Strategic Plan

2018-2022

March 2020

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A message from the Vice-Chancellor

Our Strategic Plan released in 2018 has served us well. Consistent with good practice, the University has undertaken a mid-term review and refresh of the Plan.

This enables us to ensure that it remains relevant and responsive to changes in our operating environment; and that important new initiatives, such as Clever Learning, Research 2030 and the University City of the Future, are fully described, and that their contribution to our strategic objectives are fully articulated.

The world around us is changing very rapidly. La Trobe is uniquely placed to continue this great University’s tradition of making a difference. This refreshed Strategic Plan will help us to respond to the big trends affecting our sector – things like Artificial Intelligence, machine learning and digital disruption, the challenges of urbanisation, climate change and global food production, and the changing world of work.

The refreshed Plan reaffirms our commitment to be deeply connected to our communities, and to excellence, innovation, accessibility and relevance – in short, to be a great University for the 21st Century.

Professor John Dewar AO
Vice-Chancellor and President
Our mission...
Advancing knowledge and learning to shape the future of our students and communities.

Our vision...
To promote positive change and address the major issues of our time through being connected, inclusive and excellent.

La Trobe University opened its doors to students in 1967 as the third University in Victoria. Its founding purpose was to bring higher education to the northern suburbs of Melbourne.

Since then, La Trobe has gone on to be globally ranked amongst the top 1.5 per cent of universities in the world, while maintaining its mission to be one of Australia’s most accessible Universities. During the 1990s that mission expanded to include regional campuses in central and northern Victoria. La Trobe is now the largest provider of higher education to regional Victorian students. No other Australian University combines these two missions of excellence and accessibility as well as La Trobe does.

While the University can be proud of this history, we will continue to serve our communities best by ensuring that we remain relevant to the needs of our students and partners — in what and how we teach, the way we support our students to live valuable lives, in the quality, relevance and impact of our research, in the quality of our external partnerships, in our contribution to the economic and social well-being of the communities we serve, and in the efficiency and quality of the way we operate.

La Trobe is committed to being a ‘Climate Clever’ University, an approach endorsed by our Academic Board. This will inform the way we educate our students, the research we conduct and the way we manage our operations.

Our values
Our values underpin everything we do. They are:
- inclusiveness, diversity, equity and social justice
- pursuing excellence and sustainability
- championing our local communities in Melbourne’s north and regional Victoria
- being willing to innovate and disrupt the traditional way of doing things.

This strategy
This strategy identifies four core objectives (outstanding student experience; student employability; research excellence; and partner of choice) and three enablers (one university with many communities; operational excellence; and revenue growth), as presented in the diagram on page 04.

By core objectives, we mean the main goals against which we will measure our success as a university delivering our mission and vision. By enablers, we mean the physical and human assets, financial resources and community connections that underpin the delivery of our core objectives, mission and vision.

Our cultural qualities
Our vision is to promote positive change and address the major issues of our time through our Cultural Qualities, of being accountable, connected, showing care in all we do and being innovative. We will strive to be exemplars for the sector in our commitment to gender equity and to inclusivity for marginalised groups. Our positive culture will lead to the fulfillment of our core principles: to create an outstanding student experience and being the partner of choice. Our Cultural Qualities are:

- Connected: Connecting the students and communities we serve to the world outside
- Innovative: Tackling the big issues of our time to transform the lives of our students and society
- Accountable: Striving for excellence in everything we do, holding each other to account, and working to the highest standards
- Care: We care about what we do and why we do it, because we believe in the power of education and research to transform lives and global society
Our Core Objectives
To meet the needs of our diverse student body, La Trobe must offer a consistently high-quality student experience that is engaging, supports academic success and provides diverse opportunities for our students to extend their talents and contribute to their communities.

La Trobe students will be creative and independent thinkers from diverse walks of life, countries, cultures and backgrounds, and will include those with a passion for innovation and challenging the status quo. We will equip them with an identifiable modern, industry informed and globally relevant education, that will support them to develop the high-level professional skills and attributes required to thrive in the workforce.

Quality enhancement

The quality of the student experience is a whole-of-university responsibility, and we will adopt an evidence-based approach to continuously measure and improve it. We will prioritise the sharing of good practice and collegial approaches to scholarly curriculum improvement across disciplines.

Our students increasingly expect to engage with their studies flexibly, including through online and micro-credential options in addition to more traditional degree structures.

We will continually update our courses so that they are interesting, engaging, industry relevant and accessible for students, providing opportunities for students to build and extend their skills across their careers and to ensure they remain competitive in a global market, wherever they choose to commence their careers and build their futures.

We will continue to improve the design of subjects and the quality of teaching through a continuous improvement process that provides additional opportunities for students to provide feedback.

