



**Sustainability  
Annual Report  
2017**





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RMIT Sustainability Annual Report 2017

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# 1. About this Report:

## 1.1 Report Scope

This is RMIT University's third annual sustainability report, spanning the calendar year from 1 January to 31 December 2017 and we will continue to report annually. The report documents our progress, highlights our key achievements and sets our sustainability goals for the following year.

Our report shows the impact that our learning and teaching, research and operations has on the environment, local economies and society and highlights our commitments and progress towards becoming a more sustainable organisation.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) Standards: Core option. In line with GRI requirements, this report presents our significant economic, social and environmental impacts and contributions, both current and those that are reasonably foreseeable. We address where these impacts occur and how we contribute to them throughout this report. The information contained in this report has not been the subject of any external assurance.

This report covers all Australian entities listed under the RMIT Annual Report with additional data from our international campuses in Vietnam where available and indicated. This report does not contain and restated information.

In preparing this report RMIT has considered the following GRI Reporting Principles for defining report quality to ensure a high quality sustainability report is achieved:

- Accuracy
- Balance
- Clarity
- Comparability
- Reliability
- Timeliness

## 1.2 Materiality

Our approach to developing the content for our report has been informed by the GRI's Reporting Principles for defining report content - stakeholder inclusiveness, sustainability context, materiality and completeness. It has also been informed by the principles of the AA1000 standard which provides guidance to organisations to identify and respond to issues in sustainability. In 2017 we undertook a content determination and materiality assessment informed by these principles and AccountAbility's Five Part Test.

**Our report shows the impact that our learning and teaching, research and operations has on the environment.**

RMIT Sustainability Committee

## 1.3 Our Sustainability Context

Following the content determination and materiality assessment the key issues identified were:

- Ready for life and work
- Research impact
- Green buildings and infrastructure
- Learning and teaching
- Student health, safety and wellbeing
- Empowering staff
- Governance
- Diversity and inclusion

The issues emerging since our last assessment included the welfare of our students in the city with the impact of climate change and how to maintain social cohesion among student body and their relationship to place when they are increasingly accessing education online.

We welcome your enquiries and feedback on this report.

Please email: [sustainability@rmit.edu.au](mailto:sustainability@rmit.edu.au)

Step	Inputs
<b>1. Identify</b> A desktop review to develop a longer list of sustainability issues	<b>A review of:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Issues listed as material in the 2016 report</li> <li>• RMIT University's operating context in global sustainable development (including the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the World Economic Forum's Global Risk Report 2017)</li> <li>• RMIT University's risk register</li> <li>• RMIT University's strategy</li> <li>• Direct interviews with nine internal and eight external stakeholders on content and key issues</li> <li>• Issues identification exercise with more than 100 students, through the 'butterfly' exercise.</li> </ul>
<b>2. Prioritise</b> Ranking of issues	<b>A review of:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sector-specific lists of material issues (e.g. from GRI and SASB)</li> <li>• The sustainability reports and websites of peers</li> <li>• Issues reported in the media</li> <li>• Survey of internal and external stakeholders to rank issues</li> </ul>
<b>3. Prioritise</b> Ranking of issues	<b>A review of:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The 2016 report against the GRI Standards 2016 and known best practices in reporting.</li> <li>• Direct interviews stakeholders on content and areas for improvement.</li> </ul>
<b>4. Validate</b> Presentation of prioritised issues at RMIT University	Workshop with the University's Sustainability Committee to review and validate the results

# 1.4 Highlights

2017 marked the 130-year anniversary of the founding of RMIT University

20 students joined our new Sustainability Ambassadors Program

Our new Sustainability Space opened on the City campus

University awarded five stars for learner engagement in The Good Universities Guide

RMIT won the GLOBE (Gay and Lesbian Organisation of Business and Enterprise) Community Award for 'Protecting our Community'

The Bike Hub won a Green Gown Award

The VC became a Pay Equity Ambassador for Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA)

RMIT completes the New Academic Street (NAS) project transforming the City campus.

Installed another 100kW of solar on our campus in 2017

RMIT partnered with the Melbourne Renewable Energy Project to collectively purchase renewable energy from a new wind farm to be built in Victoria

The Sustainable Events Guide launched

RMIT celebrated Reconciliation Week with the opening of its new Ngarara Willim Centre at Bundoora campus

## 2. Message from the Vice Chancellor

In 2017, RMIT celebrated 130 years since we were founded with a motto of “a skilled hand, a cultivated mind”. This vision remains as relevant today as it was then, as we continue to prepare students for the changing world of work and shaping the world with impactful research.

A cornerstone of our current Ready for Life and Work strategy is sustainability: environmental, social and economic. Led by our organisational values, we are proud to challenge and champion important issues across our communities and the world.

In this report, I am proud to share some of the contributions we’re making and the progress we’ve made against our sustainability goals.

In recognition of the inherent value of Indigenous Australians, our journey to a shared future includes commitments that go beyond the fundamentals of reconciliation. As part of our Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) and, among many achievements, we proudly opened the new Ngarara Willim Centre at Bundoora West campus to further support our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Supporting our staff and students and the evolving needs of families, we opened a brand new RMIT City Campus Children’s Centre, providing long-day childcare services. The purpose-built centre provides a progressive, inclusive and consistently high-quality children’s service in a facility that, of course, has strong sustainability attributes in its design and operation.

We created a Sustainability Ambassadors Program to empower our students to have a voice, participate in sustainability initiatives and grow their knowledge. The pilot successfully supported 20 Ambassadors who receive formal recognition for their contribution on their academic transcript through the Future Edge Program.



One of our core values at RMIT is ‘courage’. This means speaking out on important issues in our community and our world.

Martin Bean CBE



The conclusion of the Sustainable Urban Precincts Program and the expansion of on-campus solar projects saw us reduce our carbon emissions by 34 per cent from our 2007 baseline. This reflects our ongoing commitment to action on climate change through energy conservation.

For the first time in Australia a group of local governments, cultural institutions, universities and corporations are collectively purchasing renewable energy, directly enabling the build of a wind farm in regional Victoria in 2018. As a proud partner of the Melbourne Renewable Energy Project, we will purchase 25 per cent of our electricity from this wind farm from 2019.

Striving for the best sustainable outcomes and practices is, and always will be, integral to RMIT. We will continue to push the boundaries with our passion for social inclusion and determination to use our capabilities to make real world impacts. We understand our role in the broader community and through our actions and teachings, we can shape the world for better.

**Martin Bean CBE**  
Vice-Chancellor and President

## 3. About RMIT

### 3.1 Organisational profile

**RMIT is a global university of technology, design and enterprise in which teaching, research and engagement are central to achieving positive impact and creating life-changing experiences for our students.**

One of Australia’s original educational institutions founded in 1887, RMIT University now has 87,000 students and 11,000 staff globally. We embrace diversity as a critical driver for positive economic and social change. With 45 per cent of our higher education student body representing international students, this makes us Australia’s leading multi-cultural institution and a benchmark for cross-cultural integration in a globalising world.

The University enjoys an international reputation for excellence in professional and vocational education, applied and innovative research, and engagement with the needs of industry and the community. RMIT is ranked in the top one per cent of global universities, rising to equal 247th in the 2017 QS World University Rankings. The University is ranked eighth in Australia for employer reputation, and 30th in East Asia and the Pacific.

RMIT prides itself on the strong industry links it has forged over its 130-year history. Collaboration with industry is integral to the University’s leadership in applied research and education, and to the development of highly skilled, globally focused graduates.

With three campuses in Melbourne (City, Brunswick and Bundoora), two in Vietnam (Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City) and an industry collaboration centre in Barcelona, Spain, RMIT is a truly global university. RMIT also offers programs through partners in Singapore, Hong Kong, mainland China, Indonesia and Sri Lanka, and enjoys research and industry partnerships on every continent.

For more information on our key statistics visit our website: <https://www.rmit.edu.au/about/governance-and-management/key-university-statistics>

The University is a significant landholder in the City of Melbourne, owning approximately 6 per cent of Melbourne’s central business district. This positions us to take a leading role in driving sustainable urban outcomes for the city. In total RMIT’s property portfolio comprises more than 130 buildings in Melbourne (more than 460,000 m2 gross floor area) and a further nine buildings on overseas campuses with a total floor area of 54,000m2.

The consolidated 2017 net operating result for RMIT University and its subsidiaries was \$70.9 million, continuing the strong results of recent years. RMIT University’s operating result was \$51.0 million or 4.3 per cent of revenue.

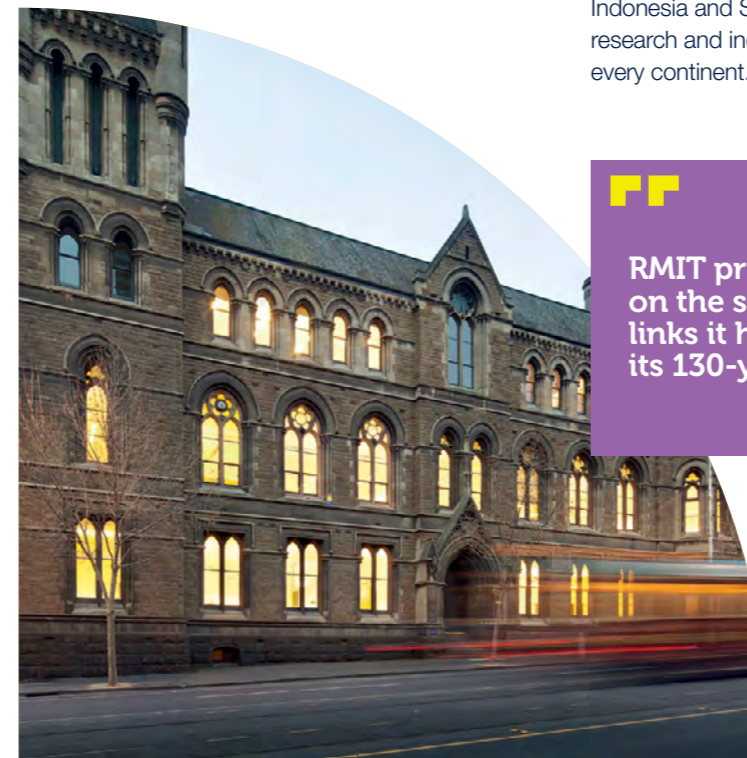
RMIT subsidiaries are governed by a Board of Directors which includes a member or members of the RMIT University Council. Financial performance, operational highlights and risk management are reported quarterly to Council.

