioritised – to establish a stimulating, intellectual and collegial environment of discipline groups to support PhD students. The School will develop and host seminar programs, conferences, lectures, and hold regular PhD colloquium. Have > 10 cotutelle PhD supervisions active at any point in time.



## STRATEGIC PILLAR 3:

# DEEP ENGAGEMENT WITH PARTNERS AND COMMUNITIES

Genuine value arises from engagement with partners and communities. The School's engagement priorities must build on our participation in the broader University's program of strategic engagement both regionally and globally. Enhancing our external engagement will increasingly require substantial internal cooperation with other areas of the University leveraging the synergies, complementary expertise, and benefits of scale that such collaborations can create.

We will engage with our communities, industry, and government to co-create opportunities for students through live case studies, class projects and work integrated learning and develop research collaborations through Centres such as the Centre for Rural Ageing or Centre for Study of the Inland. Engagement must be central to all that we do, and our purpose and vision reflects this reality. Moving forward, our teaching, research, and staff capability development

priorities must be underpinned by external engagement and strategic partnerships. We will need to develop and maintain a sustainable engagement model that is aligned with and reinforces our strategy. Deep strategic engagement through enhancing reputational benefits will provide a necessary springboard to attract students, both domestically and internationally as well as research partners. Promoting the relevance of industry, government, alumni and community partnerships, and their benefits, has significant reputational value for the school, and are likely to lead to further engagement opportunities creating a virtuous circle of engagement led improvements across the board for the school.

### STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3A: FOSTERING ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT

Our alumni include significant members of the business and policymaker community, and we seek to retain them as members of the La Trobe community. The School will connect with our alumni earlier and more meaningfully and consistently throughout and beyond their direct involvement with the University and work to create

more collaborative opportunities. These will include mentoring and career development advice for our students, events to encourage connection with broader industry and professional networks, opportunities for the co-development of courses and subjects, live case studies, data access, internships, and WIL. We will encourage alumni to become partners or participants in our research and our teaching and student engagement.

### STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3B: BUILD RELATIONSHIPS INTERNATIONALLY – UNIVERSITIES AND EDUCATIONAL PROVIDERS

We are a global business school in many respects and have established meaningful partnerships with partner universities internationally. At the same time, the dual needs to support international enrolments and build international research connections and profile tend to pull our partnership activities in different directions. Student international mobility remains underdeveloped and is an area we need to progress in. We will progress the depth our relationships with international universities –at their deepest, extending to student exchange



activity, collaborative international learning and joint research and PhD research supervision, and hosting joint conferences. We do not, have at present a systematic program of staff exchange for teaching and research or offer joint or consortium courses; or have joint research centres, jointly appointed staff or cooperative corporate connections. These are a priority and will be key to progressing our internationalisation.

Our engagement internationally is a key factor in the School's future growth and success. Our partnerships will priorities the strategic development of the school and the partner. Our transnational partnerships will provide opportunities not only for international students' enrolments, but also for collaborative international learning for our students and staff. Our TNE partnerships will focus on building reputation in countries not only in our focal regions on South-East Asia and the Pacific, but also South Asia, Europe, Africa, and South America. The School's international student mobility needs to grow. To date, we have had rather limited depth to our relationships with international universities – and this will change as we explore new opportunities. There is a strategic priority to align with our mission and vision and engage in multifaceted partnerships with reputable universities that will grow simultaneously international research collaborations and student opportunities and articulations. We aim to develop such strategic partnerships with reputable international universities. We will develop a systematic program of staff exchange for teaching and research; offer joint or consortium programs; and cooperative connections with industry in priority country markets.

Many of our courses have been purposefully aligned to advance their professional focus, co-designed with business and industry associations. This allows graduates professional recognition. While some elements of courses focus on employability, we need a more coherent overarching framework for employability; providing structured opportunities for students to experience work integrated learning opportunities linked to their chosen careers in differing industries; and more opportunity for international mobility. Improving structured career development opportunities is particularly critical among our postgraduate courses, where we need to improve significantly.

In relation to the internationalisation of our research with social impact we will work to identify and nurture research foci in which we take a position of national and international prominence. These foci will need attract and sustain significant external research funding, international collaborators and engage us more closely with our communities such that

they maximise our social impact. We must work to exert greater influence on business and policy thinking and practice. We have a limited and under-resourced history of engaging deeply in policy debates and need to identify a number of new routes to greater engagement with business and policymakers.

We seek to be in the top echelon of business school for the quality of outcomes for staff and students from strategic partnerships with international universities contributing to the university's position as measured by indicators including international partnerships assessment rating index. Exchange 10 Academic staff with key partner universities per year. We will work to enable 20% of our student body to have an international experience as part of their course, with a significantly higher ratio on some courses. we will seek to co-fund > \$200,000 per year of research with core international research partners.