Retention and student success

We acknowledge the diverse social and economic pressures facing our students and are committed to providing targeted support and diverse opportunities for students to connect, engage and achieve their unique version of success. Our Student Success and Retention Plan 2018–2022 sets out the actions, measures and targets we must pursue to maximise student progression, persistence and completion. As part of this work, we will continue to implement evidence-based and data-informed initiatives that allows us to target intensive support to students who need it most and support the successful transition of students from and through multiple entry points, pathways and study modes.

A respectful, safe and secure learning community

We care about every member of our University and are strongly committed to equity and diversity. We aim to create a safe, secure and inclusive learning environment in which everyone’s rights, responsibilities and expectations are clearly understood, wherever learning takes place. Aiming to work more closely with our students, we have created a Student Partnership portfolio to embed principles of respect, safety and security across the La Trobe learning community.

Our focus on supporting mental health and wellbeing will enable us to build a well and thriving community, foster self-awareness and resilience amongst staff, students and partners, and improve and expand services and support. We are creating a University culture of which we can be proud, and in which comprehensive support is available for students and staff.

Engaged staff, engaged students

We recognise that one of the ways to improve the student experience is to improve the staff experience. La Trobe seeks to recruit and retain excellent academic and professional staff, and to be an employer of choice. We are putting in place a series of targeted professional learning opportunities for staff to equip them to respond to the complex needs of our students.

Enhancing the student experience is at the heart of all that we do at La Trobe. To support this, we are establishing the La Trobe Academy. The Academy will focus on strengthening the quality and raising the esteem of learning and teaching at La Trobe, through the provision of world-class continuous professional learning for staff and by recognising and rewarding excellence in teaching and learning support, and will position the university as a global leader.

Diversity

We will ensure that our staffing profile reflects the diversity of our student body and our communities, and that our graduates can engage effectively with people from different backgrounds, abilities and cultures. We aim to educate global citizens through cross-cultural curricula, outbound mobility, language teaching and a wide range of employability experiences.

Embedding Indigenous perspectives

We will embed Indigenous perspectives, Indigenous knowledge, and relevant innovative pedagogies in all curricula, in the service of developing culturally-safe graduates with a nuanced grasp of the contemporary consequences of colonisation and the strengths of Indigenous Australian cultures.

GOAL

To deliver a consistently high quality experience for all students.

2022 TARGET

Top 12 public university in Australia and top in Victoria for consistently high quality experience as measured by performance on the QILT Student Experience Survey in Teaching Quality and Overall Experience.
Transforming the student experience and our educational offer.

The traditional model of university education is experiencing disruption. Over the past 10 years, the sector has experienced a groundswell of change, including increasing scale, technological capability, shifts in student expectations and alternative educational models. Although degrees will remain important, prospective and continuing students are seeking more flexible modes of learning, and simple to navigate courses with options that align with their career aspirations.

For many, the potential to engage with shorter cycle learning experiences and ‘stackable’ credentials that meet their emerging skills needs across their careers is becoming increasingly important.

To remain relevant, universities must meet, head on, the challenges of scale, diversity and complexity.

In response, La Trobe has embarked on an ambitious strategy to fundamentally transform our educational offer and revolutionise the student experience. We are calling it Clever Learning.

Clever Learning is our strategic educational transformation program. The program integrates and builds on projects and work already underway to meet our strategic objectives of:

- Outstanding Student Experience
- Student Employability
- One University
- Operational Excellence
- Revenue Growth

The program is organised into three clusters of activity:

**Course Management Reform**
- Delivering a strong digital foundation for agile governance, management and publication of course and subject information.

**Course Offer**
- Course Architecture. An efficient and robust structural framework of our education offer that encourages strong interdisciplinary connectedness, simplified transition points, value add experiences for students and high academic standards.

- Online and flexible study. Expanding our capacity for online offerings through planned systems, development and support programs.

**Student Digital Experience Platform**
- A student engagement interface, providing an integrated portal and personalised environment for students’ engagement with systems, services and learning activities. This will include consolidation of online service provision, delivering streamlined and online-friendly services and supports for students navigating the University environment.

Begun in late 2019, the program will run for three years, delivering educational transformation across our course portfolio and student experience activities.
Students come to La Trobe in search of an education that results in fulfilling career outcomes, wherever they choose to build that career. Improving the employability outcomes of all our graduates – both domestic and international students – is crucial to the University’s future. This will attract outstanding students and contribute to deeper industry partnerships.

As part of our innovative Clever Learning three year plan, La Trobe will become a trusted talent partner. We already offer life-long career support for students and alumni, and as Clever Learning evolves this will increasingly include topping up standard university qualifications with short-cycle qualifications and microcredentials, as well as a range of opportunities for developing new skills. We will go beyond ‘careers advice’, to empower students to equip themselves with the skills they need both before and after graduation.