Our current subsidiaries are:

- RMIT Holdings Pty Ltd
- RMIT Online
- RMIT Spain SL
- RMIT Training

The University’s Annual Report contains further information on our financial performance, subsidiaries and our executive profiles [www.rmit.edu.au/annualreport](http://www.rmit.edu.au/annualreport).

The University as constituted under the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology Act 1992 is a body politic and corporate with perpetual succession.



RMIT prides itself on the strong industry links it has forged over its 130-year history.





### 3.2 Our heritage

The Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nations are the Traditional Owners of the land on which the University stands and were our first practitioners of sustainability. We respectfully recognise Elders past, present and future.

2017 marked 130 years since RMIT was established as the Working Men's College with the aim of bringing education to the working people of Melbourne. Since 1887, our inner-city campus has been a vital part of the City of Melbourne, from the 1880s boom through world wars, the Great Depression and renewed prosperity during the second half of the 20th century.

Reflecting on our 130 years, we have a strong history of philanthropy, such as Francis Ormond's 1881 "seed fund" of 5000 pounds which was matched by the Melbourne community and used to found the University. The John Storey bequest has to date helped more than 600 students to study overseas and the Chan family donated several floors of a Bourke Street building – now home to RMIT Training and our newest enterprise, RMIT Online.

To explore our 130 year journey visit [www.rmit.edu.au/about/our-heritage](http://www.rmit.edu.au/about/our-heritage)

### 3.3 Governance

#### University Council

RMIT is a public university created under the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology Act 1992, governed by the RMIT Council and managed by the RMIT Chancellery. Under the legislation, the RMIT Council is responsible for the "general direction and superintendence" of the University including formulating policy and monitoring performance. The Council has 14 members, including one elected staff representative and one elected from the student body. Its chair is the RMIT Chancellor, Dr Ziggy Switkowski AO.

The University Council are provided regular updates on sustainability initiatives at RMIT through the Sustainability Committee Chair. For example, in 2017 the University Council approved Responsible Investment Principles for the management of our Philanthropic Funds to align with our UN Global Compact commitment.

#### The Vice-Chancellor's Executive

The Vice-Chancellor and President Martin Bean CBE is responsible for ensuring the University has strong and effective leadership and a clear direction. Supported by the Vice-Chancellor's Executive they provide strategic advice and governance across the University's portfolios.

For further information about our governance structure, please visit our website: [www.rmit.edu.au/about/governance-and-management](http://www.rmit.edu.au/about/governance-and-management)

#### The Sustainability Committee

Our Sustainability Committee is the highest governing body with responsibility to promote and coordinate sustainability initiatives across all areas of the University. Its goal is to ensure sustainability principles and practices are embedded within the University's core learning and teaching, research and operational activities.

The Sustainability Committee reports through the Chair to the Vice Chancellor's Executive on the University's sustainability performance and makes recommendations about sustainability-related commitments, policies, strategies and targets.

### 3.4 Key documents

#### Strategic Plan - Ready for Life and Work

Our strategic path is built upon our guiding values and principles and is intrinsically connected to our sustainability goals. Developed in collaboration with our students, staff and wider RMIT community, our strategy emphasises that it is the collective responsibility of the whole University community to work towards attaining our 2020 vision.

At the heart of the strategy is our aim to create life changing experiences for our students that prepare them for life and work. Our seven strategic goals underpin our commitment to sustainability and reflect the impact we have on the economy, society and the environment.

Our values of passion, impact, inclusion, agility, courage and imagination are enshrined in our mission to create a transformative experience for our students, prepare them for life and work, and help to shape the world with research, innovation, teaching and engagement.

The 2017 Annual Report discusses how progress is being made towards three key directions from the Strategic Plan: life changing experiences; passion with purpose; and shaping the world. Our annual report can be found on the RMIT website: [www.rmit.edu.au/about/governance-and-management/governance/annual-reports](http://www.rmit.edu.au/about/governance-and-management/governance/annual-reports)

#### Sustainability Policy

Our sustainability policy was formalised in 2012 with the objective of embedding sustainability principles and practices throughout learning and teaching, research and operational activities. It sets a number of goals across the areas of culture, tertiary education, research, community, partnerships, infrastructure and operations and links to a range of strategies and policies that guide specific activities.

The Sustainability Policy is available at: [www.rmit.edu.au/about/our-values/sustainability](http://www.rmit.edu.au/about/our-values/sustainability)

#### Code of Conduct

The RMIT Code of Conduct for Staff provides definition on how RMIT's values are demonstrated in the day-to-day activities of the University. The Code outlines the expected standards of behaviour and how members of the RMIT staff community are to conduct their duties while representing RMIT and working towards achieving the goals of the University.

Within the code of conduct it states that staff are expected to use all University facilities, equipment and processes efficiently, carefully and in a proper manner by being green in the workplace: pursuing the principles of sustainability and understanding the impacts and opportunities of their work. The Staff ethics and integrity policy is available at:

RMIT also has a Student Conduct Regulation which maintains and protects academic integrity at the University.

For more information visit: [www.rmit.edu.au/about/governance-and-management](http://www.rmit.edu.au/about/governance-and-management)

#### Graduate Attributes

The RMIT graduate attributes outline the broad skills that RMIT University expects that graduates will have acquired and be able to demonstrate to an appropriate level whatever their program of study. Two of the key graduate attributes for sustainability are:

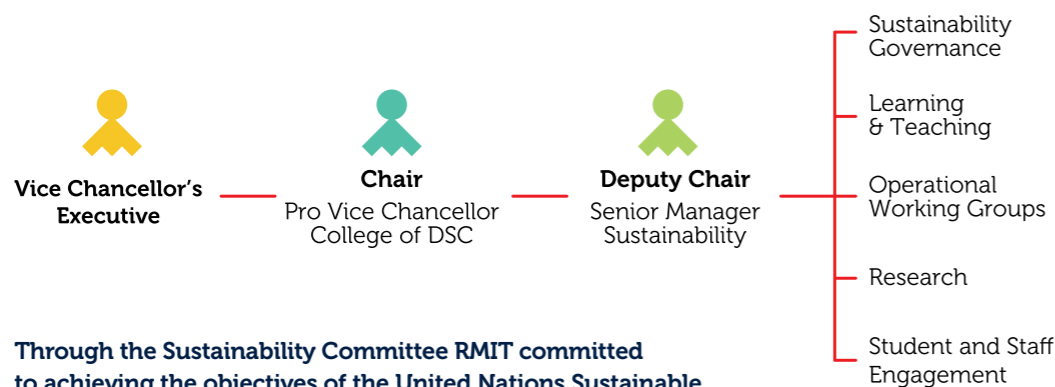
- Environmentally aware and responsible  
Graduates of RMIT University will have engaged in processes to develop their abilities to recognise environmental and social impacts and to provide leadership on sustainable approaches to complex problems.
- Culturally and socially-aware  
Graduates of RMIT University will have developed cultural, social and ethical awareness and skills, consistent with a positive role as responsible and engaged members of local, national, international and professional communities.

#### Risk Management Framework

Risk Management Framework is based upon and guided by the International Risk Management Standard AS/NZS ISO 31000:2009.

The RMIT Council provides strategic oversight and monitoring of the RMIT Group's risk management activities and performance and ensures the degree of exposure that RMIT is prepared to accept in pursuit of its objectives is established and articulated in RMIT's statement on risk appetite.

The Council Audit & Risk Management Committee, with support of the Internal Audit and Risk Management function, periodically reviews the effectiveness of the RMIT Risk management policy process and its application to potential risk exposures, monitor the alignment of risk-appetite and risk-profile, and ensures internal audit plans for the RMIT Group include appropriate consideration of risk.



**Through the Sustainability Committee RMIT committed to achieving the objectives of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. These goals are aimed at ending poverty, protecting the planet and prosperity for all.**

# 4. Stakeholder engagement

## 4.1 Engagement mechanisms

We identify our stakeholders based on the following key criteria:

- Representation – those who represent or who can legitimately claim to represent key interests with which RMIT University interacts.
- Dependency – those who are dependent on RMIT University and those on who we depend for our operations.
- Responsibility – those to whom RMIT University has direct responsibility such as legal, financial, operational or contractual links.
- Influence – those who have the ability to impact on RMIT University's decision making.

## 4.2 Smart Stuff

Smart Stuff is an online platform to share staff ideas for improving systems and processes. The initiative is a response to Goal 3 in our Strategic Plan 'Supporting and empowering our people with clearer, smarter, simpler systems'.

Smart Stuff is a new ideas platform - available to every staff member. Staff are able to post ideas, vote for ideas they like, comment and share their thoughts. The platform is underpinned by a Steering Committee to directly address the improvement suggestions and to support delivery.

Sustainability queries raised by staff through Smart Stuff have included opportunities for recycling coffee grounds from on-campus retailers, electronic invoicing to reduce paper consumption, replacing synthetic turf on campus with real grass and the harvesting and use of recycled water on campus.

**Supporting and empowering our people with clearer, smarter, simpler systems**



The table below to see how we engage with our stakeholders:

Stakeholder Group	Engagement Methods	Frequency
Students	- Biennial surveys - Meetings with our Student Group - RMIT University Student Union - Student Experience Advisory Committee	Constant
Staff	- Annual surveys - Annual performance development reviews - University support services	Constant
Alumni	- Website - Events - Mailing lists	As Required
Industry partners	- Advisory Boards - Relationship Managers - Work Integrated Learning	As Required
Suppliers	- Contractual management process - Tender processes - Relationship management	Constant
Governments	- Meetings - Project collaboration - Annual reports	Constant
Local communities	- Website - Publications - Open Day	As Required

## 4.3 Digital Engagement

During 2017 the Sustainability Team developed a number of digital and social media channels to engage with our students, staff and the wider community.

### Facebook

The 'Sustainability at RMIT' is one of only three official Facebook profiles for the University. At the end of 2017 the page had 262 likes and 168 followers who shared their sustainability stories, were interested in articles about sustainability research or attended events.

### Newsletter

The 'Sustainable RMIT' newsletter allows our community to follow us on our sustainability journey and get involved. At the end of 2017 we had 500 subscribers, with 58 per cent opening the email to read the article (the industry average for education and training is a rate of 16 per cent) and a click rate through to other links of 7 per cent (the industry average is 1.5 per cent).

### Website

Throughout 2017 RMIT moved to a new content management system and structure for our website. This has allowed the Sustainability Team to alter its web presence with content more targeted to our audience. This has resulted in a public facing landing page [www.rmit.edu.au/about/our-values/sustainability](http://www.rmit.edu.au/about/our-values/sustainability), a new staff site within the new 'WorkLife' intranet and embedded content in student-facing channels.

