

La Trobe Rural Health School



Statement of Strategic Intent



2020 - 2030



LA TROBE
UNIVERSITY

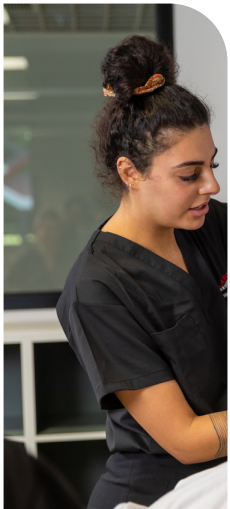
Acknowledgement of Country

The La Trobe Rural Health School proudly acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands our campuses are located on. We celebrate that Indigenous Australians have an ongoing connection to Country, the University values their important contribution to both the University and the wider Australian society.

We acknowledge the beautiful and unique Country, waterways, skies, plants, seasons, and animals of Victoria. We acknowledge Victorian Aboriginal communities, their Elders, and their Ancestors. We acknowledge their living cultures and their continuing worldviews, governance, ways of knowing, being and doing.

Making Rural Health & Wellbeing Matter

The La Trobe Rural Health School (LRHS) aims to **Make Rural Health and Well-being Matter** locally, nationally, and internationally through graduates and research outcomes that make a difference. We will foster social justice by engaging with the health and wellbeing of rural communities while recognising strengths and needs. We define rural, as any region outside of a major metropolitan city and are proud to be based on each of La Trobe's regional campuses in Albury-Wodonga, Bendigo, Mildura and Shepparton. Our partnership with PSB Academy in Singapore adds an international dimension to our School and creates opportunities for these students to also experience the richness of Australian rural life. The School is distinctive for being based in the regions and graduating students from 14 health disciplines into the rural health workforce. We aspire for the LRHS to be both the best and the largest Australian rural health school, as measured by our graduates' success as rural healthcare professionals, and our research rankings.



The LRHS Statement of Strategic Intent is an expression of the La Trobe University Strategic Plan 2020-2030 and contextualises our part in achieving the university's mission.

We are a university known for making a positive difference in the lives of our students, partners, and communities. We will become an even more valued and relevant university because of the way we respond to their needs at this time of great local and national challenge.

The four rural proofing principles that we use include



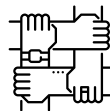
Strategic

In the LRHS our primary strategic lens is rural health and wellbeing;



Relevant

Activities need to be student-centred, investigate phenomena linked to rural health and wellbeing, and benefit our local communities;



Partnership

Consultation and communication plans are culturally safe, comprehensive, iterative, and authentic; and,



Communicate

The benefits and implications for rural health can be clearly and succinctly messaged through traditional and non-traditional channels.

COMMITMENT | TO | EXCELLENCE

Without the excellent people who work here, LRHS would not exist to serve both our students and the regional communities where we live and work. Our primary aim is to provide a safe, inclusive workplace that embraces the university's cultural values of being connected, innovative, accountable, and caring. We believe we are stronger together than we would be individually, therefore we actively find ways to work together both within, and outside of the LRHS. We use a partnership approach in all our collaborations and avoid replication of existing central services, instead we aim to value add by facilitating a rural overlay. Ensuring staff health and wellbeing is a priority for the LRHS leadership team and is considered in all of our decision making about resource allocation. Staff achievements are both recognised and rewarded, and we routinely celebrate success. We use a set of principles for decision making and resource allocation.

Guiding Strategic Goals

ACCESS

A distinctively rural student experience that intentionally supports success

CULTURE

A culture of being Accountable, Connected, Innovative, and Caring in how we work with students, our colleagues, and communities

EQUITY

A focus on ensuring that all Australians, but especially First Nations people, have access to high quality and equitable health and social care

IMPACT

Graduates and research findings that make a positive difference to the health and wellbeing of rural people and their communities