**What we will do**

1. **We will develop**
   - a refreshed set of Graduate Capabilities that are informed by industry and reflect contemporary capabilities such as entrepreneurship;
   - a plan to embed the Career Ready Advantage Capability Framework in all degree programs offered by La Trobe and through partner institutions;
   - a program of targeted staff development to enable the integration of employability capabilities in the curriculum, building on existing good practice in Work Integrated Learning.

2. **We will partner deeply with industry**
   - from around the world to transform our courses, experience, opportunities and employment pathways to enable our international graduates from regional campuses, and in our regional communities, to benefit from extended post-study work rights.

3. **We will partner with employers and alumni to implement the Career Ready Advantage, focussing on industry-relevant skills (cognitive skills, flexibility, social intelligence and career management skills) and personal attributes (resilience, curiosity, passion and empathy).**

4. **We will further develop and implement our regional employability advantage strategy, aligned with key courses in the regions, including guaranteed Work integrated Learning opportunities for our regional students.**

5. **We will work to ensure that we have the courses, experience, opportunities and employment pathways to enable our international graduates from regional campuses, and in our regional communities, to benefit from extended post-study work rights.**

6. **As part of our Clever Learning strategy, we will become recognised as a trusted talent adviser to identify and respond to emerging skills gaps in the new world of work by, for example, topping up standard university qualifications with short cycle qualifications.**

**Employment outcomes for La Trobe students currently approximate national averages.**¹ We have very strong results at our regional campuses, where students benefit from our deep connections with local education and health services, and local industry, government and non-government agencies.

In an increasingly competitive and continually evolving labour market, we must continue to improve students’ employment prospects by empowering them to develop the skills and capabilities that employers tell us will be important in the future workforce. A large proportion of today’s graduates will change jobs up to 17 times in a lifetime, work part-time, or hold multiple part-time jobs, which means that it will be critical for them to have broad, flexible, work-relevant skills.

To work effectively in this complex environment, La Trobe graduates will be equipped with skills in Global Citizenship, Innovation & Entrepreneurship and Sustainability Thinking – as part of La Trobe degrees, and embedded in our graduate capabilities. These skills enable our graduates to adapt their knowledge and skills to new contexts in a rapidly changing world. We are also improving graduate research employability through co-creating courses with industry, such as our Industry PhD.

Increasingly, our students and alumni will come to rely on La Trobe to provide a range of education and training opportunities to ensure their skills and qualifications remain current and relevant within the workplaces of the future.

**Career Ready**

Developed in consultation with students and employers, Career Ready supports employability through an employer engagement team, internships and Work Integrated Learning (WIL), ‘in house’ recruitment, and embedding employability into the curriculum. The centrepiece of Career Ready is the Career Ready Advantage.

We consulted widely with employers to understand the skills and attributes they value in graduates. These are described in detail in our Career Ready Capability Framework.²

Career Ready Advantage allows students to take control of developing their capabilities. As students build on experiences such as part-time work, internships, volunteering and international experiences, they are rewarded with priority access to internships, mentoring, consultations, and networking opportunities.

The capabilities our students develop are compiled into a personalised Career Ready Portfolio, which demonstrates to future employers the skills and attributes they have developed, and the experiential learning activities they have undertaken.

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¹ In the Graduate Outcomes Survey 98% of La Trobe’s undergraduate students completed their studies in full-time employment in 2018, 94% of all graduates were in employment at 12 months after graduation (compared with the national average of 77% and 93%).

² By participating researchers, 98% of La Trobe graduates were in full time employment in 2018, and 93% in employment earned (compared with the national average of 84% and 95%).

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**GOAL**

To continually improve graduate employability outcomes.

**2022 TARGET**

Top 12 public university in Australia and top in Victoria in percentage of graduates in employment, and performance at or above national average for employment outcomes by field of study, by performance on the Graduate Outcomes Survey and Graduate Outcomes Survey (Longitudinal).
La Trobe has a proud record of globally recognised excellence in many of our disciplines. Maintaining and enhancing our research reputation is essential to our future and is everyone’s business.

Our research seeks to be relevant to our communities, and to our partners, by addressing the major challenges of our time, including responding to climate change; finding solutions to the challenges of securing food, water and environmental integrity; improving health and performance in sport, exercise and rehabilitation; building equity, wellbeing and social inclusion in our communities; and creating a more just and sustainable future for human societies.

Our previous strategic plan, Future Ready, helped to focus our research efforts, and we are now seeing the results in new partnerships; increases in publications, citations and reputation; and a rising number of career opportunities in areas with the highest potential. We will develop and support researchers at all stages of their careers in our areas of thematic strength, providing integrated research support at each campus.

