

EQUITY, DIVERSITY, & INCLUSION



STRATEGY 2025-2030

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

LA TROBE UNIVERSITY ACKNOWLEDGES THAT OUR CAMPUSES ARE LOCATED ON THE UNCEDED 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 people and communities through teaching and learning, research and community partnerships across all of our campuses.

La Trobe University has campuses and undertakes teaching, learning and research activities in the traditional lands of the following people:

- Bangerang
- Barkindji
- Boonerwung
- Dhudhuroa
- Gadigal
- Jaara Jaara
- Latji Latji
- Muthi Muthi
- Taunerong
- Wiradjuri
- WayWurru
- Wurundjeri
- Yorta Yorta

We pay our respects to their Elders, past and present and thank them for their ongoing care of the land, skies and waterways of this beautiful country. We acknowledge our Indigenous staff and students for their valuable contributions, dedication and ongoing support of our strategic objectives.

¹ Indigenous peoples is used in this document when acknowledging the diverse populations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of this land. In this Strategy 'Indigenous peoples' is used as the preferred term to represent First Nations Peoples of Australia and the Countries they belong to. These terms are interchangeable.

Indigenous art by Dixon Patten of Bayila Creative

Artwork featured in this Strategy
is by Troy Firebrace.



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A MESSAGE FROM THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

Welcome to La Trobe University's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy and Framework. This strategy reaffirms our commitment to fostering a diverse, inclusive, and safe university for all members of our community – our students, staff, alumni, and partners.

Our EDI Strategy aligns with the University's broader strategic goals and our commitment to inclusivity. It is underscored by our Cultural Qualities of Accountable, Connected, Innovative, and Care and is designed to strengthen EDI knowledge and practices, create inclusive campuses, empower our diverse community, and ensure we are all accountable for EDI at La Trobe. I am committed to embedding accountability for this strategy at all leadership levels across the University.

This strategy has been shaped by the invaluable contributions of our students and staff, whose insights and feedback through university-wide consultations have informed our vision and strategic priorities. The priorities will guide our actions to foster a culture where everyone feels respected, valued, and empowered to succeed.

To achieve our priorities and realise our vision of *"Transforming La Trobe through EDI to Drive Growth and Real Impact"*, we have developed a framework to assess and grow EDI maturity and establish key actions, governance, and responsibilities for achieving long-term EDI outcomes across La Trobe.

The commitment and strong advocacy of our students and staff means we have made significant progress to date, but there is much more to be done. This strategy represents our commitment to continuous learning and improvement, meaningful change, and delivering real impact, both within La Trobe and in the wider community.

I invite all students, staff, alumni, and partners to commit to this strategy. Through a shared commitment and collective action, we will build a more vibrant, inclusive, and equitable University, one that not only excels academically but which drives meaningful and lasting social change.



Professor Theo Farrell (he/him)
Vice-Chancellor,
La Trobe University



INTRODUCTION

La Trobe University's Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy demonstrates our commitment to create an environment where every member of our community² —staff, students, alumni, and partners—feels respected, valued, and empowered. Using a strengths-based and intersectional approach, it promotes and supports inclusivity for everyone at La Trobe University. Together, through commitment and action, we will create a vibrant, inclusive, and equitable university.

WHAT IS EDI?

EQUITY WHAT IS IT?

Equity involves ensuring fair treatment, access, and opportunities for everyone. Unlike equality, which treats everyone the same, equity recognises that people may require different resources or supports to achieve similar outcomes.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

By providing tailored resources, support, and opportunities, we address disparities, create a fairer environment, and enable everyone to succeed and contribute to collective success.

DIVERSITY WHAT IS IT?

Diversity involves recognising and valuing a range of identities, perspectives, experiences, and contributions, including differences in race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, disability, socioeconomic status, religion, culture, age, qualifications, skills, lived experiences, ideas, knowledge, opinions, thinking and problem-solving approaches.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

By embracing these differences, we foster an environment where diverse contributions thrive and are considered in decision-making, enhancing learning, teaching, research, and overall institutional performance.

INCLUSION WHAT IS IT?

Inclusion is the practice of creating spaces where everyone feels respected, valued, and has a sense of belonging. It involves actively engaging and empowering a diverse range of people, ensuring all voices are heard, and everyone has opportunities to fully participate and thrive.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Diversity alone is not enough, people must feel valued, heard, and empowered to contribute. True belonging enables full participation, collaboration and growth, strengthening communities and driving better outcomes for all.

AN INTERSECTIONAL APPROACH

An intersectional approach to EDI recognises how different aspects of a person's identity, such as, but not limited to, gender, race, disability, sexuality, and socio-economic background interact to shape their experiences of inclusion, exclusion, privilege, and discrimination.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

By understanding how these overlapping factors influence people's experiences, we can better address systemic barriers, create more inclusive policies and practices, and ensure that no one is left behind in our EDI efforts.

EDI IN AN ORGANISATION

In an EDI context, organisations commit to policies, practices, and cultures that promote equity, embrace diversity, and foster inclusion, creating environments where all individuals can thrive and reach their full potential.

² Community encompasses our staff, students, alumni, and partners and the surrounding communities we serve.

EDI AT LA TROBE

HONOURING OUR HISTORY, SHAPING OUR FUTURE

La Trobe has a long-standing history for academic excellence, progressive thought and strong community engagement.

Established in 1967, La Trobe was the third university founded in Victoria. Our Bundoora location, amongst Melbourne's thriving suburban communities, enabled us to attract a diverse student body, including many first-generation university students.