## 4.4 Memberships

RMIT is a member of key local and global organisations, these include:

- United Nations Global Compact Network Australia
- Australian Technology Network (ATN)

Membership of the United Nations Global Compact Network Australia (UNGCA) assists RMIT in sector based collaboration, leadership advocacy and global connections on sustainability.

The Australian Technology Network brings together five of the most innovative and enterprising universities in the nation: RMIT University, QUT, University of Technology Sydney, University of South Australia and Curtin University. Chaired by our Vice-Chancellor, Martin Bean CBE, the group is committed to forging partnerships with industry and government to deliver practical results through real world research.

- Australasian Campuses Towards Sustainability (ACTS)
- Green Building Council of Australia (GBCA)

RMIT is a member of ACTS, a network which aspires to inspire, promote and support change towards best practice sustainability within the operations, curriculum and research of the Australasian tertiary education sector.

RMIT is a member of the GBCA to support and drive the adoption of green building practices in the property industry. We currently have six buildings rated under the Green Star system and are finalising a submission under the Interiors Pilot Tool for our New Academic Street Project.+



**500**  
Newsletter subscribers by end of 2017.



**262**  
Facebook likes by the end of 2017.

# 5. Supporting sustainable students



## RMIT engages students through channels such as student-led clubs, grant opportunities, Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) placements and the Fairtrade Coordinator position

As sustainability becomes more prevalent in our lives, we are finding students not only have a greater role to play in addressing environmental and social challenges, they also have the 'courage' to hold the University accountable, debate the big issues and propose solutions to global problems.

The University not only needs to build student sustainability capabilities in their curriculum, but also needs to provide opportunities for students to engage in sustainability outside of the classroom, to have real-world experiences and make industry connections.

With a dedicated Sustainability Engagement role established in Property Services in late 2016, an Engagement Plan was formulated to guide the work throughout the year. The vision was to educate and inspire our students to operate as social, environmental and culturally aware global citizens.

The five focus areas for the 2017 Engagement Plan were:

1. To increase the presence of the Sustainability Team through face-to-face activities, curation of the Sustainability Space and digital engagement.
2. Focus on sustainability inductions; promoting behaviour change within the University community to increase recycling rates and reduce environmental impacts.
3. Organising and hosting events for internal and external stakeholders that promote the University's commitments towards sustainability.
4. Increase the profile of sustainability through external partnerships, promotional activities (conference papers, campus tours) and student 'living lab' projects. Create space for shared dialogue on global issues.
5. Demonstrate RMIT's maturity and competence in sustainability, whilst generating student interest / advocacy on campus.

### 5.1 Projects

#### Sustainability Ambassador Program

In 2017 the Sustainability Team launched a new student Sustainability Ambassador program, where sustainability would be integrated into the student's journey and they would receive formal recognition for their contribution on their academic transcript.

In its first year the program proved to be popular with close to 100 applications received from passionate students from all disciplines. The 20 Ambassadors who were selected were then inducted into a full day of sustainability training at RMIT, which concluded with a media training/communications workshop that was hosted by SYN Media. Throughout the year the Ambassadors have the opportunity to participate in workshops, assist at events and act as a reference group for certain sustainability initiatives on campus.

One of this year's ambassadors, Michael Pham said he learned a lot throughout the program - "The program has given me the opportunity to learn more about fair trade practice and what it takes to be more sustainable where possible. I've also been fortunate enough to meet people that I can freely share my knowledge and experiences with" he said.

Students who fulfil the initial training and a minimum of 10 hours of voluntary work are eligible to receive recognition of their efforts on their transcript through the 'Future Edge', a University-wide program to enhance key employability skills.

#### Sustainability Space

The 'Sustainability Space' was created at the heart of the New Academic Street development as a flexible, interactive and informative exhibition space for sustainability at RMIT. The space aims to educate our community about the sustainability initiatives being undertaken at the University, whilst demonstrating how to be more sustainable on campus.

Throughout the year displays were curated to highlight the sustainability work of the University's Sustainability Committee, Schools and Research areas.

One example of such a display occurred during the #CelebrateRMIT event – artistic banners displayed various aspects of sustainability at the University. Each banner focused on a different topic, such as engaging with students, transforming the built environment, collaborating through partnerships and innovation through projects.

When the University celebrated its 130th Anniversary we asked students to look toward to the year ahead and let us know what sustainability topics were most important to them. The responses were written on recycled cardboard butterflies which then swarmed across the windows of the Sustainability Space.

The space is an inclusive area where students and staff can meet to express their opinions with peers in regards to sustainability on both a local and global scale. The space acts as a focal point for these conversations at events, such as Fair Trade Fortnight and Sustainability Week.

#### Living Lab Projects

In 2017, students from a range of disciplines completed sustainability project integrated into their academic program. The projects utilised the campus as a learning tool and were linked to RMIT's sustainability goals, examples include:

- **Cycling App**  
In response to a recommendation in our Integrated Sustainable Transport Plan (ISTP), we asked students studying User Centred Design from the School of Computer Science and Information Technology to design an app. The goal of the prototype for mobile devices was to make cycling to campus more accessible, safe and social.

The design project was integrated into the student's curriculum, which was counted towards their final mark. The app generated topical conversation around the challenges of cycling in a city and the user needs. Feedback from the students creating the app suggested they gained a new understanding of why people cycle to campus.

- **Recycling Behaviours**

A group of students enrolled in the Bachelor of Environment and Society completed a project on RMIT staff and student attitudes and behaviours around recycling on campus.

Supported by the Sustainability Team the social research project was undertaken as their capstone course on 'Sustainability Strategies'. The students completed a literature review, surveys, interviews and observational data collection.

The survey received a high response rate from staff and students and showed an overall high level of interest and participation in recycling on campus from the RMIT community. 97 per cent of online survey respondents practised recycling on campus. However, barriers were identified, including infrastructural issues, a lack of education and awareness around waste disposal, and what can be recycled.

Observational research data revealed that a large amount of recyclable materials were placed in the general waste supporting a view that students are unaware or confused about what can be recycled.

- The report has produced a number of broad recommendations based on the research findings to assist in increasing awareness, improving rates of recycling and changing behaviours.

### 5.2 Events

Throughout 2017, the University ran an impressive 25 events aimed at educating students and staff on sustainability and what it means to RMIT. With an average of two sustainability events per month, we are confident in our capacity to embed sustainability on campus, while showcasing the best of what RMIT has to offer.

Events in 2017 included:

#### Sustainability Showcase:

A day-long event connecting students with sustainable opportunities offered at RMIT. This included a global mobility forum (sustainable opportunities for studying abroad), a sustainable careers panel, Greening RMIT skill-share, Fairtrade workshop and Green campus tour.

#### Sustainability Week:

A week-long celebration of sustainability, included a range of curated events, such as a movie screenings, Indigenous campus tour, speaker sessions with industry experts (on energy, biodiversity, climate change, consumption and waste, sustainable design and planning) and a tour of our renewable energy park.



## 6. Creating impact

### CSR industry panel

With an increasing focus for business on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) comes a growing need for future business leaders and employees to have the right skills and knowledge to respond to these challenges. RMIT hosted an event to examine the role of corporate social responsibility in business, exploring the ways in which CSR and sustainability are now understood as core components of business strategies, activities and innovations. The panel included industry experts Cotton On Group, B Lab, NAB and Yarra Valley Water.

### Fairtrade Fortnight:

During Fairtrade Fortnight we ran a number of events to educate and promote Fairtrade to RMIT staff and students. The fortnight of events included Fairtrade chocolate tastings, a movie screening and Q&A with industry experts.

### Fashion Revolution Week:

In support of Fashion Revolution Week RMIT hosted an event with International Development Graduate and previous Fairtrade coordinator, Melanie Lazelle. Melanie shared her experiences tracing the certified Fair Trade merchandise from the RMIT Campus Store in an interactive workshop.

### 5.3 Student-led Groups

RMIT aspires to be a sustainability literate community. We foster a culture that empowers our students to uphold sustainability principles and pursue their own sustainability initiatives. In doing so, the University encourages and supports student-led groups that bring sustainability actions to life on campus.

A number of devoted voluntary student groups are bringing sustainability to life on campus.:

- **RUSU Sustainability** – coordinated by a dedicated Sustainability Officer role within the RMIT University Student Union (RUSU) they work with students to drive sustainability initiatives on campus.
- **Engineers Without Borders RMIT (EWB)** -This group is comprised of students who are passionate about creating social value through engineering. The group supports its members to become involved in local projects, runs events, advertises positions within EWB and create a platform for like-minded people to socialise.

- **RMIT Oxfam** - RMIT Oxfam enables students to participate in broader Oxfam activities and access resources. The group provides a means for RMIT students to decide the Oxfam issues and activities they want to engage, to develop campus focused activities and campaigns and to relate broader global issues.
- **Greening RMIT** - Promotes urban agriculture, gardening and sustainable food on campus, through education, collaboration, and a range of urban greening products and services.
- **Fossil-Free RMIT** - Student campaign to divest the University's philanthropic funds from fossil fuels. It is a part of a global grassroots movement to hold leaders and institutions accountable for climate change action.
- **Australian Youth Climate Coalition** - A student club that mobilises the RMIT community to support the social movement to solve the climate crisis. The group organises protests, fundraisers, social events, and educate others throughout the year to become a part of the collective movement to inspire change

### 6.1 Enabling Capability Platforms

Research at RMIT aims to solve critical global problems and deliver significant economic, social and environmental impact.

RMIT has eight Enabling Capability Platforms (ECPs) which connect researchers from multiple disciplines under thematic umbrellas, allowing the University to deploy its areas of research excellence to comprehensively address critical local, national, regional and global challenges and capture emerging opportunities.

1. Advanced Manufacturing and Fabrication
2. Advanced Materials
3. Biomedical and Health Innovation
4. Design and Creative Practice
5. Global Business Innovation
6. Information and Systems (Engineering)
7. Social Change
8. Urban Futures

Each Enabling Capability Platform is defined by its people, infrastructure, relationships (internal and external) and subject matter expertise. In 2017 the ECPs appointed Directors, who are international leaders in their field and highly skilled in establishing multidisciplinary networks with industry partners. Each ECP then established their priority research areas, for example:

- The Urban Futures ECP is working with RMIT's partners to transform urban planning policy and practice to achieve liveable cities that promote the health and wellbeing of residents in line with the UN Habitat's New Urban Agenda.