We will provide high quality research training and graduate research student experience, including opportunities for industry engagement, and deliver efficient professional support services. We will minimise the administrative burden on researchers and graduate researchers, and provide easy access to transparent information to identify opportunities, evaluate progress and make strategic decisions, through the Program for Research Information Management Enablement (PRIME, to be launched in 2020).

Future Ready’s goals were achieved by giving our staff targeted support. The next leap forward will require increasing in research intensity and quality to gain greater international recognition. We have a successful record of local collaboration in research, and now is the moment to increase the level of international collaboration in our research effort aligned to our areas of strength. This global perspective will help us achieve greater influence and impact. Our commitment to being the partner of choice will also underpin our research success (see Unrivalled Partner of Choice on pages 16-17).

What we will do

1. Research culture
   We will foster an aspirational, ambitious research culture, focussed on achieving excellence. We will build a community of researchers who are aspirational, ethical and engaged with their communities. We will encourage and develop connected researchers, from graduate researchers and candidates to leading researchers and research groups. We will develop our research talent here, as well as recruiting world class researchers. We will develop our support systems, staff and processes to reduce the administrative burden, releasing time for research. Our research culture will encourage excellence and connection regardless of campus or partner location.

2. Integrated research support
   We will continue targeted investment via internal grants and strategic initiatives. Our Research Focus Areas have been very successful in driving multi-disciplinary research, and we will review and refocus research structures, groups and supports to deliver our Research 2030 goals and strategic mission and vision. We will continue to provide the appropriate incentives to align our efforts with our strategic goals. With focussed investment, we can make a difference through research in critical areas of importance to develop sustainable communities, systems, cities and regions, and address the major issues of our times.

3. Engagement and impact
   We will ensure our research makes a difference by working with our communities, industry and government partners, and by utilising the research expertise that exists on each campus. We will become the partner of first choice.

4. Equity and diversity
   We will foster a culture of recruiting, developing and promoting staff and students from diverse backgrounds. We will continue to support the Athena Swan initiative to bring equity and diversity to all areas of research and research leadership. We will have a system of support that is best practice in the higher education sector.

5. Regional research strategy
   We will further develop and implement our regional research strategy and work with researchers, industry and community members at each of our regional campuses to identify and support a distinctive research focus for each campus.

6. Internationalisation
   We will increase international collaboration to widen our sources of support, extend the reach and impact of our research, and broaden our base of research talent. We will add to and nurture our existing international collaborations and provide incentives for international co-publication, co-supervision of graduate researchers, and co-funding of projects.

GOAL

To achieve continual and sustainable increases in research income, productivity, impact and recognition – including improvement in international and industry collaborations, and graduate research completions.

2022 TARGET

Top 350 in the QS rankings.
La Trobe has a strong history of building excellent teaching and research partnerships. We already:

- Are number three in Victoria in Category 2-4 Research income per capita.
- Have a long history of partnerships with overseas institutions to deliver innovative courses and pathways for offshore students.
- Have extensively partnered in important subject areas including health, aged care, agriculture, cyber security, sport and food production.

We will extend these relationships further as we improve the student and staff experience, promote student employability, increase our research output, develop our culture of innovation and entrepreneurship, and generate new forms of revenue. Our partners will gain access to our skills and experience, infrastructure and research capability – as well as helping us produce graduates with the job-relevant knowledge and skills they need.

The University City of the Future initiative is critical to us achieving our ambitions in being an unrivalled partner of choice. We will create a thriving centre of excellence in education, research, lifelong learning and innovation at our Bundoora Campus. It is our roadmap to develop a modern and exciting learning environment for our students, new economic activity, jobs and sustainable industries. It will foster innovation and entrepreneurship and support collaboration between universities and industry and bring economic growth to the North of Melbourne and link to the needs of community and industry in our regional footprint.

Our vision for our 42-hectare Research and Innovation Precinct at Bundoora is to build a growing, world-class ecosystem of industry, academia and community that is the industry and innovation hub of Melbourne’s North, driving economic growth and achieving global impact. 1-2 We will provide co-location opportunities on our Bundoora campus for industry partners aligning to our three Research & Innovation strategic areas: Health and Wellbeing; Food, Agriculture and Environment; and Digital Technology and Transformation.

In all our areas of research activity, we will engage deeply with the end-users of our research to address industry and community needs. We will work to understand and deliver on the needs of all our partners, industry, educational, government, and communities. We will work collaboratively to solve problems, co-create, and capture the value we create. We will also consult with clients who can benefit from our expertise. Our Industry PhD will link our research students to industry partners, who will in turn get access to our world-leading research capabilities to help solve their business challenges and increase their performance. We will create a research ecosystem of researchers, entrepreneurs, and industry partners to ensure that the work done by our students and researchers helps to support economic transformation in our local communities.