From the outset, La Trobe differentiated itself by specialising in the sciences and humanities, distinct from other universities. Our early years were defined by intellectual inquiry, social activism and a commitment to social justice. We are proud to be a university founded on and driven by social justice, which continues to drive us today.

Our regional campuses play a critical role in expanding access to higher education for students in regional and rural communities. With campuses in Albury-Wodonga, Bendigo, Shepparton, and Mildura, and most recently in Sydney, we have deepened our connection to these communities and strengthened our commitment to equity in education. These campuses not only provide pathways to university for students, but also foster regional development through research, partnerships and community engagement.

RECENT RECOGNITION



TOP 20 GLOBALLY

For contributions to UN Sustainable Development Goals (2024)

TOP 250 GLOBALLY

In the QS World University Rankings (2025)

12TH GLOBALLY

For Advancing Healthier Communities and Health Equity (2024)



4 AUSTRALIA

For Advancing Healthier Communities and Health Equity (2024)

TOP 4 AUSTRALIA



1 VICTORIA

For Gender Equality (THE Impact Rankings 2024)

KEY MILESTONES EDI AT LA TROBE

1980s

Pioneering Gender Studies

Launched one of Australia's first **Women's Studies** courses, later evolving into **Gender, Sexuality, and Diversity Studies**.

1990s / 2000s

Expanding Regional Access

Expanded into the **regional locations of Albury-Wodonga, Shepparton, Bendigo and Mildura**, strengthening equity in education for regional communities.

1993

Opened **Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society (ARCSHS)** – Advancing equity, inclusion, health and wellbeing, particularly as they relate to sex, gender, sexuality and human relationships.

2008

Opened **Olga Tennison Autism Research Centre (OTARC)** – Australia's first dedicated Autism research centre.

2018

Initiated the **WATTLE (Women Attaining Leadership)** program.

Created the **Tracey Banivanua Mar Scholarship** to support research careers of caregivers.

2019

Achieved **Science in Australia Gender Equity (SAGE) Bronze Accreditation** for gender equity in higher education and STEM.

Appointment of **inaugural Pro Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous)**.

2022

Established a dedicated **EDI Function** to advance and support EDI initiatives across the University.

Formed the **EDI Committee**, and **CALD, Disability, Gender Equity and LGBTIQ+ Working Groups**.

2023

Opened **Care Economy Research Institute** – Australia's first multidisciplinary research centre focused on the Care Economy.

Opened **Gabra Biik, Wurruwila Wutja Indigenous Research Centre** – Facilitating Indigenous community research partnerships.

2023

Introduced the **Gender Affirmation Support Plan** and introduced **Paid Gender Affirmation Leave**.

Awarded the **First SAGE Cygnet** for supporting academic promotions of women and diverse staff.

Rolled out **the Rise with La Trobe pathway program** to support Indigenous High School students to access Higher Education.

2012 - 2017

Expanding Metropolitan & Interstate Access

Opened the **Melbourne City campus** (2012) and expanded further into New South Wales with the **Sydney campus** (2017).

2015 - 2017

Launched **Gamagoen Yarrbat Indigenous Education Strategy**.

2017

Introduced the **Gender Equity and Diversity (GEDi) Function**, focused on advancing gender equity and inclusion.

Launched the **Academic Promotion Peer Support** program.

2021-2025

Launched a series of interconnected **Action Plans**: Gender Equality Action Plan (2021), SAGE Silver Action Plan (2021), Indigenous Strategy (2022), Universal Design and Inclusion Action Plan (2023), Sexual Harm Prevention and Response Action Plan (2023), and Anti-Racism Action Plan (2025).

2024

Awarded **Second SAGE Cygnet** recognising support for carers and parents to advance their careers.

Key

Expanding Reach

Leading Research

Progressing EDI

DEEP CONNECTION

LA TROBE'S STRATEGIC PLAN & EDI STRATEGY

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

The *EDI Strategy* is **deeply connected** to La Trobe's Strategic Plan 2025–2030, supporting our long-term institutional goals. Our success is built on the foundation of inclusivity, valuing everyone, where all people – staff, students, alumni and partners – are valued, supported, and empowered to contribute their unique perspectives.

► **PEOPLE ARE AT THE HEART OF OUR STRATEGY**

Achieving our strategic plan requires a strong commitment to EDI from everyone.

► **EDI IS THE FOUNDATION OF OUR SUCCESS**

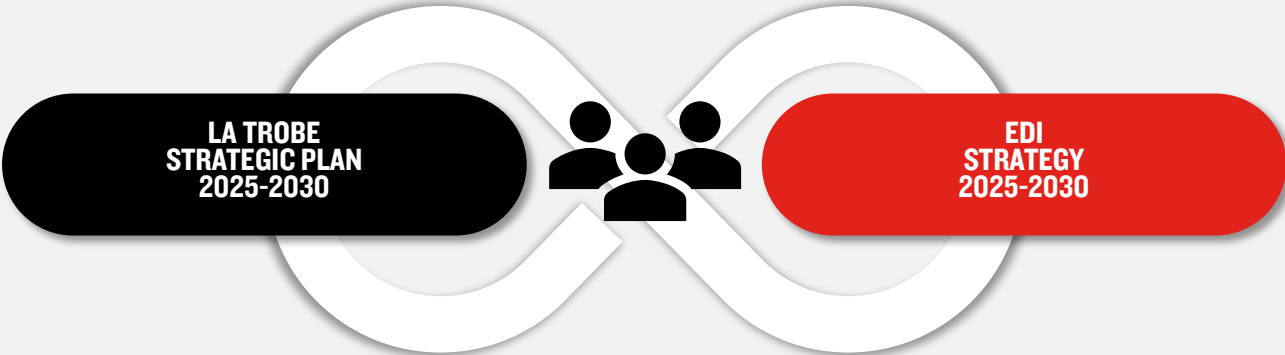
EDI cultivates an environment where everyone can thrive, driving respect, collaboration, and a unified sense of purpose.