- The Social Change ECP is working with research partners to improve public policy and social outcomes and to inform public understanding of social change. Working with industry, government and the community sector to empower people and communities, reduce inequality, strengthen human and political rights, and enhance social and environmental sustainability.
- The Global Business Innovation ECP are examining technological and non- technological innovation and shedding light on the 'soft' aspects of innovation processes (i.e. people, structures, systems, culture, routines and behaviours). This increased understanding of innovation will enable our University and the Australian public and private sectors to translate our shared research findings into innovative products, services, systems and models that lead to world-changing economic, social and environmental benefits.

### 6.2 A spotlight on sustainability research

In 2017, we focused our efforts on improving the quality, scale, distinctiveness and impact of research. Supporting RMIT researchers to work together and deploy expertise more widely through collaborations with industry, government and peer institutions. The following case studies showcase the depth and variety of sustainability research undertaken at RMIT.

#### Gardens for Wildlife

Ecological and human wellbeing are interlinked. Yet while cities continue to grow, urban biodiversity and human connections within it are declining, in potentially synergistic ways.

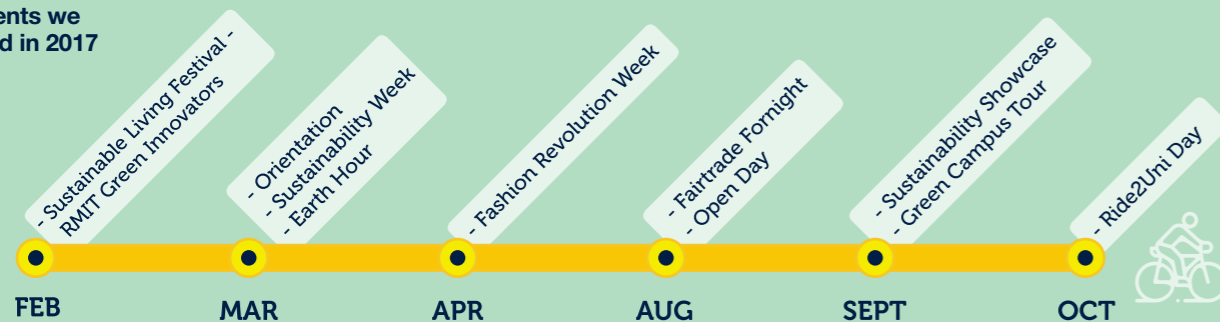
Dr Laura Mumaw, an incoming RMIT VC Postdoctoral Research Fellow, undertook her PhD at RMIT investigating community wildlife gardening as a way to address this urgent global challenge.

The research, which was supported by both the ICON Science and Beyond Behaviour Change Research Groups in RMIT's Centre for Urban Research, initially focused on Knox Gardens for Wildlife. The collaboration between Knox Council and Knox Environment Society engages residents in wildlife gardening and demonstrated how diverse residents adopt nature stewardship values and activities through participation.

Key program elements include an interactive garden assessment, community nursery hub, hands-on learning, community and council involvement, and endorsement of each garden's contribution. Through the program residents expressed feelings of connection to place and community, wellbeing from immersion in nature, learning new knowledge and skills whilst contributing to a worthwhile purpose.

Informed by this research, Dr Mumaw and colleagues helped launch Gardens for Wildlife Victoria, supported by the Victorian Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP), the Port Phillip and Westernport Catchment Management Authority (CMA), the Andrews Foundation and RMIT. The network of community groups and councils, representing 21 municipalities in greater Melbourne and regional Victoria, support each other to develop local programs that involve their residents, schools and businesses in caring for the native plants and animals of their areas.

### Events we held in 2017





Gardens for Wildlife Victoria uniquely forges community-council collaborations as wildlife gardening hubs, promotes co-design of local programs suited to community strengths and aspirations, and targets social alongside ecological goals. New hubs have been piloted in Whitehorse, Cardinia and Yarra Ranges, with a growing number in development. In her postdoctoral research, Dr Mumaw will work with Gardens for Wildlife Victoria using action research to explore how stewardship collaborations can be fostered, how their work can be linked and scaled up, and how their biodiversity and human wellbeing outcomes can be understood and strengthened.

#### Liveability Index

Professor Billie Giles-Corti is a Distinguished Professor at RMIT University and Director of its Urban Futures Enabling Capability Platform. She leads a multi-disciplinary research team that studies the impact of the built environment on health and wellbeing. Her research links geospatial data with health and travel-related survey data to study relationships with the built environment; and to evaluate urban planning policies.

Until recently, limited systematic research was undertaken to examine the influence of 'liveability' on health and wellbeing, and even less attention was paid to how best to measure 'liveability' within a policy context. Prof Giles-Corti's research proposes that global liveability rankings of whole cities mask the extreme differences in liveability from one precinct to the next.

By mapping policy-relevant urban liveability indicators across all Australian capital cities, the team produced the first baseline measure of liveability in Australia's capital cities, which is known as the Liveability Index and can be used to address urban development issues and opportunities.

While parts of Australian capital cities are highly liveable, the Liveability Index suggests otherwise, finding that access to the features that underpin liveability were in fact highly unequal. These features are distilled into seven 'domains': walkability, public transport, public open space, housing affordability, employment, the food environment, and the alcohol environment, which are found to be critical factors for creating liveable, sustainable and healthy communities.

With urban planners, governments and developers increasingly interested in making cities 'liveable', this type of research informs governments that as Australia faces the prospect of a doubled population by 2050, better, more comprehensive and consistent policies are urgently needed across all capital cities to maintain and enhance liveability and ensure the wellbeing of residents. Recommendations include building affordable higher-density housing in green leafy communities, with local shops and services and employment using high-quality public transport and walking and cycling infrastructure.

#### Energy saving impacts of green infrastructure

Governments at all levels invest a lot in greening Australian suburbs, but local government greening efforts had not been as successful as hoped. The 'Where Should All the Trees Go?' report undertaken by Dr Marco Amati, Associate Professor in International Planning, has found that the greening efforts of most of our metropolitan local governments are actually going backwards as a result of a major decline in canopy coverage and overall loss of green space.

Dr Amati's studies address rising energy costs by assessing urban greening efforts and what accounts for the gains and losses. It involves updating and modelling the impact of shade trees in selected Australian cities and calculating the derived financial and environmental benefit.

Studies in Australia and overseas have shown that one of the most effective ways for trees and urban forests to save carbon in the urban environment is through shading buildings, reducing ongoing costs associated with air conditioning.

A key finding was that liveability in terms of access to green space and concentration of heat due to the urban heat island effect were spread unevenly across metropolitan areas and that there was a strong, consistent correlation between low canopy cover, heat and socioeconomic disadvantage. As areas lose vegetation, urban areas start to act like heat sponges. The study identified that less affluent areas were at risk of having urban hotspots 10 degrees higher than wealthier areas, or areas with national parks.

The findings from Dr Amati's research taps into urban planners and government interest in cities, centering on the idea of a 'smart' connected consumer public by bringing together the definition of 'green cities' as being resource efficient with the idea of 'green cities' as being rich in plant life. Thus, the research draws awareness of the benefits of green city solutions through the energy industry.

The research highlights that green infrastructure is a key component to be considered in strategic planning of large metropolitan areas, especially to break up patches of high heat anomalies through 'planting corridors'.

The research also provides information to energy providers, which they can pass onto consumers via their marketing material. A precedent already exists with water utilities encouraging consumers to purchase green life products through a variety of channels, however this has not been utilised by energy providers, thus providing opportunity for further research.

#### Helping households reduce energy use

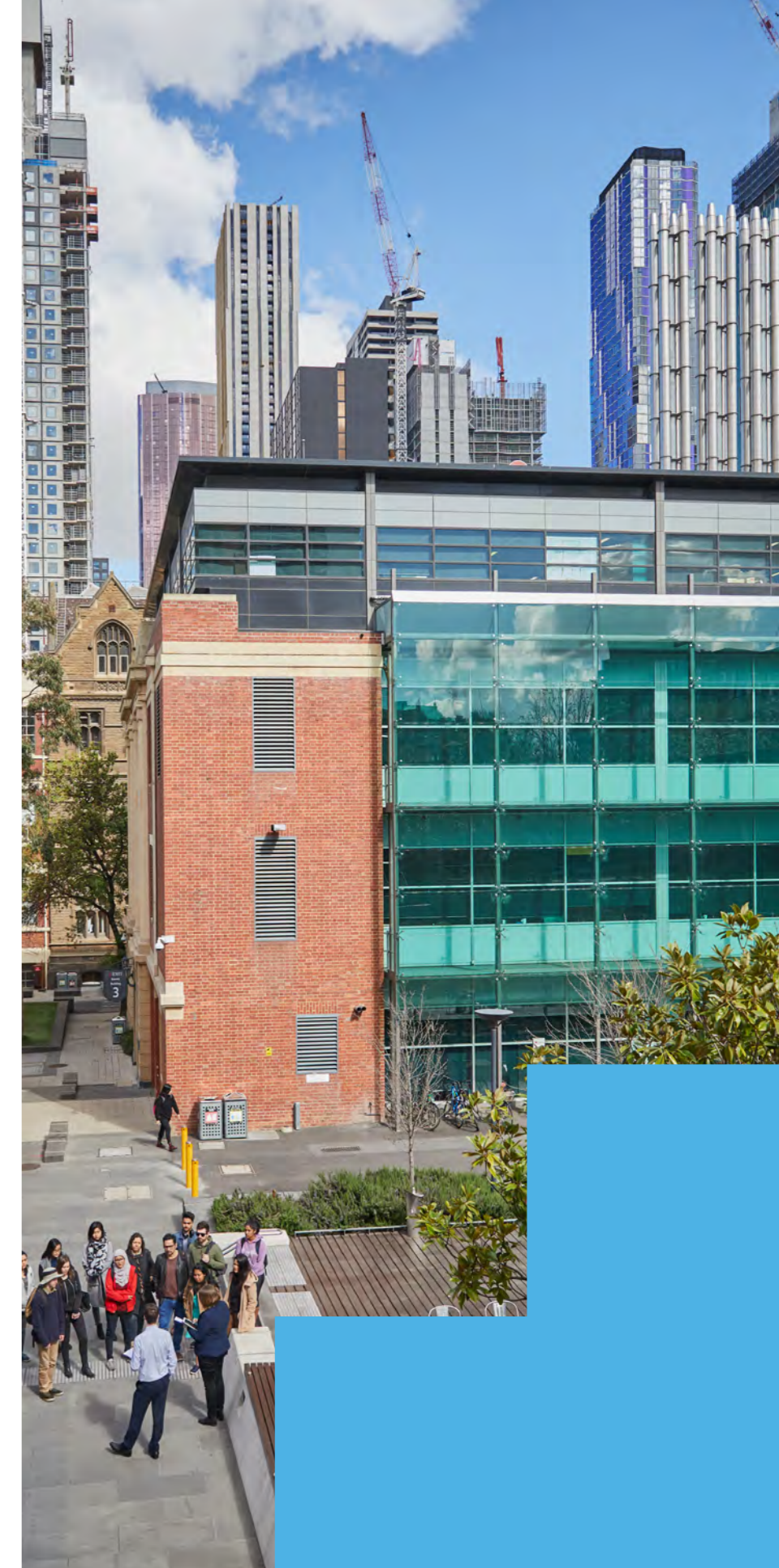
An expert in smart technologies, energy demand and sustainability Dr Yolande Strengers is working with the energy industry and policy makers to reduce household energy use.