We will work with Indigenous organisations to build capacity and deliver their social, cultural and economic aspirations; and we will promote social justice by working with community groups and the not-for-profit sector, including organisations supporting the rights of refugees and people seeking asylum, financially disadvantaged people, those with a disability, and others who may be marginalised or persecuted.

What we will do

Our partnerships help us deliver the goals and targets in each of this strategy’s core objectives and enablers. Our Campus Master Plans will bring communities, industry, students, staff and researchers together. We will establish interactive, open and collaborative spaces that make La Trobe a desired location for collaboration.

1. Being a Partner that is Chosen

To be a partner of choice, we must be chosen. Our assets and investments will attract partners, but our culture, responsiveness and our ability to work in true partnership, will secure them.

2. University City of the Future

We will continue to implement our bold vision to transform our Bundoora Campus by turning it inside out, inviting community and industry in and transforming the way we work with and service our community in the north of Melbourne.

3. Research and Innovation Precinct

We will create a thriving Research and Innovation Precinct, as part of our University City of the Future, to attract global partners, and world-class research and education collaborations with industry, community and government.

4. Sports Park

As part of the University City investment, we will ensure that the significant Sport Park we have created supports our student experience, our research agendas, our industry partnerships and builds closer links with our surrounding community.

5. Indigenous Research

We will work to broaden the quality and quantum of Indigenous research at La Trobe. We will foster relationships with Indigenous communities to clarify community-desired research outcomes, perspectives and priorities, as well as to embed an overall praxis in line with nationally-mandated codes for ethical conduct of Indigenous research, including such core tenets as community co-design and data sovereignty. We will also work to broaden the disciplinary reach of such research, along with deepening our engagement with Indigenous research methodologies.

6. Accelerator/Incubator

We will extend the La Trobe Accelerator Program to unlock the innovation that exists within our University and our regional communities, and in Melbourne’s North. We will create an entrepreneurial ecosystem in regional Victoria that is “open to all” and recognised as a global exemplar of a start-up destination for northern Melbourne and regional communities.

7. Industry driven curriculum

We will work closely with sector-leading partners to co-develop and co-deliver new subjects and courses that directly address their future workforce needs.

8. Our campuses as a living laboratory

We will build on our successful partnerships to drive our research and education by 2022. 4

9. International Research and Education Partnerships

We will build on our successful relationships with partners in China, UK, Vietnam, India, Singapore and elsewhere. With our partners we will grow the scale, the diversity and the value to our students and partners of what we do. We will use our partnerships to drive our research standing and our global rankings.

10. TAFE Partnerships

We will continue to innovate through partnerships with TAFE and other local organisations to provide unique education programs that meet the needs of under-served communities.

GOAL

To become recognised as the ‘Unrivalled Partner of Choice’.

2022 TARGET

Double partnership revenue from research and education by 2022. 4

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1. La Trobe University Research and Innovation Precinct Strategy, Nous Group, 2019.
2. Doubling of revenue will be from a baseline of 2017.
3. 4 Doubling of revenue will be from a baseline of 2017.
4. La Trobe University Research and Innovation Precinct Strategy, Nous Group, 2019.
5. Doubling of revenue will be from a baseline of 2017.
6. Doubling of revenue will be from a baseline of 2017.
Our Enablers
One University, Many Communities

La Trobe today is a connected network of campuses and communities throughout and beyond Victoria, brought together by the idea of ‘one university, many communities’.

In Victoria, we have campuses in Collins Street, Bundoora, Bendigo, Shepparton, Albury-Wodonga and Mildura. Beyond Victoria we have a campus in Sydney and significant partnerships with global institutions in China, India, Vietnam, Singapore, Japan, the Philippines, the United States, Canada, France, Germany, Sweden and the UK. Our growing online community knows no borders. We seek to identify countries that offer the greatest potential for partnerships in student recruitment, third party teaching, research and student mobility.

Our Campus Network

La Trobe’s multi-campus network differentiates us strongly from other universities, allowing us to reach out to a broad range of communities and socio-economic groups to promote wider participation in higher education. We are proud to offer higher education to regional, first-in-family, low socio-economic groups to promote wider participation in higher education.

Our Bundoora campus positions us as the engine room for transforming Melbourne’s North – one of the fastest growth corridors in the city. Our newly expanded city campus offers a suite of postgraduate courses in business, law and health, and our new state-of-the-art Sydney city campus offers a range of programs in accounting, business, management, IT and health sciences. Our regional campuses allow students to study at a globally recognised university while living and working in in some of Victoria’s most attractive regional centres. We will bring both opportunity and excellence to the communities we serve. And because regional graduates are far more likely than city graduates to live and working in in some of Victoria’s most attractive regional centres. We will bring both opportunity and excellence to the communities we serve. And because regional graduates are far more likely than city graduates to live and work in the regions, we are helping counter the ‘brain drain’ from country to city.