► **IMPACT ON EXCELLENCE**

Our EDI Strategy fosters a diverse, equitable, and inclusive environment that enhances learning, teaching, research, and overall institutional excellence.

► **INTEGRATED EDI APPROACH**

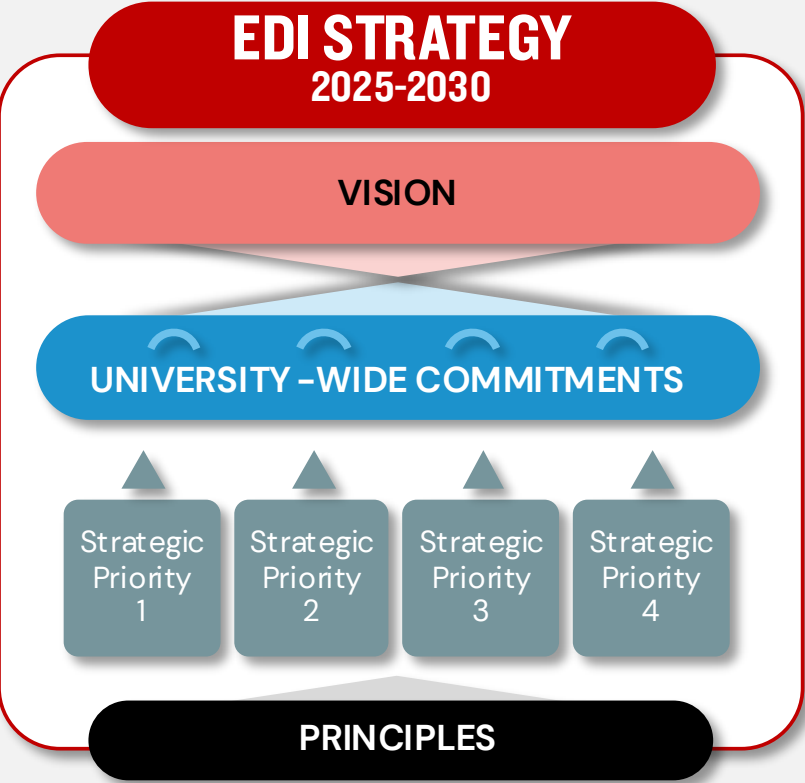
EDI is seamlessly embedded into policies, strategies, and frameworks, ensuring meaningful change and enabling every individual to contribute to our collective success and shared vision.



UNDERSTANDING

LA TROBE'S EDI STRATEGY COMPONENTS

Our *EDI Strategy* outlines our vision, four University-wide commitments, four strategic priorities and five principles to enable us to progress EDI at La Trobe.



The **overarching long-term plan** that outlines La Trobe's long terms goals for EDI, establishing the foundation and direction for EDI at La Trobe.

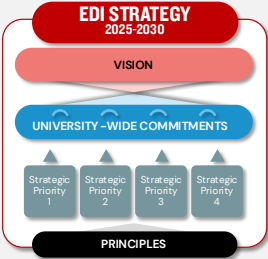
Our vision is our **aspirational statement of what we aim to achieve**, directing the EDI strategy, guiding strategic priorities, actions, outcomes, and success measures.

Our **four commitments define La Trobe's core actions** to achieve our EDI vision, guiding our decisions, behaviours and practices.

Our **four strategic priorities** address goals and challenges in realising the EDI vision and supporting our commitments.

Our **principles** shape our Strategic Priorities and inform our behaviours and practices, ensuring we remain aligned to, and achieve, our vision.

EDI STRATEGY 2025-2030



AT A GLANCE

Transforming La Trobe through Equity, Diversity and Inclusion to drive growth and **REAL IMPACT**.

VISION



OUR VISION FOR LA TROBE IS FOR EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION TO POSITIVELY TRANSFORM THE EXPERIENCES OF OUR STAFF, STUDENTS, ALUMNI, AND PARTNERS, DRIVING EXCELLENCE IN LEARNING, TEACHING, RESEARCH, AND INSTITUTIONAL PERFORMANCE.

