

REGIONAL GROWTH AND INNOVATION



LA TROBE
UNIVERSITY

2030 STRATEGY

INTRODUCTION

We are proud to be Victoria's only true state-wide university with campuses in Albury-Wodonga, Bendigo, Mildura and Shepparton. Over 650,000 people live in the regions covered by these campuses, the economies of which generated over \$25.7 billion in gross added value in 2023, with agriculture, health and social care being the main employment sectors.¹

La Trobe University has a vital role to play in generating the skilled workforce needed to increase productivity for economies and communities to thrive in regional Victoria and beyond, and also in driving innovation and jobs growth through our research and industry partnerships.

The Australian Universities Accord (AUA) identifies tertiary education as key to building a more prosperous and equitable country. Accordingly, AUA has set a national target for 55% of Australians aged 25 to 34 to have a higher education qualification by 2050, compared to around 42% in 2022. The AUA report noted that only 19.8% of students from regional, rural and remote Australia go to university, hence increasing participation in higher education from these (and other equity groups) is key to achieving the overall national target.² La Trobe University is strongly aligned with the ambition of the AUA, given our founding mission to improve access

to higher education for people and communities from all backgrounds.

With our regional campus network, La Trobe University is well positioned to lead place-based economic and social development through collaboration with regional industry, local community and across all tiers of government. In so doing, we will draw on our major research strengths in agriculture, health, and education to drive regional entrepreneurship and employment.

Home to the largest Rural Health School in Australia, we have recently delivered \$30 million worth of new, state-of-the-art teaching facilities at our Albury-Wodonga, Mildura and Shepparton campuses, doubling our capacity to train nurses for these regional communities.

We are investing a further \$43 million in new clinical teaching facilities for allied health, dentistry, midwifery and nursing in Bendigo. Our award-winning employment-based Nexus education program is

producing the teachers needed for rural and regional schools in Victoria. Our unique and wholly online MBA program makes it easy for regional business leaders to upskill.

Notwithstanding these investments and innovations, we recognise the ongoing challenge of low higher education participation in regional communities. Leveraging our physical presence across regional Victoria will be key in responding to this challenge, as will be working in partnership with local communities to meet the distinct operating environments, challenges and opportunities of their regions.

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.

Wurundjeri
Melbourne
(Bundoora and City)

Dja Dja Wurrung
Bendigo

Dhudhuroa/Waywurru
Albury-Wodonga

Latji Latji
Mildura

Yorta Yorta
Shepparton

Gadigal
Sydney

¹ Victoria Skills Authority, regional profiles for Mallee, Goulburn, Ovens Murray and Loddon Campaspe (2023).

² The Australian Government, Australian Universities Accord: Final Report (2024), p. 21.



OUR AMBITION

Our ambition is to reduce the gap between regional and metropolitan participation rates in higher education and drive growth and innovation in regional communities through transformative education, impactful research, and vibrant campuses.

To achieve this, we will expand and reform our education offerings to better appeal to and meet the needs of regional learners; we will further expand research programs and partner with industry to support the growth of regional economies; and we will enable our regional campuses to be vibrant resources to support social and cultural development.

BY 2030, WE WILL:



IMPROVE ACCESSIBILITY

Expand and reform our education offerings through viable on-campus, hybrid and online courses that appeal to regional learners, ensure an outstanding student experience, and respond to the critical workforce needs of regional communities.



DRIVE INNOVATION

Drive research and industry engagement to develop innovative solutions addressing the health, wellbeing, and economic challenges in regional communities including under-represented populations.



EMPOWER COMMUNITIES

Continue our investment in and development of the Albury-Wodonga, Bendigo, Mildura, and Shepparton campuses as thriving centres of social and cultural activity, tailored to support local aspirations and create inclusive opportunities for growth.

Our Regional Growth and Innovation 2030 Strategy will deliver on these goals by advancing three pillars of work to achieve transformative, positive outcomes for regional communities, industry and La Trobe.

Implementation plans will be produced for each of our regional campuses to take forward the initiatives and achieve the targets outlined under these three pillars.