Dr Strengers, a Senior Research Fellow, has worked with a team of RMIT researchers since 2006 to contribute to the challenge of rising energy prices in Australia caused by peak electricity demand on very hot days. Her research focuses on household demand management strategies, with the aim of shifting peak demand and reducing energy use to benefit industry and vulnerable consumers.

A key plank of the Australian Government's energy policy is to reform electricity pricing, so it more accurately reflects rises and falls during peak demand. New tariffs, such as time-of-use pricing, aim to give consumers greater control and choice over electricity while giving them incentives to shift demand outside peak times.

Dr Strengers' research suggests that current policy often misses opportunities to shift electricity demand. Her research project with Dr Larissa Nicholls on family routines and energy use revealed that many household practices are unlikely to shift in response to cost-reflective tariffs, such as time of use pricing; which charge a higher fixed peak rate on weekday afternoons and early evenings, offset by lower costs at other times. They found that households with children may be more likely to shift their practices on an occasional basis—such as on a very hot day—by leaving the home to visit friends or go to the cinema.

This research plays a critical role in informing energy reforms and the need to consider how people relate to energy in their everyday lives; how they negotiate disruption and change, the important role of gender in households, the dynamics of household routines and how the problem of peak demand can be managed more equitably.





## 7. Sustainability in Tertiary Education

At RMIT we aim to position our graduates to meet the challenges and take advantage of the opportunities evident in the new high-skill, knowledge-intensive economy. We do this by fostering the following graduate attributes, closely linked to program outcomes and employability:

1. Work-ready
2. Global in outlook and competence
3. Environmentally aware and responsible
4. Culturally and socially aware
5. Active and lifelong learners
6. Innovative

These attributes are designed to ensure that each student who passes through our University leaves equipped with the practical skills and expertise that employers consider most valuable.

As part of RMIT's pledge to the Australian Technology Network (ATN) Declaration of Commitment to local, national and global sustainability, the University is committed to providing staff with the tools, education and support to achieve our institution's sustainability objectives and targets. This specifically relates to the capacity building of our academic staff.

**RMIT is the only Victorian university to be awarded five stars for learner engagement.**

### 7.1 RMIT is #1 for student engagement and belonging

Students are giving RMIT's focus on the student experience a big thumbs-up, with the University awarded five stars for learner engagement in the Good Universities Guide for the first time. RMIT is the only Victorian university to be awarded five stars for learner engagement.

More than two thirds of students surveyed gave a positive rating to the quality and frequency of their interactions with the University. Learner engagement also offers an indication of students' sense of belonging to an institution.

RMIT's Strategic Plan, Ready for Life and Work, puts creating transformative experiences for students at the centre. Over the past two years RMIT has put in place some exciting initiatives to improve the journey for all students and increase their sense of belonging. This work includes the deployment of a new timetabling system, a new learning management system and a new student website. There are also now more than 1,000 student mentors, so students can support students and membership of our RMIT Link clubs and societies is up by 47 per cent.

More than two thirds of students surveyed gave a positive rating to the quality and frequency of their interactions with the University. Learner engagement also offers an indication of students' sense of belonging to an institution. RMIT is the only university in Victoria with five stars for learner engagement in the newly released Good Universities Guide 2018. Almost 96 per cent of students enrolled in environmental studies at RMIT are satisfied with the overall quality of their educational experience – the highest result in this field of study in Australia.

Across the University, eight fields of study gained five-star ratings:



**Environmental studies:**  
educational experience, **96 per cent**;  
teaching quality, **92 per cent**;  
learner engagement, **77 per cent**.



**Teacher education:**  
skills development, **86 per cent**;  
learner engagement, **75 per cent**.



**Creative arts:**  
skills development, **84 per cent**;  
learner engagement, **73 per cent**.



**Health services and support:**  
graduate employment, **84 per cent**.



**Architecture and building:**  
teaching quality, **83 per cent**.



**Communications:**  
learner engagement, **76 per cent**.



**Pharmacy:**  
learner engagement, **75 per cent**.



**Humanities, culture and social sciences:**  
learner engagement, **68 per cent**.

Key to bringing all this to life for our students is quality teaching and the unwavering contributions of our academic staff members. RMIT also received five stars for the proportion of academic staff with doctorates or masters' degrees.

More information about our academic programs can be found online:

<https://www.rmit.edu.au/study-with-us>

### 6.3 Partnerships

RMIT actively engages in number global partnerships that advance sustainability, these include:

#### The UN Global Compact - Cities Programme

RMIT has hosted the international secretariat of the UN Global Compact - Cities Programme since 2008. The University is the lead global partner of this initiative of the United Nations Global Compact - the world's largest corporate sustainability initiative which is working to advance the SDGs and UN principles of human rights, labour, the environment and anti-corruption.

A platform for partnered sustainable urban development action, the Cities Programme facilitates collaboration between all levels of government, business and civil society to address complex global challenges on the local level.

2017 was a fantastic year for the Programme, setting the foundation for steady growth and impact. The City Partnerships Challenge, a two year system to accelerate the implementation and investment in high impact sustainable development projects, was taken up by a number of Australian cities. In 2018, City Partnerships has been launched in an offer to cities globally, supported by Netherlands foundation, Realdania, RMIT and several United Nations partners.

#### United Nations International Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (UNEVOC)

RMIT has held UNEVOC Centre status for more than 20 years, which acts as part of the United Nations mandate to promote peace, justice, equity, poverty alleviation, and greater social cohesion.

The Centre assists Member States develop policies and practices concerning education for the world of work and skills development for employability and citizenship, to achieve access for all, high quality programmes and learning opportunities throughout life.

The UNEVOC Centre at RMIT aims to encourage impactful research, broker knowledge and build capabilities in the Asia Pacific region in relation to Vocational Education and Training (VET) and the UN's Sustainable Development Goals through three focus areas:

1. Young people, social enterprise and VET
2. Applied research and the transformation of VET learning and teaching for Sustainable Development
3. Gender diversity, equity and participation in VET

## Case Study: SHAPE Elective

SHAPE is a studio elective focused on multidisciplinary collaboration and generating design responses and implementation strategies to current, real world projects.

The elective was born from RMIT's mission 'to create transformative experiences for students' provides a unique platform for students, staff, researchers and industry professionals to deliver innovative learning and teaching initiatives. Created in the School of Property, Construction and Project Management the elective focuses on interdisciplinary engagement, industry collaboration and project-based learning.

Students from built environment professions to work together through the multiple stages of a project journey (conception to completion) and deliver a project proposal that transforms the future urban environment, actively engages with local and global issues and considers the entire life-cycle of the project whilst incorporating the aspirations of key stakeholders.

A popular student project has been the 'Redesign of the Melbourne CBD North Precinct' to develop a world class environment that supports and develops 'next generation Melbourne' incorporating the aspirations of the Melbourne Metro Rail Project and Melbourne Innovation Districts Project. Project proposals included designs for the new State Library station (including concourse levels and station entrances) and above ground urban environment (plazas, connection spines, streetscapes and transformation of existing building hubs) that build upon Melbourne's unique character, enhance education and economic outcomes, create new knowledge and city experiences and enrich inclusion and public transport and amenity. Student project outcomes were then presented to a panel of industry experts and key project stakeholders, which provided students with an opportunity to receive professional feedback.

The success of the SHAPE studio elective has resulted in an additional postgraduate course offering, which is to commence in 2018. The elective is also being integrated into the Aurecon Design Academy three year internal training and development programme, which develops mastery amongst design practitioners.



## 7.2 Learning and Teaching Academy

Prior to 2017, staff capability building was the responsibility of the former Office of the Dean Learning and Teaching (ODLT). In 2017 during a 'transition' year, RMIT re-examined its focus and established RMIT Studios, and a new central unit, the Learning and Teaching Academy (L&T Academy). The purpose of the L&T Academy is to lead the integration of learning and teaching principles and practice at RMIT while concurrently facilitating an inclusive and innovative learning environment.

A sustainable commitment to excellence in learning and teaching is evidenced by the L&T Academy through the embodiment of principles acknowledging the centrality of:

- Rigour - currency in industry, research infused
- Accessibility - diverse ways of being and engaging
- Futures orientation - life, work, learning
- Scholarly renewal - feedback, data, analysis, reflection
- People - active and engaged learners and teachers

The L&T Academy supports the University's sustainability agenda through, focused resourcing and sustainability across all pillars – social, economic, and environmental – has been embedded into the staff training 'essentials' program.

To ensure each pillar is adequately addressed in detail, a representative from the University's Sustainability Committee is appointed to overseeing each specialised area.

A key action to be pursued by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Education Portfolio in 2018 is the design, development and delivery of micro-credentials for staff and students to help achieve the broader sustainability objective as indicated in our operational plan. More new staff capacity building initiatives are also expected to come out of the L&T Academy in 2018, such as a Learning and Teaching Symposium with a focus on Sustainability in Learning and Teaching.



## 8. Ready for work and enterprise

RMIT is dedicated to offering a transformative experience to all students from all backgrounds to integrate learning, campus, social and work connections.

More than half of our programs offer internships, placements and industry work experience. These opportunities offer students a transformative experience which is at the heart of being ready for life and work. To create transformative experiences for our students, RMIT offers connected pathways between life, work and learning, supporting people to personalise their education to best meet their needs.

Learning experiences change people's lives when they are open to new pathways and opportunities. In a world increasingly characterised by complex choices, RMIT helps its students to construct pathways that reflect their talents and ambitions.

### 8.1 Global Mobility

Increasing globalised labour markets provide our graduates a wide range of career opportunities. With the largest number and proportion of international students of all Australian universities RMIT provides students greater exposure to global thinking and perspectives throughout coursework and campus life. We further prepare students by offering global mobility programs that strengthen cross-cultural skills and competencies.

With global work, exchange and study experiences to suit every student at every stage of study and life.