UNIVERSITY-WIDE COMMITMENTS



WE CULTIVATE A COLLABORATIVE COMMUNITY	WE CREATE A DIVERSE CAMPUS CULTURE	WE PRIORITISE SOCIAL JUSTICE	WE COMMIT TO EDI AS A CORE PRIORITY
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STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



1	2	3	4
STRENGTHEN EDI KNOWLEDGE & PRACTICES	CREATE INCLUSIVE CAMPUSES & CULTURE	EMPOWER DIVERSE COMMUNITY GROWTH	ADVANCE EDI THROUGH ACCOUNTABILITY & LEADERSHIP
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Consistently understood and applied understanding of EDIInclusive curriculum and researchAlumni and partners engaged in EDI	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Inclusive and welcoming campusesStrengthened community impactA culture of inclusion and success	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Equitable access and representationEquitable systems and opportunitiesRecognising community contribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Embedded EDI commitment in La Trobe strategiesTransparent reporting and continuous improvementLeaders equipped with EDI skills

OUTCOMES



PRINCIPLES

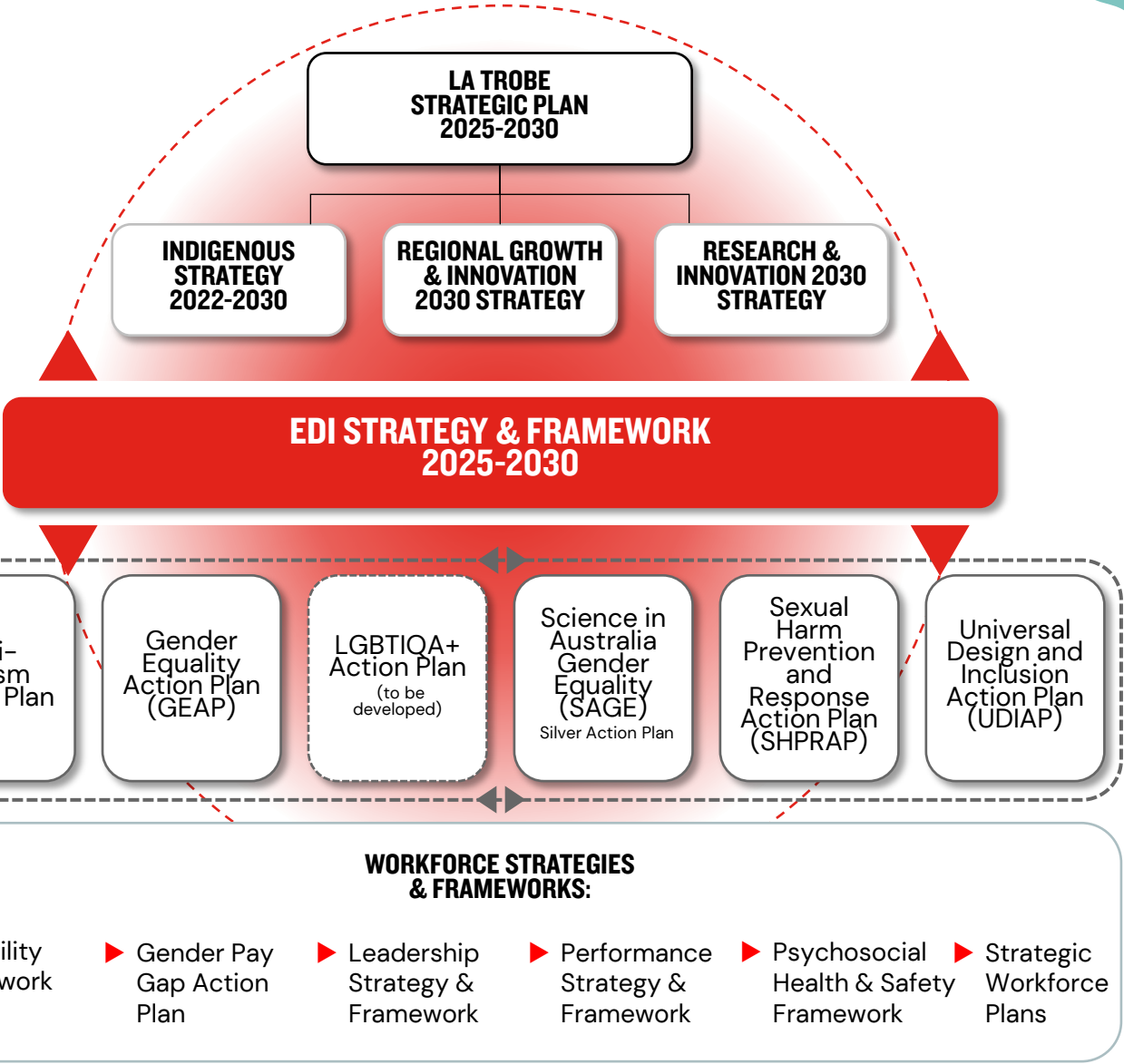


FOSTER SHARED RESPONSIBILITY	DRIVE MEANINGFUL CHANGE	UPHOLD EQUITY & HUMAN RIGHTS	EMBRACE DIVERSE LIVED EXPERIENCES	BUILD LASTING IMPACT
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EDI ECOSYSTEM

CONNECTING STRATEGY & IMPACT

Our EDI Strategy is aligned with La Trobe’s Strategic Plan and EDI action plans, ensuring an integrated approach that drives meaningful change and maximises impact.



FUTURE OF EDI AT LA TROBE

We have made significant progress with EDI particularly over the last three years, driven by the commitment and advocacy of our staff, students and community members. We recognise that meaningful progress takes time and that our journey has not been without its challenges, particularly for staff and students with lived experience. This only strengthens our commitment to listening, learning and continuing to improve.

As we move forward and work together to advance EDI, we will empower the voices of those with lived experience to inform our priorities. We will mature our approach by strengthening our data, and adopting an evidenced based, systemic and integrated, whole-of-university approach, to drive greater impact and create meaningful change, ensuring everyone feels valued and empowered at La Trobe to thrive.