PILLAR 1:

REFORMED EDUCATION FOR REGIONAL LEARNERS

La Trobe University has the largest regional footprint in Victoria thanks to significant investment in campus infrastructure which also serves communities in southern New South Wales. However, from 2019 to 2023, regional enrolments for on-campus courses saw a significant decline. Despite retaining the largest overall market share across our four

regional catchment areas combined, over the last decade La Trobe has experienced a loss of local market share in each of our catchment areas. This decline is primarily due to increasing competition from universities that predominantly offer online courses in all four catchments. We can do more to meet the diverse needs of regional learners by offering flexible, accessible, and industry-aligned programs, and in so doing will recover lost market share. We

will reform our education offer to better meet the needs of regionally based students taking on-campus, hybrid and online courses. We will also take forward multiple initiatives to enhance the student experience more broadly, including La Trobe Connect to increase online access to all support services and strengthening our Students as Partners program.

KEY ACTIONS:



On-campus

regional enrolments will increase under our Health Innovation program, and this is already evident in 2024. Growth will also come from our Education Innovation and Impact strategy in the School of Education. In addition, we will explore options to increase international enrolments at regional campuses, especially Bendigo.



Hybrid learning

which combines the advantages of face-to-face learning on-campus with the flexibility of online learning, is where we have unrealised competitive advantage to offer something distinct for learners in our regional catchments. We will co-design a new regional delivery model that meets the needs of regional learners and leverages our excellent campus-based facilities.



Online courses

have seen impressive growth (+130%) in enrolments from regional catchments since 2019. Importantly, our regional online enrolments are Australia-wide. We see considerable potential for growth here by developing our brand as a quality provider of online delivered higher education for regionally located Australians.

REGIONAL STUDENT* GROWTH TARGETS

Mode	2024 actuals	2030 targets	2040 aspirations
On-campus	1000 EFTSL (base)	1200 EFTSL (+20%)	1600 EFTSL (+60%)
Hybrid	2500 EFTSL (base)	3700 EFTSL (+48%)	7300 EFTSL (+192%)
Online	600 EFTSL (base)	1800 EFTSL (+200%)	5900 EFTSL (+883%)
TOTAL	4100 EFTSL (base)	6700 EFTSL (+63%)	14,800 EFTSL (+261%)

* Domestic regional undergraduate (UG) and postgraduate (PG) learners within La Trobe's CSP allocations, domestic regional PG full fee-paying learners, international UG and PG full fee-paying earners studying at La Trobe's regional campuses.



BY 2030, WE WILL GROW ENROLMENTS IN REGIONAL

on-campus and hybrid courses by twice the growth rate of the domestic student population in regional Victoria, and four times the rate when regional online enrolments are included. Altogether, this will enable us to reduce by a third the gap between metropolitan and regional participation in higher education. We will diversify our education portfolio further across our strengths of health, science and education.

We will respond to emerging regional industries and known regional workforce shortages by enabling programs of work designed to enhance access, retention, and outcomes for regional students. To support the significant growth in regional students attending university and help address the barriers they may face, we will campaign and raise funds for 1,000 scholarships for regional students undertaking on-campus and hybrid courses by 2030. We will also engage with the Federal Government to secure the support needed, including additional Commonwealth Supported Places, to achieve our ambitious 2030 growth targets.



Lifelong learning

is an area where we can grow our support for regional skills development. This will include various short course and micro credential offerings, some of which will be stackable into degree courses. Each of these offerings will be developed in consultation with employers with some offerings developed specifically for employers under a B2B arrangement. We will include a regional stream in our Lifelong Learning Strategy that will take us beyond 2030 and ensure this is aligned with our Regional Growth and Innovation Strategy.



PILLAR 2:

RESEARCH THAT DRIVES REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Aligned to La Trobe's strengths, a renewed focus on research excellence at scale in health and wellbeing, and

sustainable agriculture and food, underpinned by digital technology, responds to the climate, economic and workforce challenges faced by the regional communities we serve. Existing strengths in our regional campuses connect with major opportunities

for innovation and economic growth in these communities.