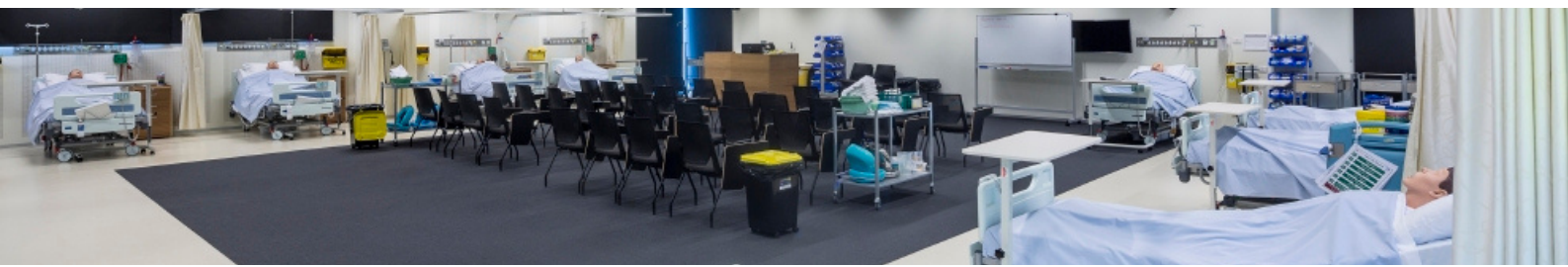
RECOGNITION

A team of national and international experts in rural health research and learning and teaching, who are committed to maximising health and wellbeing outcomes globally, nationally, and locally

Tracking Strategic Goals

We will know we have succeeded in our goal to develop a positive culture when we improve the Employee Experience as measured by a La Trobe Employee Experience Survey 2023.

LRHS partners with key stakeholders to provide contemporary, innovative, and relevant educational experiences that will build Australia's future rural health workforce. We aim to increase the number of students we educate for life and for a good career. Supporting First Nations students to achieve success is a top priority, and we strive to ensure we work in culturally safe ways. We embed First Nations' knowledges in organisational processes, teaching and research through developing strong partnerships with First Nations' staff and external First Nations' organisations.





The practical experience students gain during their degrees mean our graduates are practice ready for rural health with a broad, generalist knowledge and skill set. The clinical placement and fieldwork opportunities provided to our students will be immersive, supportive, connected, and relevant to rural communities while delivering experience of the generalist knowledge and skill-base required of a rural practitioner. Our primary curricula incorporate elements specific to rural health, to rural practice and are clearly differentiated from metropolitan based courses. We collaborate with industry partners to provide specialist continuing professional development opportunities for the existing rural workforce.

Ensuring access to education and research opportunities for students from regional and remote areas is important to us, and our selection process across all disciplines reflects this goal. We welcome international students into our courses and support them to contextualise their learning to their home country. When students choose to study with us, our flexible approach to content delivery means that where possible they can engage in learning in a time and place of their choosing.

Our graduates will demonstrate excellent communication and influencing skills, they will be digitally literate and culturally safe. As well, they will understand the importance of life-long learning and critical thinking, using creative and innovative approaches to problem solving. LRHS graduates will have developed transferable leadership skills and understand what it means to serve their community.

We will know we have succeeded in our goals to increase access and reduce inequities in education when we have achieved parity for First Nations people in enrolments (3%) and achievement (non-Indigenous), and when 70% of LRHS students are of rural origin within 3 years.

Our rural health research activities are based on regional, national, and international collaborations that foster reciprocity. We understand our partners' needs, bring together the right expertise, manage projects efficiently, act with integrity and help them to innovate by translating research results into practical applications. As part of a large research active University, we will deliver high-quality research training, skills development and research support to local health professionals, supervisors, students and broader community stakeholders.

Our role in mentoring and supporting rural early career researchers, mid-level and senior researchers to enable them to join established research teams within and beyond the School is clear. For us, research impact is demonstrated by the improved health and wellbeing of rural people. We will continue our commitment to matters of importance to our local communities while developing solutions that address global social justice concerns through our international research activities and networks.

Our research expertise in rural ageing, rural workforce development, rural primary health care and rural community health and wellbeing is recognised through the John Richards Centre for Rural Ageing Research, the Violet Vines Marshman Centre for Rural Health Research, the Holsworth Initiatives, and through our designation as a University Department of Rural Health. In all our research we review ethical considerations and the potential impact of the research process and findings on First Nations people. We will partner with First Nations communities and organisations, to promote First Nations-led research projects and integrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of knowing in our practice.

We will know we have succeeded in our goals to create impact and achieve recognition when we increase our Medical Research Future Fund and Cat. 2 grant income by 50% by 2025.