CASE STUDY |

Responding to racism: The influence of representation and advocacy

In May 2022, Deepa Balakrishnan was appointed Co-Chair of the Cultural and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Working Group. Following her appointment, she was contacted by culturally and linguistically diverse staff from across the university sharing their experiences of racism.

Recognising the need for a structured approach, Deepa proposed engagement of an independent consultancy called Mind Tribes to the EDI Committee to create safe spaces for dialogue. Supported by the Vice Chancellor and the EDI Committee, the listening circles provided by Mind Tribes allowed staff to share their experiences anonymously. The insights gathered were instrumental in shaping discussions with the Senior Executive Group (SEG), highlighting the urgent need for actionable steps to combat racism.

The establishment of the Anti-Racism Taskforce marked a significant stride in the University's commitment to fostering an inclusive workplace. The Taskforce, consisting of members with lived experiences of racism, was tasked with developing an anti-racism action plan. Through these efforts, the University aims to build a culture of mutual respect and support, ensuring all employees feel valued and empowered to contribute to the University's mission.

CASE STUDY | Call me by my name:

Addressing naming in Student Systems

In early 2022, Finn*, working at ASK La Trobe, identified a significant issue within the University's CRM system that affected trans and gender-diverse, and culturally diverse students. The system sends emails directly to students with an uneditable header automatically using the students' legal first names, leading to instances of deadnaming or misnaming – the act of referring to someone by their legal name instead of their chosen name.

Finn took the issue to the University's LGBTIQ+ Working Group, where it was confirmed that other staff and students had faced similar challenges. Finn then collaborated with the Deputy Director of Student Success to address the issue of deadnaming in the system, leading to a successful update in October 2022 that allowed the system to use students' chosen names. Following this, staff advocacy efforts continued, resulting in a 2024 discovery project to investigate updating staff-facing systems to improve inclusiveness, with the University committing to these updates in 2025.

*Not real name



HEARING OUR COMMUNITY:

KEY CONSULTATION
INSIGHTS

INTRODUCTION

Our EDI Strategy and Framework was developed through a comprehensive process, incorporating research into leading practices across higher education, the public sector and other industries. While we recognise existing challenges with collecting intersectional demographic data, particularly workforce data, we are committed to strengthening our data approach. To ensure a robust understanding of diverse experiences, we drew insights from existing experience surveys and a dedicated consultation process, engaging a wide range of staff and student voices across La Trobe.

We utilised knowledge and expertise from across the University to develop the strategy. This approach ensures alignment with best practices for creating effective, enterprise-level strategies. The goal is to establish a practical and sustainable organisational framework that supports La Trobe’s long-term success and growth.

CONSULTATION APPROACH

From June to September 2024, a comprehensive consultation engaged staff and students across La Trobe. This included scoping conversations, an online questionnaire, and 31 facilitated consultation sessions across all campuses. In total, 238 attendees and 181 questionnaire responses were received.

A project reference group was established with representatives from across the University to provide regular input, advice and feedback on the consultation approach and strategy development. Members included academic and professional staff, people with lived experience, people in student-facing roles, functional area representatives and members of our EDI Advisory Groups. The EDI Committee provided overall strategic oversight and governance and was consulted during the development process.

INSIGHTS FROM CONSULTATION

Insights gathered through the consultations highlighted the key themes below:



CARE AND SUPPORT

Participants expressed that care and support are strong within La Trobe but are experienced inconsistently across different areas of the university. There is a clear need for more systemic application and enhanced support mechanisms to ensure a more positive experience for all.



CAPABILITY UPLIFT

Participants indicated the need and desire for EDI training and resources to build an informed and inclusive workforce and culture at La Trobe.



TRANSPARENCY AND LEADERSHIP

People raised concerns regarding a lack of transparency and visible leadership in EDI decision-making. A desire for clear communication and accountability was expressed.



WELLBEING AND SUPPORT

Respondents reported positive experiences of wellbeing and support, however, a need for more consistent and ongoing assistance was sought with an emphasis on fostering connections and support networks.



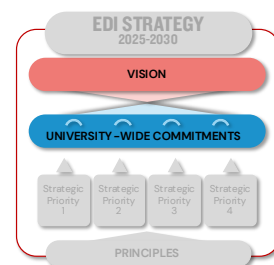
PLACE AND PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

People spoke of a desire for a tailored approach to meet the unique needs of each campus, while also addressing the need for improved accessibility, safety and inclusivity for all community members.



DIVERSE REPRESENTATION

Participants, particularly from diverse backgrounds, spoke of disparities in recruitment, retention, and career and education pathways and progression. People agreed there was a need for improved intersectional data collection and targeted initiatives to promote inclusivity and equitable opportunities.



OUR VISION

*Transforming La Trobe through Equity, Diversity and Inclusion to drive growth and **REAL IMPACT**.*



OUR VISION FOR LA TROBE IS FOR EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION (EDI) TO POSITIVELY TRANSFORM THE EXPERIENCES OF OUR STAFF, STUDENTS, ALUMNI, AND PARTNERS, DRIVING EXCELLENCE IN LEARNING, TEACHING, RESEARCH, AND INSTITUTIONAL PERFORMANCE.



OUR COMMITMENTS

Our vision is underpinned by **four University commitments**. These commitments define La Trobe's core actions to achieve our EDI vision, guiding our decisions, behaviours and practices to create an inclusive, diverse, and equitable environment for all. They are supported by our Cultural Qualities: Accountable, Connected, Innovative, and Care which shape the way we work and engage with our communities.