Consistent with the Research and Innovation 2030 Strategy, key actions include:

KEY ACTIONS:



Research priorities aligned with regional needs:

- Collaborate with local governments, industry, and community organisations to identify and co-design funded research programs that will deliver solutions with positive impact in our regional footprint.



Build strategic, mutually beneficial partnerships:

- Organise a multi-campus program of workshops, seminars, and networking events to facilitate knowledge exchange and collaboration between researchers and industry.
- Establish research focused partnerships with Indigenous-led organisations and ethno-culturally diverse communities.
- Leverage our entrepreneurship programs to support regional start-ups and connect our researchers and local business to foster regional innovation ecosystems.



Enhance research capacity:

- Develop workforce capabilities across our campuses including regionally based research centres.
- Support colocation of industry with La Trobe research capabilities across our regional campus network.
- Extend access to research focused events and facilities across regional campuses to increase the visibility of programs of research and to enable networking.

This focus will position La Trobe as a partner of choice for regional innovation, driving economic and social outcomes. Working in consultation with industry and community partners, we will develop flexible modes of co-location to meet partner needs and enable them to access and leverage our institution-wide research capabilities.

BY 2030, WE WILL DOUBLE THE NUMBER OF REGIONAL CO-LOCATED PARTNERS FROM 8 IN 2024 TO 16.

Adding to Deloitte, Agriculture Victoria, AFL Central Victoria and the Bendigo Tech School, we will focus on the key sectors of health and wellbeing, agriculture and food production, digital transformation, and creative industries.

PILLAR 3:

VIBRANT, MULTIPURPOSE
REGIONAL CAMPUSES

In our role as an anchor institution in our communities, La Trobe's four regional campuses will serve as vibrant, multipurpose resources that strengthen our presence through

providing place- based services and amenities available to all learners, industry and community.

By delivering education, research, business, and social activities, we will cultivate collaboration, foster inclusion and respond to emerging local opportunities and thereby invest

in the success of our communities. Increased vibrancy through local community use will improve the sustainability of on-campus retail facilities and enhance the campus experience for La Trobe students.

KEY ACTIONS:



Civic Integration:

- Enable our campuses to be a community resource that blend learning, industry, and community uses of campus infrastructure to encourage sharing of resources, promote inclusivity and align with aspirations for social development and economic prosperity.
- Collaborate with partners to co-curate and host program of activities and cultural events that engage the local community.
- Provide access to our facilities to community organisations aligned with our social justice mission.



Open to all:

- Encourage use of our facilities by students from other universities, VET and schools, Lead collaboration with regional schools, VET providers, Regional University Study Hubs, local business and industry to collectively build student aspiration and create learning ecosystems that enable lifelong learning.
- Partner with schools to encourage use of campus facilities by school students, and thereby development of knowledge and capacities for post-school education that will keep students connected to their community.
- Enable local organisations to utilise our facilities to further embed our campuses into our communities.



Local partners:

- Extend our network of local partners, including industry and alumni, to promote the place and impact of the University in their communities.
- Leverage local expertise to enhance causal employment opportunities for students.
- Collaborate with local industry, government and community to increase work-integrated learning opportunities for students and expand our industry partnerships for employability programs and events.
- Strengthen employability pathways to local industry aligned with the specific needs of regional industries.
- Engage regional alumni with a program of on-campus events and leverage the alumni network for student mentoring program and studentship fund-raising.

BY 2030 WE WILL DOUBLE THE USAGE
OF OUR REGIONAL CAMPUS FACILITIES

with 10 community organisations working out of our regional campuses, and we will have a minimum of 150 alumni actively engaged in our regional student mentorship program.



OUR MULTI-CAMPUS NETWORK

We believe everyone should have the opportunity to study at a globally-renowned university. That's why we have campuses across Victoria and New South Wales. Our ambition is to reduce the gap between regional and metropolitan participation rates in higher education, while driving growth and innovation in regional campuses through transformative education, impactful research and vibrant campuses.