Global mobility programs offered include:

- Student exchange - involves studying for one or two semesters with an overseas exchange partner with which RMIT has a reciprocal agreement.
- Short-term experiences - can range from a two-week academic-led study tours, to on-campus courses which students can take during semester breaks. Some short-term experiences are discipline specific, but many are open to students from any level of study in any discipline.
- Industry programs - are opportunities for students to gain valuable international work experience in paid and unpaid internships, work-placements, work integrated learning, clinical placements and research programs.

In 2017, our Global Experience Office placed over 3,200 students in a global mobility program, an increase of 23 per cent from last year.

As our reach extends worldwide with campuses, programs and partnerships across a network of global urban centres, we are consistently establishing ties with our industry partners in Asia, Europe and the Americas further improves the global employment prospects for our graduates.

### 8.2 Work-Integrated Learning

Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) connects the classroom to the workplace and is considered an integral part of the University's commitment to work-relevant education. By providing students the opportunity to integrate academic learning with its application in the workplace not only prepares our students for 'real life' situations but it also allows them to 'test drive' their career options.

WIL comes in many forms, across many disciplines and importantly are co-designed with industry and community partners. The practice may be real or simulated and can occur in the workplace, at the university, online or face-to-face. Industry-engaged WIL activities involve students interacting with organisations (industry, government and community) through discipline relevant projects and work placements. Hence, students can undertake an internship (placement) or a partner organisation may require teams or individual students to undertake a real project that is based on real problems or address needs of industry or community. Industry partners are engaged in the project and provide feedback to students.

Whether the activity is a placement or project, WIL can be tied to one or more courses within the student's program as the activity is formally assessed for credit and therefore contributes to their degree.

Our Careers and Employability office works closely with Schools and Portfolios in Melbourne and Vietnam to provide systems and processes to support WIL, develop university-wide resources, facilitate the sharing of best practice and broker WIL opportunities into the University from employers and community partners.

From 1 Jan to 25 Sept 2017, the Careers and Employability office was involved in more than 13,000 WIL activities.

### 8.3 Careers and Employability

Our Careers and Employability office has a significant role in preparing our students to be ready for life and work upon graduating.

In 2017, the University launched, RMIT Creds - a University-wide credentials program made up of a series of industry-relevant 21st century micro-credentials designed to develop our student's enterprise skills. The 34 micro-creds on offer are delivered on a digitally-enabled platform and have been co-created with industry to ensure credentials are valued and recognised by future employers.

Students who undertake a credential program gain valuable skills that are in direct alignment with our graduate capabilities. These capabilities are: collaboration, communication, community engagement, creativity, critical thinking, enterprise ready, global outlook, innovation, leadership, sustainability and work ready. Since its launch, more than 4,500 students have registered for the pilot program and chosen their learning path through creating their own portfolio of professional and personal skills and capabilities.

RMIT's industry mentoring program continued to expand in 2017, supporting more than 1,000 mentoring partnerships between students and industry professionals. A total of 1,320 industry mentors are now registered with the program, an increase of more than 400 since 2016. More than 3,030 students took part in the Future Ready program, developing skills to boost their employability and prepare for graduate life, while more than 3,000 enrolled in Future Edge, RMIT's co-curricular student employability program. The number of students using RMIT's Job Shop has grown by 266 per cent since 2016.

In Vietnam, participation in the Personal Edge program focusing on in-demand skills increased significantly in 2017, driven by the launch of a gamified app that enables students to create a digital portfolio of their experiences and credentials.

### 8.4 Enterprise

Entrepreneurship is core focus for RMIT. We have a long, proud history of industry engagement and innovation, with one of the highest rates of enterprise formation among graduates in the country.

RMIT Activator is the University's unique approach to building entrepreneurial talent in our community. It connects our students, staff and alumni to a network of transformative experiences all designed to help them learn enterprise skills, innovate alongside industry and innovation experts and launch new businesses.

Our Activator's Residency Program is backed by industry partners KPMG and IsoBar, which provides our members access to pre-seed funding opportunities, mentorship, masterclasses, coaching and resilience programs.

In 2017, RMIT continued to cultivate a community entrepreneurial mindset by launching RMIT Activator City Hub in Building 98, a new space to support the University's entrepreneurial programs and students with innovative ideas. Students, staff and alumni have access the space, which they can use as a base for building their ideas and launching their start-ups through the Activator Residency Program.

The Hub also acts as a headquarters by providing those enrolled in the Activator online program, which offers an interactive digital way for university members to explore their ideas, with a physical space to engage with other members and receive support beyond the online platform.

The Activator program currently has:

- 3,558 community members
- 466 ideas being explored
- 50 Start-up Teams supported
- \$792,000 pre-Seed funding granted

Activator exists to harness the potential of our entrepreneurial community, and provide the tools members need to build a successful and sustainable business. Its success has resulted in five RMIT Activator teams graduating to the next stage of the Pitch@Palace, a global platform founded by the Duke of York, which aims to guide and connect on a global level entrepreneurs and early-stage businesses with potential supporters including CEOs, influencers, investors, mentors and business partners. His Royal Highness, The Prince Andrew, Duke of York toured RMIT's City campus in September 2017, including experiencing a live innovation showcase – the very best of technology, design and enterprise.





## 9. Living our values

**Building a culture of diversity and inclusion for all our students and staff is one of the key organisational values at RMIT. Our goal is for every person to feel safe and appreciated at all times and that any disrespect shown to members of our community will not be tolerated.**

RMIT recognises the benefits for the recruitment, retention, innovation, collaboration and productivity of our people in an environment that celebrates and welcomes diversity and inclusiveness. Committed to a whole university approach, the University supports and invests in initiatives that not only enhance access, outcomes and mental wellbeing for staff and students but also demonstrate leadership and action.

In 2017, RMIT made a variety of public statements supporting marriage equality, gender equality and signalling that sexual assault and sexual harassment are harmful behaviours that need to be addressed in the learning and work environment of the University.

In the same year, the University also saw a total of 228 Victorian secondary schools participate in the Schools Network Access Program (SNAP), an equity access scheme that gives priority entry into RMIT for eligible applicants.

More than 2,600 students received an RMIT offer through SNAP for 2017 entry – a 10 per cent increase from 2016.

RMIT Vietnam awarded 111 scholarships worth AU\$1.78 million to prospective and current students. In addition to this, RMIT Vietnam fully funded two new scholarships enabling Vietnamese women to gain doctorates and supporting their participation in research and leadership within traditionally male-dominated fields.

### 9.1 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students and Staff

RMIT recognises the inherent value of Indigenous Australian perspectives. The University aims to position itself as both an employer of choice and preferred place to study for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders. RMIT has undertaken a firm commitment to contribute to, and lead in, the areas of reconciliation and Indigenous community development.

The University values cultural diversity, believing that all staff and students should be treated with dignity and respect and seeks to contribute to creating a nation that provides equal life chances for all and works in collaboration with its Indigenous heritage.

In 2017 RMIT celebrated Reconciliation Week with the opening of its new Ngarara Willim Centre at Bundoora campus. The Centre caters for the study and cultural needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

The week also marked the first anniversary of the release of RMIT's Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). The opening included a traditional smoking ceremony, an Indigenous-themed walk through the campus and a speech from Lionel Bamblett, General Manager of the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association, about the 1967 referendum and its 50th anniversary this year.

Manager of the Ngarara Willim Centre, Stacey Campton said the Bundoora facility was part of a strong Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander presence at the campus, which is already home to the Keelbundoora Scarred Trees and Heritage Trail.

**The key achievements in the 12 months since the RAP was launched include:**

- RMIT's colleges and portfolios developed individual Indigenous Engagement Plans to address the six RAP Action Areas.
- Ngarara Place Indigenous garden won the Victorian Premier's Design Award for best Design Strategy, as a significant Indigenous place maker in Melbourne.
- RMIT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Plan launched.
- The University has become a member of Supply Nation, the Australian leader in supplier diversity. Supply Nation connects its membership of Australia's leading brands, government and organisations with Indigenous businesses across the country.
- RMIT's first Aboriginal Deputy Pro Vice-Chancellor – Indigenous Education and Engagement, Professor Mark McMillan, appointed.
- Indigenous education champion Lois Peeler AM received an RMIT honorary doctorate in recognition of her work.

### 8.5 Melbourne Innovation District

A key priority within RMIT's Strategy to 2020 is to ensure the best use of our places and spaces to work, learn and socialise together as a university.

To achieve this, RMIT has partnered with City of Melbourne and Melbourne University to create an "urban innovation district" as part of the Melbourne Innovation Districts (MID) initiative, which is set to drive investment in the knowledge economy and shape the city's future.

With three of Melbourne's biggest institutions working together to attract more small businesses, start-ups and social enterprises to the CBD North area, the district is expected to create a global return flow of talent, experience, collaboration and possible investment.

RMIT's involvement in the district supports our interdisciplinary approach to creating transformative experiences for our students. With the district home to 21 per cent of all knowledge sector jobs in Melbourne, the district will connect and develop infrastructure for innovation and collaboration by forging new links between industry sectors and urban clusters, to create new opportunities for Melbourne's knowledge workers, researchers, students, business and community organisations to connect and collaborate on new solutions, services and technologies. Such collaborations will be essential for the city to sustain its growth and prosperity.

Planning considerations for the district will include upgrades to streets, parks and other public spaces, which will result in more collaborative and engaging green spaces that encourage walking and cycling and incorporate greater use of sensors, apps and other networking technologies.

The partnership not only focuses and amplifies what we are doing to help design and shape the future, but it also inspires our students, staff, alumni, companies, investors, community partners and governments to get involved in creating new knowledge and city experiences. By collaborating on community priorities, our graduates benefit from hands-on experience and exposure to innovative ideas, which will make them highly sought after by employers.

In 2017, efforts were focused on studio projects, practice-based prototyping, and engaging students and staff members through public dialogue and performance. Throughout the project there has been a strong emphasis on enterprise activation, social innovation, and institutional design.



**One of the reasons I'm so proud of being the Vice-Chancellor of RMIT is because we're a brave values-led organisation who embraces people's differences** – Martin Bean CBE, Vice-Chancellor and President.



## Indigenous artwork hails Sovereignty

As part of the University's 130-year celebrations and the official opening of the \$220 million New Academic Street, RMIT commissioned a powerful statement of Aboriginal Sovereignty – a 2.4m possum skin cloak forged from cast steel and iron.

The Law of the Land artwork by prominent Aboriginal artist and RMIT PhD candidate Vicki Couzens will provide an enduring spiritual connection to Country at RMIT. In collaboration with RMIT sculptor and artist Jeph Neale – Law of the Land represents Aboriginal knowledge and ancestors, and creation of the law of the land.