Each of our campuses is a unique expression of place, people, history and local partnerships that plays a huge role in the social, cultural and economic life of its community.

The ‘One University’ philosophy

The One University philosophy supports the uniqueness of each of our campuses and the richness of our connections with partners and communities outside the university. While each La Trobe campus remains special and distinct, we will encourage and support the movement of staff and students between campuses. This will allow students and staff to benefit from local partnerships and community connections.

To strengthen our ‘One University’ philosophy we will:

1. Finalise development of a clear statement of the distinctive nature and focus of each campus to drive internal planning and external connections.

2. Continue to work with our Regional Advisory Boards to build our understanding of community aspirations and foster advocacy for locally-delivered higher education that is inclusive and excellent.

3. Undertake a formal assessment of the impact of all major new initiatives across the campus network as part of the decision-making process.

4. Continue to implement the Campus Master Plans across all campuses.

Community connections

La Trobe is home to some of the country’s leading public intellectuals and scholars, and we have connections to many more. We will draw on these networks, and our physical campuses, to influence debate about the future of regional Australia and to advance public scholarship through stimulating events and connections.

We will:

1. Deepen the reach and impact of cultural events and institutions in our regions through sponsorship, educational programs and the implementation of the strategy.

2. Continue to offer place-based programs that run alongside major cultural events to add to their quality and reach, and demonstrate the role the University can play in the intellectual and cultural life of our regional communities.

3. Advocate for policy reform that will benefit regional communities, including by organising events that stimulate, challenge and inform the national conversation about regional Australia.

4. Use our campus presence at each of our locations to create opportunity for the whole community.

BUNDOORA has served Melbourne’s North and beyond since our inception in 1967. It is our largest campus with over 22,000 students and a comprehensive range of generalist and specialist undergraduate and postgraduate courses across 13 schools in our two Colleges of Science Health and Engineering (SHE) and Arts, Social Sciences and Commerce (ASSC). We have ambitious plans to develop our 235 hectare land base (1.5 times the size of Melbourne CBD) into a global exemplar of a University City of the Future. The La Trobe University City of the Future will reimage what it means to be a university in the 21st century. By turning our campus inside out, and inviting community and industry in, we are transforming the way we work with and serve our communities. Our partnership with the public and private sectors will see A$5 billion invested in the creation of a vibrant and sustainable new city with a significant residential population. This new city in Melbourne’s north will include a world-class research and innovation precinct, health and community services, new student and residential accommodation, retail and cultural spaces, sport and recreation facilities, and improved transport connections. This will establish the 235-hectare Melbourne campus in Bundoora as a new knowledge community and a place to work, live, learn, socialise and stay healthy.

Our Master Plan envisages our student numbers increasing to approximately 40,000 by 2040. According to a recent report by Oxford Economics, the Melbourne campus supported 6,860 jobs and contributed $515 million in GDP to Melbourne’s North in 2016. By 2026, these figures will rise further, meaning that La Trobe will contribute an additional 3,680 jobs and $371 million in GDP to the economy in Melbourne’s North in that year, relative to 2016. Our 2016 research and development expenditure is expected to contribute $377 million to Australia’s GDP in real present value terms over the next 50 years.
BENDIGO is one of the fastest growing regional cities in Victoria. It is a major centre for government services, has vibrant local industries, and an expanding arts and cultural sector. Our Bendigo campus is the largest of our regional campuses, with more than 3,500 students, and graduates enjoying a 94 per cent employment rate. Our plan is to continue our work to ensure that the Bendigo campus becomes a great university city. Work is nearing completion on the $50 million transformation of the Campus, including an expanded library and student facilities. In partnership with the City of Greater Bendigo and local industry groups, we also aim to establish the Bendigo Centre for Digital Transformation, a regional innovation ecosystem that supports the creation of high value jobs through translation and commercialisation of industry led research and digital transformation.

ALBURY-WODONGA delivers strong manufacturing, tourism, agriculture and service industries to a large area of Victoria, NSW and the ACT. Our campus attracts students from across the region and beyond, offering a wide range of courses from arts and business to psychology, nursing, social work and biomedical science. State of the art teaching laboratories opening in 2020 were built as part of a $7 million Federal Government investment supporting the medical pathway program. Bachelor of Biomedical Science (Medical). The Albury-Wodonga campus is one of Australia’s leading campuses for industry engagement, and is home to the research Centre for Freshwater Ecosystems and the John Richards Centre for regional and rural ageing research. 