1

WE CULTIVATE A COLLABORATIVE CULTURE

where staff, students, alumni, and partners collaborate with mutual respect, shared accountability, and a commitment to continuous learning. This collaborative culture empowers, supports, and equips everyone to thrive, contribute meaningfully and succeed.

**CULTURAL QUALITY
CONNECTION**

**WE ARE
CONNECTED**



2

WE CREATE A DIVERSE CAMPUS CULTURE

that celebrates diversity in thought, experience, and identity, where inclusive participation is the norm, and equitable access to opportunities is assured. By ensuring equitable outcomes for all members of our community, we advance individual and collective performance, wellbeing, and institutional success.

**WE
CARE**



3

WE PRIORITISE SOCIAL JUSTICE

which is deeply embedded in the cultural fabric of La Trobe and reflected in our Cultural Qualities. This commitment drives lasting societal impact through research excellence, innovative teaching and strategic partnerships. By fostering systemic change, we deliver measurable benefits to the communities we serve, reflecting our commitment to social responsibility, equity and innovation.

**WE ARE
INNOVATIVE**



4

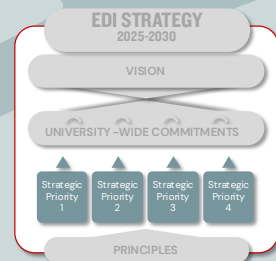
WE COMMIT TO EDI AS A CORE PRIORITY

to drive sustainable institutional growth, foster innovation, and ensure we remain at the forefront of academic excellence, delivering real and lasting impact.

**WE ARE
ACCOUNTABLE**



OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



Our four strategic priorities guide our actions to build EDI knowledge and practices, foster inclusive campus environments, empower our diverse community, and ensure effective leadership and accountability. These interconnected priorities are designed to drive meaningful and lasting change, embedding EDI into everything we do to achieve our vision of progress, growth, innovation, and real impact at La Trobe.

► **PRIORITY 1** **STRENGTHEN EDI KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICES**

We will build the understanding and confidence of our community by integrating EDI principles into work, learning, behaviours, and daily practices for staff, students, alumni, and partners, while fostering an environment of shared accountability to strive for ongoing growth and engagement.

► **PRIORITY 2** **CREATE INCLUSIVE CAMPUSES AND CULTURE**

We will create welcoming learning, working and campus environments, both physical and online by integrating locally tailored strategies that reflect the needs of each campus and digital space, fostering a collective La Trobe identity whilst positively impacting broader communities.

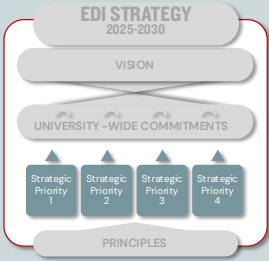
► **PRIORITY 3** **EMPOWER DIVERSE COMMUNITY GROWTH**

We will support and empower our diverse community to thrive by creating opportunities for everyone to grow and succeed.

► **PRIORITY 4** **ADVANCE EDI THROUGH ACCOUNTABILITY AND LEADERSHIP**

We will demonstrate effective leadership and institutional commitment to EDI by integrating these responsibilities at all levels of leadership, establishing clear accountability structures, and fostering a dedication to proactive involvement that drives measurable progress, continuous improvement, and meaningful change.

PRIORITY 1
STRENGTHEN EDI
KNOWLEDGE
AND PRACTICES



Purpose:

We will build the understanding and confidence of our community by integrating EDI principles into work, learning, behaviours, and daily practices for staff, students, alumni, and partners, while fostering an environment of shared accountability that strives for ongoing growth and engagement.

Outcomes:

1. Consistently understood and applied understanding of EDI:
Staff and students develop a consistent understanding of EDI principles, including intersectionality through training, resources, and reflection, fostering an environment of curiosity, continuous learning, and confident application in their work and study.

2. Inclusive curriculum and research:
EDI principles and inclusive design³ are embedded into academic programs, ensuring accessibility and enabling students to engage with diverse perspectives and inclusive curriculum and teaching.

3. Alumni and partners engaged in EDI:
Alumni and partners contribute to EDI through programs, mentorship, and advocacy, strengthening La Trobe’s commitment to inclusivity across its community.

Success Indicators:

Gather feedback on capability and assessing training effectiveness:
Training completion rates and qualitative feedback will be assessed to measure the effectiveness, relevance, and real-world application of EDI training, ensuring broad participation and continuous improvement.

Apply EDI knowledge in practice:
Staff, students, alumni and partners demonstrate how to apply EDI principles in real-life contexts, such as teaching methods, research, collaboration and community engagement, to share knowledge and identify areas for improvement.

Track alumni and partner engagement in EDI:
Measure alumni participation in EDI-focused events and mentorship programs, alongside the growth of external partnerships that actively incorporate and promote EDI principles.

³ The design of mainstream products and/or services that are accessible to, and usable by, as many people as reasonably possible without the need for special adaptation or specialised design.

CASE STUDY | Embracing cultural safety: The impact of EDI capability

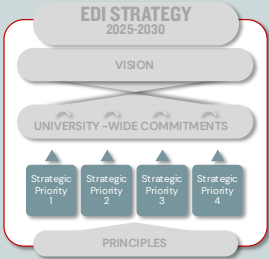
Grace*, working at Rainbow Health Australia, part of the Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society (ARCSHS), found a uniquely inclusive environment during their employment. Transitioning during their tenure, Grace has experienced a workplace culture at ARCSHS that prioritises respect, inclusivity, and cultural safety. Practices such as sharing and asking for pronouns when meeting a colleague for the first time, ensuring colleagues’ identities were consistently respected, and creating a supportive atmosphere made them feel seen and valued. This environment significantly enhanced their motivation and productivity.