ALBURY-WODONGA

Dhudhuroa/Waywurru

Research is at the core of our Albury-Wodonga Campus, with our leading research centres focused on freshwater ecosystems, rural ageing and alpine ecology. Here, you can find the Centre for Freshwater Ecosystems, the John Richards Centre for Rural Aging Research and the Care Economy Research Institute, which contributes to Albury-Wodonga's status as the third-largest research centre per capita in Australia.

Community partnerships are another important flagstone of the campus, with industry relationships in health, sport, art, education and government enriching our local ties. The campus has recently doubled the capacity of its Clinical Simulation Suite to better invest in the future of the region's healthcare.



MILDURA

Latji Latji

Our campus plays a vital role in the Mildura community – 87 per cent of our students stay and work locally, with almost 2,000 alumni living and working around the region. Through partnerships and community engagement, we continue to strengthen student learning experiences while also contributing to the broader Mildura community. Recently, crisis support hotline Lifeline found a home at the Mildura Campus.

Researchers at La Trobe, along with a team of regional partners, were recently awarded more than \$900,000 to co-design a kit for rural Australians to check their heart health at home – a project that has the potential to save many lives.



BENDIGO

Dja Dja Wurrung

Situated between the Bendigo CBD and the Greater Bendigo National Park is our largest regional campus, where over 4,000 students and 400 staff work and study. Our long-term goal to revitalise the city centre and turn Bendigo into a vibrant university city saw significant momentum in 2024 with our acquisition of the Emporium Creative Hub lease.

When it comes to research, we're focused on areas that directly improve the lives of rural, regional and remote Australians: food, agriculture and environment; health and wellbeing; and digital technologies. The Australian Government recently granted \$2.8m in funding to research led by La Trobe's Violet Vines Marshman Centre for Rural Health Research for their significant project, RISE4SkinCancer.



SHEPPARTON

Yorta Yorta

With renovations complete, our Shepparton Campus was able to reopen fully in 2025 for staff and students. The campus has undergone an extension to deliver a greater experience for students, with the capacity of the clinical nursing laboratories doubled, the library expanded, new spaces for study and events, and more.

We partner with many organisations and community groups in the region to enhance student and research opportunities, including the Greater Shepparton City Council and Goulburn Valley Health. We also draw on our research capabilities and expertise from our multi-campus network to benefit organisations and our community.



MELBOURNE (BUNDOORA)

Wurundjeri

In Melbourne's growing north, you can find our main campus in Bundoora. With a wide range of courses, substantial landholdings and outstanding facilities like the Sports Park, Bundoora Campus is a hub of activity for both students, academics, researchers and industry leaders. Here, research is undertaken in unique state-of-the-art facilities such as the AgriBio Building and the Nangak Tamboree Wildlife Sanctuary.

Bundoora Campus is also a force for good, with a focus on serving communities both near and far. Right now, the La Trobe University Health Clinic is being built to both relieve chronic allied health workforce shortages and provide cost-effective healthcare. From 2026, the Clinic will train an additional 400 allied health professionals each year.



SYDNEY

Gadigal

Our \$10 million, state-of-the-art Sydney Campus was designed with students in mind. Launched in 2017, our Sydney Campus is a close-knit, richly cultural environment where students can study with La Trobe without leaving NSW. Located in the centre of the city's business precinct, the Campus is close to internship opportunities – and the city's world-renowned icons.



MELBOURNE (CITY)

Wurundjeri

At 360 Collins Street, our City Campus offers postgraduate study and short courses in the heart of Melbourne's central business district. Built in line with the latest innovations in educational design, as well as teaching and learning technology, students can have a leading classroom experience right in the middle of the city's action. City Campus grants easy access to internship and placement opportunities with some of Australia's biggest organisations, helping students build strong connections to some of Melbourne's most important industries.



ONLINE

There's no campus closer than your own home – or more tailored to how you prefer to study – than online. Students who choose online can study anywhere, anytime, while benefiting from enhanced online support services, local placement opportunities and industry network connections. We've tailored our courses for online learning and real-world experience, so students can develop strong professional connections as well as the skills they need for thriving careers.

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