MILDURA is the service centre for north-west Victoria, and a centre for horticulture and irrigation. Our campus is deeply embedded in the business and cultural life of the local community, and delivers a skilled workforce for our local schools, health services and businesses. We are proud to provide access to quality higher education in a location where many of our students are first in family, low SES or Indigenous. Around 96 per cent of our Mildura graduates get jobs after graduating, and 85 per cent stay in the Mallee region. Working with the local community, we generate world class events and opportunities for research in community development, water and ecology, agriculture, arts and Indigenous affairs.

SHEPPARTON is a culturally diverse city lying at the heart of the Goulburn Valley – a centre of horticulture, dairy, logistics and manufacturing. Our city-campus centre is meeting a growing demand for courses in areas like the arts, business, agribusiness, education, nursing and social work. A joint investment by La Trobe and the Federal government of $12 million will enable us to further expand and diversify our teaching programs to meet local demand and workforce needs, and to develop greater research capacity in partnership with local industry and regional organisations. Our strong community links present opportunities for research in agriculture, community development, health, cultural diversity and Indigenous affairs.

CITY CAMPUS (360 Collins Street) – our City Campus has recently been expanded to include flyovers in the heart of Melbourne’s central business district. The City Campus delivers a range of innovative postgraduate courses through the Business School, Law School and School of Psychology, Law School and School of Psychology, Law School and new Law and Psychology course bundles. The city campus is the service centre for the city’s business precinct, overlooking Hyde Park, at 253 Elizabeth Street. The Sydney Campus offers foundation studies and diploma programs, along with a range of undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in accounting, business, management, IT and health sciences for just under 1000 students from more than 20 countries.

EDUCATION

Our education will be tailored to the needs of local communities and local industry. Because our regional campuses offer teaching on a smaller scale, there are opportunities to innovate and experiment in teaching methods, modes of delivery and use of technology, to develop new ways of improving the quality of the student experience, student outcomes and retention levels, and increase student enrolments on each campus.

Regional Victoria is home to some of the most successful cultural institutions and festivals in Australia – such as the Bendigo Art Gallery and Writers Festival, the Murray Art Museum Albury, the Shepparton Festival, and the Mildura Writer’s Festival – which offer our Regional Promise whereby students at our regional campuses are guaranteed an internship or work integrated learning as part of their degree.

Research

La Trobe’s multi-node regional campuses offer unique expertise to address big challenges that can have regional, national and international impact. The sustainable management of natural resources and the impact of climate change will require the full involvement of regional communities. Our campuses are located close to some of the most important industries in regional Victoria, including agriculture, water, and human and health services. We will continue to build on this physical proximity to develop close research partnerships, because our researchers have much to offer in these fields.

We will continue to:
1. Further develop and integrate our regional research strategy, and celebrate the distinctive research character at each campus in realising our research goals.
2. Build on our status as a University Department of Rural Health and the support of our philanthropic partners to excel in our research focused on health and wellbeing in regional and rural communities.
3. Develop our regional campuses as centres of excellence in targeted research disciplines, by supporting and recruiting excellent researchers and establishing world-class research facilities.
4. Develop our sites to support physical co-location of industry with the University, particularly at the Bendigo and Albury-Wodonga campuses, where there is significant space to support industry partnerships and collaborations.
5. Develop close industry partnerships drawing on researchers from across La Trobe’s network.
6. Support research excellence on all of our campuses by identifying barriers to research on regional campuses, and by ensuring that research capabilities and facilities are available everywhere.

GOAL

To have our regional campuses chosen by regional, metropolitan and international students and researchers, whose study and work will accelerate economic and community development in the communities we serve.

2022 TARGET

Comparable student outcomes and per capita research performance at each of our campuses.
To be the sort of university we want to be – an outstanding student-focused institution with well-supported staff – La Trobe will need operational excellence in every part of our complex organisation: education, research, engagement and supporting administration. To achieve this, we will need to embed our cultural qualities in all that we do: connected, innovative, accountable and care.

What we will do

Australian universities are experiencing increasing local and global competition for the best staff. This is happening at a time when technology and labour market changes are transforming the disciplines that our staff teach and the ways that we work. We now require a mix of specialist and generic teaching and administrative skills. Where roles need to become more specialised, we will ensure they are properly supported and rewarded. More diverse career paths will need to be developed, recognised and rewarded. Consistent with our culture and values, including our commitment to sustainability, we will continue to:

1. Attract and retain the best staff and deploy their talents in imaginative ways to constantly improve results for our students, partners and communities.
2. Be an employer of choice, and a workplace that encourages individuals to achieve personal career success in their areas of expertise while being part of a dynamic and welcoming scholarly community.