### **STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3C: GAIN AND RETAIN ACCREDITATIONS – TRIPLE-ACCREDITED STATUS**

Accreditations are imprimaturs of quality and distinction. They also serve as systems for continuous improvement and the exchange of innovative research and practice in leading global business schools. We seek triple-accredited status (EQUIS, AACSB and AMBA), alongside maintaining and extending our professional accreditations in fields of professional practice, which will signal the quality of our education to students, alumni and the business and government communities. Through triple accreditation the School will hold an esteemed position among global elite peers, will join the top 1 per cent of business schools with such recognition, strengthen its international partnership potential, foster greater student mobility, and recruit high-quality students and staff and engage in collaborative research with social impact.

### **STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3D: GAIN AND MAINTAIN DISCIPLINE AND COURSE RANKINGS AND EXCELLENCE IN COURSE PERFORMANCE**

Rankings play a vital role in influencing potential student choice and contribute to a school's brand and reputation. The School will engage strategically to gain and sustain its program-level rankings, especially in Quacquarelli Symonds (QS), and proactively seek opportunities to achieve higher rankings wherever possible. The School also has ambitious goals for improvements in Quality Indicators of Learning and Teaching (QILT) and aspirations to be in the top

10 business schools in all key indicators of QILT.

Discipline rankings are also of growing significance to student enrolment and staff employment choices. These are heavily research related but also often encompass indicators of academic resourcing, reputational assessments, and data on the size and composition of student and staff bodies. The most prominent – our ERA rankings and QS and Times Higher subject/field rankings internationally – are an important focus for identifying our quality and brand image. The school will actively seek to promote our disciplines to enhance our reputation and work to be in the Top 50 to 75 (QS) for majority of our disciplines.

### **STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3E: RAISE THE PROMINENCE OF OUR THOUGHT LEADERSHIP – MEDIA OUTREACH AND IMPACT**

We are less prominent in thought leadership than other business schools. Supporting academics to generate media interest in their work will be a driver of raising our profile, generating proof points for our brand distinctiveness, and living our mission. We will develop or access where appropriate the distinctive capabilities required to communicate and translate our research for media consumption. We will develop infrastructure that supports academic capacity to communicate externally, and which takes on the work of research translation and communication. Through media engagement the translation of our research will build impact and leverage into more research and grant opportunities.

### **STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3F: MARKET DIVERSIFICATION – INDUSTRY FOCUSED SUBJECTS AND COURSES**

Our outreach and engagement strategy will include offering industry focused education programs, including short courses; micro-credentials; work integrated learning programs; research collaborations; and collaborative funding opportunities. The School will collaborate with specific partners to enhance our online education course offerings and build capacity to complement the on-campus experience. We will design and deliver contemporary high-quality micro-credentials and single-subject online courses to remain competitive and influential in a rapidly changing global education market. Select courses may be delivered in partnership with industry or third-party providers. These will be central our pursuit of developing a corporate education portfolio.

# STRATEGIC ENABLER 1:

## PEOPLE AND CULTURE

Our academic and professional staff are our most important resources and the continuous nurturing, support, encouragement, and development of our School community is the cornerstone to our success. It is through the commitment, energy, and hard work of our staff (colleagues) that we will succeed in our mission, and we need to address the quality of our working environment at the individual, team, and organisation level to promote our success, and that of our students and graduates.

### STRATEGIC ENABLER PRIORITY 1A: COLLEGIAL – HIGH PERFORMING CULTURE AND EMPOWERING CLIMATE

The School and broader University community are diverse and our diversity is a key to our competitive advantage. We will continue to build a culture and environment that supports our core priorities. Behaviour that is not consistent with our cultural qualities and guiding values of being future-focused, applied, innovative and responsible and that are inconsistent with the University cultural values will not be accepted.

Communication is core to developing a collegial and empowering school culture. The School will work ensure communication of key information and broad understanding of issues. We will work on our internal communications to promote to colleagues a broader understanding of the School, the University and our wider external partners and communities. We will develop external communications to demonstrate to our partners and communities the culture and achievements of the school and provide staff the opportunities to engage with the design and implementation of our strategy by empowering them to take responsibility and authority and be active in the school's developmental plans and growth.