## Deadly Day of Science

In order to strengthen Indigenous participation and practice in the areas of science, technology, engineering, maths (STEM) and health, RMIT opened its doors to up-and-coming Indigenous scientists as part of National Science Week.

The Deadly Day of Science gave Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in years 7-10 the opportunity to visit RMIT Bundoora campus for a day of workshops in science disciplines focused on people and health. Visitors received a special welcome and a tour of the campus which rests on the lands of the Wurundjeri Willum, the wedge-tail eagle people. The tour introduced students to skills and techniques used in patient care, food product development, as well as pharmacy medicine, exercise and sport science.



## 9.2 Diversity and Inclusion

As a University whose interests include mental and physical health and wellbeing; social inclusion; and access and equity, we take a proactive stand and speak up to support equality, diversity and respect. This reflects our deeply embedded commitment to celebrate and value diversity and inclusion.

In 2016, RMIT launched its Diversity and Inclusion Framework, which included a series of Action Plans for priority groups, including people of 'diverse genders, sexes, and sexualities' (DGSS). This resulted in the University updating its policies and practices, upgrading facilities, and showed a continued commitment to inclusion and support for our staff and students.

High level support for these plans is driven by our Executive Champion for DGSS equality, Professor Peter Coloe – Pro Vice-Chancellor Science, Engineering and Health and Vice- President.

### 2017 Highlights:

- RMIT won the GLOBE (Gay and Lesbian Organisation of Business and Enterprise) Community Award for 'Protecting our Community'.
- RMIT achieved a Bronze rating in its first submission for Australian Workplace Equality Index, which recognises the work being done by the University to support diversity and inclusion.
- RMIT was represented at the Midsumma Festival - Midsumma Pride March, with current students, staff members and alumni marching behind the Take Pride with RMIT banner.

- Representatives from RUSU's Queer Department and the University's Careers and Development team attended the Midsumma Carnival Day to speak to current and prospective students about the University's Pride Mentoring program.
- The University's participation in Midsumma is not only a celebration and acknowledgement of RMIT's diverse community but it also visibly demonstrates our commitment to inclusion and diversity.

**We met a lot of people with a connection to RMIT and the response was so positive. It seemed to really mean a lot to the students who are commencing at RMIT this year.**

Lara Rafferty, Co-Chair of the DGSS Working Party, and Manager of RMIT's Equity and Diversity Unit

## 9.3 Harmony Day

We are lucky to live in a vibrant multicultural country- from the oldest continuous culture of our first Australians to the cultures of our newest arrivals from around the world. Diversity gives us strength and enriches our lives with addition of cultural and religious traditions.

To welcome and celebrate the cultural diversity amongst us, RMIT whole-heartedly participates in Harmony Day, a national day that celebrates Australian multiculturalism and coincides with the United Nations International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

Harmony Day is about inclusiveness, respect and belonging for all Australians, regardless of cultural or linguistic background, united by a set of core Australian values. The message of Harmony Day is 'everyone belongs'.

Since 1999, more than 70,000 Harmony Day events have been held in childcare centres, schools, community groups, churches, businesses and federal, state and local government agencies across Australia.

RMIT hosted events that aimed to engage staff and students to participate in their community, respect cultural and religious diversity and foster a sense of belonging for everyone.

Not only were various morning and afternoon teas held around campus, this year our DVC Global Development and Champion for the Cultural Inclusion Action Plan, Professor Andrew MacIntyre, chaired the Global Dialogue Series: Global development in an age of political disruption, which resulted in a lively conversation on cultural inclusion, political values, economic futures, freedom of speech and questions of identity.

## 9.4 Respect. Now. Always

RMIT acknowledges that sexual assault and sexual harassment can have a devastating impact on individuals. The prevalence of sexual assault and harassment in the community is significant and the age group 18 to 24 are more vulnerable to sexual harm.

The fact that this behaviour occurs at Australian universities means we have a role to play in shaping a respectful culture both within the University and the wider community.

The Australian Human Rights Commission National Report on Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment at Australian Universities (2017), three unavoidable conclusions were highlighted:

- Sexual assault and sexual harassment are far too prevalent in university settings as they are in the broader community,
- There is significant underreporting of sexual assault and sexual harassment to the university, and
- Universities need to do more to prevent such abuse from occurring in the first place, to build a culture of respect and to respond appropriately by supporting victims of abuse and sanctioning perpetrators.

## RMIT University proudly supports marriage equality

RMIT has an important role in speaking out on issues of importance to our community and our world. This year we proudly supported the campaign for marriage equality, believing that it is a basic right that all people should be treated equally under the law, which includes being able to marry the person they love.

When Australia voted 'Yes' for same-sex marriage on 15 November, 2017 it was not only a huge celebration, but was an important step forward to achieving equality for our whole community.

Staff from our Diverse Genders, Sexes and Sexualities (DGSS) Working Party, Ally Network and DGSS Staff Network were among the people who attended an event at the State Library to hear the results for the postal survey.

We continue to prioritise the importance of inclusion, to ensure that the entire RMIT community feel safe and supported on campus.



RMIT recognises that it has a role to play in raising the public awareness of the issue of sexual assault and sexual harassment at Australian universities and ensuring that everyone at RMIT is as safe as possible.

RMIT is a supporter of 'Respect. Now. Always.' (RNA), a Universities Australia initiative to address the drivers and impacts of sexual harm at Universities. The University has embraced this initiative by ensuring the right care and support are in place for our staff and students if and when they need it. To date, we have:

- Added more people into our Safer Community team and funded a counsellor/advocate from CASA House, the Centre Against Sexual Assault.
- Become one of the first universities in Australia to commit to a program of restorative justice, thanks to the work of our Centre for Innovative Justice.
- As part of our ongoing professional development program, made available to everyone resources and training to help support any disclosures of sexual harassment and assault.
- Produced and distributed a reference card for staff, to be used and referred to should they need to provide help and support to a person making a disclosure

- Introduced responding to disclosure training for all staff
- Provided online training in consent, respectful relationships and bystander action for all students

We have committed to implementing in full the recommendations from the report as put forward by the Australian Human Rights Commission and Universities Australia. We will also survey our students annually, in addition to the national survey every three years.

Guided by our Ready for Life and Work strategy, we strive to make RMIT the best possible place to study and work, with safe environments being a cornerstone.

### 9.5 Accessibility

RMIT is committed to improving practices to better support diversity, safety and wellness for our staff, students and visitors. With 'inclusion' being one of the core values of RMIT, we aspire to create life-changing opportunities for all through an accessible and open institution dedicated to serving the needs of the whole community.

In 2017, we continued implementing the Accessibility Action Plan, which resulted in University-wide transformative actions that enhanced inclusion.

A significant development for RMIT was the signing of the Disability Confident Recruitment Charter, which outlined our commitments in providing fair and equitable treatment of candidates with a disability.

For students, the University offers Equitable Learning Services (ELS), which provide support and equal opportunities for students with disability, long-term illness and/or mental health conditions and primary carers of individuals with a disability. Committed to providing students equal opportunity in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act 1992, the role of ELS is to ensure that students with a disability are actively and positively included in all aspects of RMIT life. ELS also provides staff and students with information and assistance in relation to disability related matters. Students who register with ELS can in consultation with the University, create an equitable learning plan where adjustments to study conditions can be made and they can receive assistive technologies.

In 2017 RMIT allocated \$1.2million to further upgrade buildings and infrastructure as part of the second stage of a project to improve accessibility across our campuses. The most recent work included:

- Door automations
- Footpath upgrades to improve access between buildings
- Upgrades to amenities

### 9.6 Responsible Investment

A tertiary education can transform the lives of students, giving them the opportunity to access knowledge and pursue their passion. It also gives them the chance to make their own positive impact on the world. The RMIT Philanthropic Fund Committee has oversight of funds donated to the University to support scholarships, research, and other major projects.

As of June 2017, RMIT held \$77M in Philanthropic Funds across a range of investments, including property, bonds and cash (current data is only available for the Australian Financial Year). In 2017 these funds supported more than 1,000 students who received scholarships to undertake study and research at RMIT.

The Philanthropy Fund Committee has a responsibility to manage investments to achieve strong financial outcomes, whilst ensuring environmentally and socially responsible investment decisions are made that align with the University's values. To guide this decision making Responsible Investment Principles were approved by the University Council in March 2017.

As the first step in the implementation, we established definitions behind our principles to ensure that the investment market understands our requirements and we can report in a consistent manner.

For example, we define fossil fuel companies as those who generate 10 per cent or more of their revenue from fossil fuels related activities, including coal (coking and thermal), oil, natural gas and peat. On this basis we had a 4.29 per cent liability to fossil fuels in our philanthropic funds at the end of June 2017 and 1.70 per cent exposure to renewable energy companies. In addition, our investment managers fully excluded tobacco and nuclear weapons from their portfolios in July 2017.

It is important to note that these exposures mark a baseline for action in adopting our Responsible Investment Principles. The Philanthropy Fund Committee and Sustainability Committee are working together with independent experts to find appropriate investment vehicles with strong environmental, social, governance (ESG) performance, which can evolve and flourish over time.

For more information visit: [www.rmit.edu.au/responsibleinvestment](http://www.rmit.edu.au/responsibleinvestment)



**As Vice-Chancellor's Champion of RMIT's Accessibility Action Plan, I am proud of the steps we are taking to improve accessibility for our staff and students. Since RMIT launched its Diversity and Inclusion Framework last October, we have been working hard to embed the value of inclusion in our working life at RMIT**

– Dionne Higgins, Chief Operating Officer.



#### Memberships and Networks

- Diversity Council of Australia
- Australian Network on Disability

#### Days of Significance

- World Health Day for Safety at WorkBay
- Global Accessibility Awareness Day
- R U OK Day
- World Mental Health Day
- International Day of Disability



# 10. Empowering our people

Our approach to attracting, developing and retaining an empowered workforce is fundamental to achieving our mission. We strive to create an innovative, dynamic workplace where our staff feel connected and supported, so everyone can advance and thrive.

We offer our staff a range of lifestyle benefits and a culture that encourages professional development and career advancement. We embrace diversity, promote ethical and respectful engagement, and encourage an environment which recognises that career and life choices are important.

## 10.1 Our workforce

As a global education provider we understand that our 11,000 employees located around the world underpin our reputation and enhance our contribution to the wider community.

All of our on-shore employees are covered by Enterprise (Collective) Bargaining Agreements.

RMIT values the richness of diversity amongst staff and recognises its responsibilities to take University-wide transformative actions to enhance inclusion for all.

## 10.2 Gender Equality

The RMIT Gender Equality Action Plan helps us to navigate and accelerate the gender equality journey that we are on to improve the engagement, retention and advancement of female staff.