The team’s approach extends beyond basic policies, incorporating innovative practices rooted in neurophysiology and trauma-informed care. Staff meetings often begin with grounding activities to regulate and calibrate nervous systems, acknowledging the physical and emotional needs of staff. The role of a ‘critical friend’—a team member assigned to observe meeting dynamics, ensuring equitable participation and addressing power imbalances—further evidences the organisation’s commitment to inclusivity. This culture enabled Grace to thrive professionally, contributing effectively to the organisation’s goals while supporting their colleagues’ wellbeing.

*Not real name



PRIORITY 2
CREATE INCLUSIVE
CAMPUSES AND CULTURE



Purpose:

We will create welcoming learning, working and campus environments, both physical and online by integrating locally tailored strategies that reflect the needs of each campus and digital space, fostering a collective La Trobe identity whilst positively impacting the broader communities.



Outcomes:

- 1. Inclusive and welcoming campuses:**
Create a physical campus and virtual experience that improves accessibility, staff and student retention rates, and overall satisfaction for staff, students, alumni, and partners, while achieving *Welcoming Universities*⁴ accreditation.
- 2. Strengthened community impact:**
Foster meaningful relationships with local communities, demonstrating positive contributions and mutual growth through impactful partnerships and collaborative initiatives.
- 3. A culture of inclusion and success:**
A vibrant and inclusive environment that celebrates diversity, enhances learning and teaching outcomes, promotes academic excellence, and encourages strong engagement and participation across campus activities.



Success Indicators:

- Measure satisfaction and diversity:**
Feedback from staff, students, alumni, and partners will be collected to assess satisfaction, safety and belonging with the campus environment and initiatives, alongside monitoring diversity metrics to demonstrate increased representation of underrepresented groups.
- Capture campus climate:**
Personal experiences related to inclusion and belonging will be shared through regular listening sessions, storytelling, and forums with qualitative insights gathered to inform initiatives.
- Measure community partnerships and impact:**
The number, quality, and outcomes of collaborations with local community organisations will be tracked, along with engagement levels and testimonials, to demonstrate positive contributions and mutual support.

⁴ Welcoming Universities Accreditation is an initiative designed to recognise universities that demonstrate commitment to fostering an inclusive and welcoming environment for people of refugee backgrounds. It focuses on ensuring universities are accessible and supportive to refugees and those seeking asylum, through policies, practices, and services that promote integration, participation, and equal opportunities.

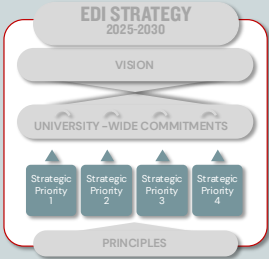
CASE STUDY | Community connections: Partnership with the Indian Association of Bendigo

In an effort to promote diversity and celebrate Indian culture and traditions, the University has formed a meaningful partnership with the Indian Association of Bendigo. This collaboration, anchored on shared values of respect, equity, and freedom, aims to create an environment where cultural diversity is celebrated. The partnership has proven to be impactful for Indian students, establishing a support network that connects them with the broader Indian community in Bendigo through cultural events, festivals, and community discussions.

The association also plays a significant role in facilitating interactions with visiting Indian delegates. When representatives from India visit Bendigo, meetings with the Vice Chancellor exemplify the University's commitment to fostering international relationships. These interactions not only strengthen the ties between the local communities but also enhance the University's profile as an institution dedicated to cultural inclusivity and global engagement.



PRIORITY 3
EMPOWER DIVERSE
COMMUNITY GROWTH



Purpose:

We will support and empower our diverse community to thrive by creating opportunities for everyone to grow and succeed.



Outcomes:

1. Equitable access and representation:

Ensure all staff and students have equitable access to opportunities, resources and career/education pathways, while actively fostering diversity at all levels through inclusive recruitment, retention, and empowerment.

2. Equitable systems and opportunities:

Systems, processes, and policies will be continually reviewed and refined to identify and address systemic barriers, ensuring all people have equal opportunities to thrive academically and professionally.

3. Recognise community contribution:

The lived experiences and contributions of our community members will be acknowledged and celebrated, including through diversity focused events and days of significance.



Success Indicators:

Measure inclusivity and engagement:

Gather feedback through surveys, focus groups, and advisory group discussions to assess belonging, identify barriers, and generate actionable insights that enhance support systems and inclusivity.

Measure retention and advancement:

The retention and advancement of all staff and students will be monitored to ensure equitable opportunities for academic and professional success.

Empower reporting and inclusive experiences:

Foster a supportive, accessible, transparent, and culturally sensitive reporting culture for both staff and students, ensuring trust and safety. Survey results and reporting data will reflect improved inclusion, safety, and reduced negative incidents, particularly for those with lived experience.