### STRATEGIC ENABLER PRIORITY 1B: ATTRACT, DEVELOP, AND RETAIN A HIGHLY INNOVATIVE, RESPONSIBLE, AND ENGAGED ACADEMICS

A well-supported and engaged staff cohort, augmented from time to time by the recruitment of new colleagues, are essential to our success. Systems for staff development and recognition will be supported by and aligned with other systems, such as recruitment, workload, and performance review, to ensure a productive and fulfilled workforce. Workload will be managed to ensure academic staff closely reflect the real time that colleagues spend on activities to develop and deliver high quality teaching, research, and community engagement. We will develop mechanisms to reward high performers and to celebrate the positive contributions of staff, through supporting promotion, providing Outside Study Program (OSP) leave, promoting international conference attendance, encouraging high quality research through incentive schemes, and establishing teaching awards. We will engage in conversations regarding performance expectations and utilise the career success framework proactively to address issues, to foster engagement and staff development, and to ensure staff accountability for performance. We will ensure that the valuable and distinctive contributions of our casual colleagues are recognised and that they benefit from opportunities to

progress professionally. The University provides for the continuing employment of colleagues specialising in teaching. Recruiting staff into these roles and managing their career development through the Learning and Teaching Recognition framework will facilitate a clearer contribution from staff on different pathways who are nevertheless crucial to the School's success.

We will focus on supporting staff to build the skills and capabilities necessary to play their role in our collective success. We will address multiple areas of staff development and improve our celebration and encouragement of success. There is a need for a comprehensive and well-resourced staff development plan and will focus on activities such as mentoring and formal learning (e.g., LTU graduate certificate in higher education, fellowship at the Higher Education Academy) and ensure developmental activities occur frequently to provide career progression pathways. To be effective, staff development will encompass key skill areas where we know staff have developmental needs, be built with sufficient capacity to cater to demands, be offered in a timely fashion to enable staff to upskill relatively quickly and on an ongoing basis and ensure the development of the School's leaders of the future.

## STRATEGIC ENABLER 2:

# MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE – OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS

Our ability to achieve our stated goals can only occur through effective and efficient governance and management of the school. Through our management and governance practices we seek to promote operational efficiency and effectiveness as a means to enabling greater performance through resource transparency and focusing on continuous improvement modelling of our operations. We place a high priority on operational excellence across all the School's business functions to support the learning and teaching, research and engagement pillars. We will constantly pursue improvements in the school's management practices and governance models as a priority.



### STRATEGIC ENABLER PRIORITY 2A: STRENGTHEN SCHOOL INFRASTRUCTURE AND SUPPORT SYSTEMS FOR EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS

We will develop and enact the policies and practices necessary to pursue our core vision and strategic priorities. We will develop systems to support existing activity, and create the infrastructure required to improve the School's performance. The digital realm will bring about much improved processes and efficiencies and the University is already working on the redevelopment of key digital and technology assets, a university-wide CRM system, the School website, ensuring the ease of online micro-credentialing, and upgrading student and curriculum management systems. The School seeks to add to these developments through investment in capacity building to support grant success, the development of research databases and laboratories necessary for business research, investment in new teaching facilities that support innovative pedagogy, the enhanced support for online and innovative pedagogy and the support for research translation and dissemination.

### INFRASTRUCTURE AND RESOURCES

#### STRATEGIC ENABLER PRIORITY 2B: SCHOOL RESOURCING CONSISTENT WITH OUR PURPOSE, VISION, AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE UNIVERSITY

Elevating our aspirations will require an improvement in our resource base – and we seek to make considerable progress in the next two years in resourcing. In addition to a growth in staff numbers, the further development of teaching focused academic staff will play a critical role in supporting the School's capacity for innovation in teaching and learning and support our central focus on student success and an enriching our students experience through deeper engagement with students.

# CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

Focusing on our strategic priorities will help the School to prioritise and promote transformative education at scale, create research with academic rigor and social impact, and promote a future school that can proactively address challenges and opportunities as they arise. The embedding of PRME and SDGs demonstrates our commitment to sustainability and social impact and manifests the school's social license.

The revitalising of our business school is a significant opportunity to achieve a strategic reset in which we are clearer about our distinctive qualities, values, and attributes. It is an opportunity to focus and build, and track, how external constituencies are evaluating us. We will where possible seek to track the LBS brand development and reputation to continuously evaluate our success in communicating our essence to our communities, especially potential students nationally and internationally, and the business community and international universities.

Our strategic priorities and underlying principles will have a set of implementation priorities and resource investments that underpin them to maximise success. While the strategic priorities are key foundations, they act in harmony. Our strategic priorities also require collaboration across the University – with other schools and the University Central Divisions – to achieve our vision. Our resourcing is consistent with our need to improve performance and will be enabled by increasing the school's financial strength.

Our yearly operational plan will detail the actions required to achieve the priorities set out in this document. A collaborative and collegial approach will be required to support the vision and full-fill the mission of the School. Staff input and support will be encouraged in the implementation of the initiatives. We will develop measures to gauge our success and monitor and reflect on our progress as we move through implementation.

This strategic plan outlines a vision for the School, its priorities and ambitions. The challenge over the next five years is move from strategy to action. We must confront our changing competitive environment head on and strive to establish world-class business school with state of art facilities, incorporating modern collaborative spaces, to nurture contemporary learning and research. We must work in partnership with the University to explore options to fund and deliver on our priorities.



**Professor Aron O'Cass**  
Dean, La Trobe Business



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