3. Attract new staff to our regional campuses to grow and contribute to our regional communities as an employer of choice.
4. Provide the digital and physical infrastructure that will allow our students and staff to flourish, and which will support thriving partnerships with industry, the community and governments.
5. Deploy our capital development program to provide state-of-the-art facilities across our campus network.
6. Refine, streamline and improve our business processes and systems based on the feedback of the people using them rather than the convenience of those who provide them.
7. Draw on the best new technologies available, including artificial intelligence and machine learning, to ensure that our staff and students are engaged and well supported in everything they do.
8. Develop a working environment that supports staff to contribute to University improvement in their areas of expertise, and provide opportunities for feedback, reward and progression.
9. Provide a comprehensive suite of support services for staff across all our campuses, supported by easy-to-use smart technology available at all our locations and remotely.
10. Implement specific support mechanisms for early career academics.
11. Examine the effects of shifting trends and practices in employment and teaching on our workforce, and respond to these changes by developing new and emerging roles, ways of working and course delivery.
12. Ensure professional development opportunities meet the needs of all staff as we continue to evolve as a University of the future.
13. Provide professional development and support to staff so they have the skills required to partner with industry and to take best advantage of the new technologies we introduce.
14. Rolling out our Net Zero initiative, a series of actions which will see us become Victoria’s first major university to be carbon neutral by 2029, with our regional campuses set to become carbon neutral by 2022. In all that we do, we will seek to operate sustainably to avoid and minimise negative environmental impacts, while improving social and economic outcomes.

GOAL
To be an ‘Employer of Choice’ for academic and professional staff.

2022 TARGET
Each campus of La Trobe to be within the top quartile of the Australian National Norm benchmark for ‘sustainable engagement’ of staff (as measured by the Employee Opinion Survey).
Revenue Growth

Continuing the fulfilment of this strategic plan will require significant revenue growth. Only by generating the necessary operating margin (and cash flow) can we invest sufficiently to improve our teaching, research and engagement, and renew our infrastructure.

It won’t be easy. The university environment is extremely competitive. The demand-driven funding system was frozen by government while the first iteration of this Plan was in print – now, caps on funding for Australian undergraduates have been lifted, but only in line with population growth. Competition for overseas students has heightened considerably as British, European and North American institutions compete more aggressively in growth markets; and government funding for research has fallen. In this environment, we need to raise revenue from a mix of traditional and non-traditional sources.

What we will do

1. Growth in student load
   We will seek to increase enrolment and retention of undergraduate and postgraduate coursework students from Australia, and undergraduate and postgraduate international students; and we will continue our focus on increasing graduate research completions. The University will concentrate on growing student load in courses that provide a sustainable revenue margin.

2. Online course delivery
   We will develop digital technology to support a range of new course options that will broaden the prospective markets for traditional students while widening the range and depth of opportunities to grow our share of the online student market.

3. Unbundling course offerings
   As part of Clever Learning, we will use a range of digital and traditional methods to widen the accessibility of our coursework programs via single subject enrolments, micro-credentialing, executive education and professional development programs.

4. Diversification of Revenue Sources
   We will put significant effort into developing revenue streams beyond student load sources. These streams will include: philanthropy (dedicated campaigns for scholarships, research and capital projects); commercialization of our physical campus assets (conferences and event hosting); research consultancy (through a dedicated commercial consulting arm of the University); and collaborations with industry and government partners to develop new campus infrastructure.

GOAL
To achieve sustainable growth in revenue to provide the resources to deliver our mission and vision.

2022 TARGET
Compound Annual Growth Rate for Revenue of 3 to 5%.

Implementation and planning

The University’s Implementation Planning Framework is designed to support the implementation of this plan, and will ensure that staff in every functional area and business unit understand their role in supporting the delivery of our strategic goals and targets.

While this strategy identifies one target (or Key Performance Indicator - KPI) for each of the four core objectives and three enablers, Implementation Plans identify a number of Management Performance Indicators (MPIs) that will contribute to each KPI.

These are identified and delivered as part of the University’s normal business planning processes. Staff are able to access data to assist them to track performance via a dedicated site on the La Trobe intranet.

Implementation Planning Framework diagram

This diagram illustrates the connections between the Strategic Plan and other plans within La Trobe at the operational and individual levels.

La Trobe University acknowledges that 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 and learning, research and community partnerships across all our campuses.

The wedge-tailed eagle (Aquila audax) is one of the world’s largest, and the Wurundjeri people – Traditional Owners of the land where our Melbourne campuses are located – know the wedge-tailed eagle as Bunjil, the creator spirit of the Kulin Nations.

There is a special synergy between Bunjil and the La Trobe University logo of an eagle. The symbolism and significance for both La Trobe and for Aboriginal people challenges us all to gamagoen yarrbat – to soar.