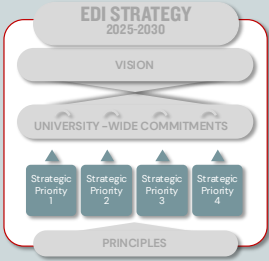
CASE STUDY | Supporting career progression: Academic Promotion Peer Support Program (APPS)

In 2024, Anne-Marie participated in the APPS program – a dedicated mentoring initiative designed to support women, LGBTIQ+ people, multicultural people, Indigenous peoples and people with disabilities aspiring for academic promotion. Despite her extensive academic experience of over a decade, Anne-Marie found immense value in the guidance offered by her mentor, who generously shared her time and insights, reflecting on her own promotion journey. The program’s smaller, more intimate group settings fostered a collegial atmosphere, allowing participants to openly share their challenges and successes, and receive detailed feedback on their application documents.

The mentor’s ability to demystify the application process played a significant role in the participants’ success. By the end of the program, all members of Anne-Marie’s group achieved their promotion goals, underscoring the effectiveness of the APPS program’s approach. The meaningful interactions, peer support, and the program’s accessible nature were crucial elements that contributed to their achievements, demonstrating the value of mentoring and structured support in career progression.



PRIORITY 4
ADVANCE EDI THROUGH
ACCOUNTABILITY AND
LEADERSHIP



Purpose:

We will demonstrate effective leadership and institutional commitment to EDI by integrating these responsibilities at all levels of leadership, establishing clear accountability structures, and fostering a dedication to proactive involvement that drives measurable progress, continuous improvement, and meaningful change.

Outcomes:

1. Embedded EDI commitment in La Trobe strategies:

EDI principles will be consistently integrated into all significant strategies, programs, policies, and decision-making processes, including budget and resource allocation.

2. Transparent reporting and continuous improvement:

Regular updates on EDI progress will be openly shared, using feedback from staff, students, alumni, and partners to improve policies, programs, and initiatives for ongoing institutional change.

3. Leaders equipped with EDI skills:

All staff and student leaders will be equipped with the skills, knowledge, and resources to champion EDI within their areas of influence.

Success Indicators:

Executive leadership, accountability, and transparency:

Ensure visible commitment to EDI through aligned strategies, active executive leadership advocacy and involvement, and transparent progress reporting. Showcase accountability through case studies and regular updates on achievements, challenges, and areas for improvement.

Inclusive and accountable leadership:

All leaders will actively champion EDI by participating in training with a focus on prevention, response, and survivor-centred approaches, modelling inclusive behaviours, and integrating EDI principles into communications, demonstrating ongoing commitment and measurable growth in EDI leadership.

Increase satisfaction with EDI leadership:

Collect and analyse feedback from staff, students, alumni, and partners on the effectiveness of EDI leadership and practices through surveys and engagement activities, with measurable improvements in satisfaction and impact over time.

CASE STUDY | Inclusive leadership: Melanie Bish’s journey

Melanie (Mel) Bish, Pro Vice Chancellor (Regional), has worked across clinical, education, management and research domains of nursing that have enabled her to develop an inclusivity focused principled approach to work. From providing patient care in remote Indigenous communities to completing rural community health assessments in Borneo; teaching professional nursing subjects in Singapore to being in an international research team with colleagues from Sweden and Hong Kong focused on culture competence in higher degree by research students, Mel believes the diversity in her professional endeavours has enabled her to embrace and value difference, leading to more innovative and cohesive outcomes. In the recent role as Co-Chair of the CALD Working Group, Mel ensured an inclusive environment where colleagues could voice their experiences and discuss how to respond to challenges relating to cultural difference, reflecting her commitment to transformational leadership.

One of Mel’s key aspects of leadership has been her willingness to be vulnerable and embrace feedback, striving to create a safe and inclusive environment. By actively identifying and challenging her own biases and prejudices, leading with authenticity and emotional intelligence, Mel demonstrated the importance of valuing diversity and fostering an environment of trust and respect. Her leadership journey exemplifies how embracing EDI principles can drive meaningful change and create a more inclusive community. Mel is now leading the University’s work in the space as the Chair of the EDI Committee.



PRINCIPLES

The Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy is grounded in the following principles, which provide the ethical framework and guiding values that shape our Strategic Priorities and guide our behaviours and practices, ensuring we remain aligned with, and achieve, our vision.



**FOSTER
SHARED
RESPONSIBILITY:**

Creating an inclusive university where everyone plays an active role in fostering a culture of respect, safety and inclusion.



**DRIVE
MEANINGFUL
CHANGE:**

Prioritising actions that deliver measurable, lasting EDI improvements, focusing on impact over outputs.



**UPHOLD
EQUITY & HUMAN
RIGHTS:**

Ensuring fair access to education, resources, and opportunities so all in the La Trobe community feel safe, valued and empowered to succeed.



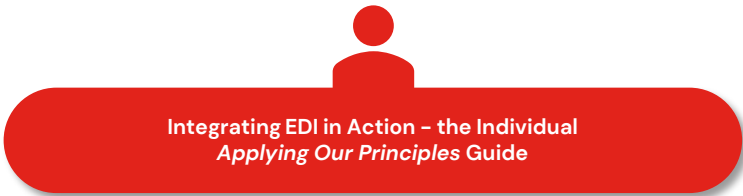
**EMBRACE
DIVERSE LIVED
EXPERIENCES:**

Recognising and responding to the complexity of diverse identities and considering intersectionality, tailoring approaches that create meaningful opportunities for all.



**BUILD
LASTING
IMPACT:**

Embedding sustainable EDI practices into policies, programs, and partnerships to drive systemic, long-term change.



The ‘Applying Our Principles’ Guide is currently available via the intranet.

CONTACT

La Trobe University
Victoria 3086 Australia

General enquiries
T +61 3 9479 1111
F +61 3 9478 5814