The Plan identifies three broad areas for focused attention that enable strategic, sustainable and meaningful change:

1. Leadership and Governance – we recognise and actively involve women at all levels of governance, management and leadership.
2. Employment Conditions – we respect and protect the employment conditions of women to enable their full participation in the workforce.
3. Women's Career Advancement – we foster an environment that supports the career advancement of women to ensure we develop and retain our talent.

RMIT commits to embedding this Plan, devoting appropriate resources to its implementation, monitoring, reporting, and evaluation, and supporting leaders to develop and implement operational plans.

In 2017, we further reinforced our position on gender equality with our VC becoming a Pay Equity Ambassador for Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA).

Our VC joins a group of influential Australian CEOs from various sectors, pledging to promote equal opportunity and pay in the workplace they lead.

Pay Equity Ambassadors help to create change by:

- Playing a leadership role in their business community and to the broader public
- Reinforcing their commitment to pay equity within their own organisation
- Profiling and promoting their approach to pay equity.

RMIT University is proud to announce its partnership with the 2017 #TechDiversity Awards. The #TechDiversity Foundation is an industry alliance committed to supporting increased participation of women and minority groups in the digital technology industry. The Awards celebrate leaders and champions of diversity in the sector, across four categories: advertising, government, education and business.

The University is also participating in the Science in Australia Gender Equity (SAGE) pilot of Athena SWAN, a UK Scientific Women's Academic Network charter that celebrates good practice towards the advancement of gender equality in the science, technology, engineering, maths and medicine (STEMM) disciplines. These actions, among others, form part of a long-term plan to make RMIT an Employer of Choice in diversity and inclusion.

Table: Women in leadership roles

	Total		Female		%Female	
	2016	2017	2016	2017	2016	2017
Governance bodies	13	13	4	6	30.7%	46.2%
Managers	490	488	243	249	49.6%	51.0%
Non-managers	10,181	10,344	5,284	5,410	51.9%	52.3%

## Employment Statistics – Contract Type (Head Count)

Employment Type	Headcount		FTE*	
	2016	2017	2016	2017
Full Time ongoing	2,731	2,786	2,731	2,786
Part Time ongoing	506	487	328	317
Fixed Term & Casual	6,860	7,152	1,972	2,177
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,097</b>	<b>10,425</b>	<b>5,031</b>	<b>5,280</b>

## Employment Statistics - Melbourne\*

Staff Category	Total FTE		Female FTE		% Females	
	2016	2017	2016	2017	2016	2017
Academic (HE)	1,895	2,038	757	841	40%	41%
Teaching (VET)	679	607	329	290	48%	48%
Professional	2,348	2,540	1,474	1,548	63%	61%
Executive	95	91	36	45	38%	49%
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,017</b>	<b>5,276</b>	<b>2,596</b>	<b>2,724</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>52%</b>

New Staff Recruitment	Female		Male		Total
	Female	%	Male	%	
Academic (HE)	154	51.16	147	48.84	301
Teaching (VET)	27	58.7	19	41.3	46
Professional	370	59.87	248	40.13	618
Executive	14	77.78	4	22.22	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>565</b>	<b>57.47</b>	<b>418</b>	<b>42.53</b>	<b>983</b>

Age Band	Headcount		Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce	
	2016	2017	2016	2017
<29	252	345		
30-39	1,294	1,334		
40-49	1,218	1,324		
50-59	1,099	1,150		
60+	555	549		
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,418</b>	<b>4,702</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>27</b>



## Employment Statistics – Vietnam

Employment Type	Headcount		FTE	
	2016	2017	2016	2017
Full Time ongoing	523	521	523	521
Part Time ongoing	33	15	18	10
Fixed Term & Casual	75	53	46	24
<b>Total</b>	<b>631</b>	<b>589</b>	<b>586</b>	<b>555</b>

Staff Category	Total FTE		Female FTE		% Females	
	2016	2017	2016	2017	2016	2017
Academic (HE)	128	128	46	46	36	36
Teaching (VET)	60	63	16	16	27	26
Professional	385	349	254	227	66	65
Executive	13	14	5	4	38	29
<b>Total</b>	<b>586</b>	<b>555</b>	<b>321</b>	<b>293</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>53</b>

New Staff Recruitment	Female		Male		Total
	Female	%	Male	%	
Academic (HE)	19	33	39	67	58
Teaching (VET)	8	22	29	78	37
Professional	53	62	33	38	86
Executive	0	-	2	100	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>183</b>

### Be Ready

At RMIT we value leadership, our leaders are fundamental to the University's success and are the stewards of shaping and driving our culture. The Be Ready Leadership Development Program is designed to build and develop the strengths of RMIT leaders, to execute and realise the goals in RMIT's Strategic Plan to 2020.

Open to Executive, Senior and Operating Leaders, the program is composed of experiential workshops, action learning sessions and master classes presented over nine months. This year, 700 staff members completed the program, which aims to bring together our people, break down silos and drive cross-unit collaboration. RMIT is committed to advancing an enterprise-wide leadership capability that values inclusion, agility and empowerment.

The online 'Be Ready Community' encourages program participants to engage with their fellow colleagues; discussing the program, sharing stories, using resources and receiving updates.

RMIT's partnerships with industry provide valuable immersion experiences for our leaders, enhancing their commercial acumen and knowledge of new ways of working.

**The two day program was uniformly outstanding with something concrete to absorb in every session. The group of RMIT staff assembled for the occasion was open and engaging throughout**

– Program Participant

## 10.3 Work/life balance

Maintaining a diverse and inclusive workforce requires RMIT to be supportive of flexible working arrangements. RMIT recognises that it has an important role to play in supporting the way staff balance their work and outside life. Our Work Adjustment Policy helps us to maintain a diverse and adaptable workforce by allowing us to make available to staff flexible work arrangements. Flexible work arrangements not only allow our staff to be more agile and productive, it also creates a workforce that is more adaptable to changing environments.

At RMIT, flexible working arrangements may include:

- Flexible patterns of work (formal or informal)
- Flexible work location
- Flexible ways of working

Staff have access to a specially designed toolkit that outlines the options they have to apply for and undertake a flexible work arrangement. These options cover:

- Technology solutions i.e. network and remote access.
- Property Services i.e. seeking different ways in which to utilise space.
- Policies and Procedures i.e. 48/52 week employment cycle procedure.
- Human Resources i.e. checks for those working from home and at work ensuring a safe ergonomic environment.
- DevelopME Workshops i.e. managing the transition back to and from parental leave.

We also provide a flexible workplace to support our people with caring responsibilities or particular needs. All staff are entitled to carer's leave under the Enterprise Bargaining Agreement, with 227 employees taking carer's leave in 2017.

	Primary Carer's Leave		Secondary Carer's Leave	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
Managers	16	0	0	2
Non-Managers	149	6	0	54
<b>Total</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>56</b>

In 2017 we opened a new spacious four-storey Children's Centre on the City campus which was custom designed for childcare. The RMIT-owned not-for-profit centre aims to provide high-quality care for the children of RMIT staff and students that:

- Nurtures our children
- Recognises and celebrates individual differences
- Provides developmental experience tailored to individual needs and interests
- Is flexible and responsive to the needs of our families.

More details about the construction of the Children's Centre project can be found in section 11.4.

## 10.4 Developing workforce capability

RMIT's capability development frameworks have been created to define the underlying skills, knowledge and abilities required in our staff to perform their role successfully and build their potential. Our three frameworks recognise the core practices of our diverse workforce and articulate the enabling capabilities that underpin success at RMIT:

1. Leadership Capability Development Frameworks
2. Educator and Researcher Capability Development Frameworks
3. Professional Capability Development Frameworks

These three frameworks provide a common language for the knowledge, skills and abilities needed to for a range of workforce activities such as recruitment, performance objectives, career planning and development planning, supporting:

- Individuals and managers to have a shared understanding of role expectations
- Performance development by providing a starting point for identifying individual capability gaps
- Individual career planning by identifying capabilities required for progression into other roles
- Workforce planning for the team by using the capabilities to identify current and future needs

Success in using the frameworks is underpinned by a flexible approach. It is not about applying one whole framework and all its capabilities at one time. Instead it is about reviewing the capabilities within all three frameworks and pinpointing the exact ones that will enable success in our staff and teams.

The University offers a range of professional development opportunities for all staff through the developME platform. In 2017 capability frameworks were built to provide definition and alignment to development programs. These support building career pathways that are integrated in talent management, work planning and recruitment.

Our commitment to build a talented and motivated workforce will involve developing and attracting people with a high value mix of industry experience, and knowledge, supporting innovative research and teaching at RMIT.

**What I enjoyed about the Be Ready program was the RMIT focus and resonance. It was about me, but it was about me as a leader at RMIT. The experience was a shared collective**

– Program Participant



### RMIT Staff Games

Each year RMIT host and encourages staff to participate in the Staff Games. The Games brings together staff from different areas in an informal setting where they can interact with each other in a fun and friendly battle.

More than 130 staff members stepped outside the office on Friday 24 November to take part in the 2017 games. The University-wide competition saw staff come together to compete in sports ranging from barefoot bowls to volleyball.



## 10.5 Health, Safety and Wellbeing

RMIT is committed to providing a safe learning and work environment. We use a range of tools, support options and information to facilitate and improve the wellbeing of our RMIT community.

In 2017, the University announced its commitment to a three-year, whole-of-University change project that recognises students' mental health and wellbeing as a core institutional priority. A range of resources to support mental health were developed, with a pilot program conducted to proactively identify and explore current issues affecting mental wellbeing. This framework ensures that RMIT not only meets the prescribed minimum requirements in meeting its legal and moral obligations but it also ensures that the health and wellbeing of our staff, students and contractors is treated with the utmost importance.

### Occupational Health and Safety

In 2017 the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team developed the Global Safety Model, a framework for managing health and safety at the University. The project included a new software solution for reporting hazards and incidents, and safety training for RMIT's senior leaders.

- Proactive Risk and Incident Management Excellence (PRIME) is our new online cloud based incident and hazard reporting software, with simple and intuitive features.
- Safety leadership workshops where completed targeting at all of our executive leaders.
- Training sessions for staff, videos and online material were developed to ensure that all in our community can be healthy, safe and well.
- A mental wellbeing pilot commence to ensure that we all have the tools, skills and knowledge needed to manage change in a positive way.

The Health and Safety Team in Property Services worked across all our construction projects in 2017 to monitor performance and compliance of contractors with legislative/RMIT requirements providing a safe work environment for themselves and our community. As part of National Safety Work Month, the team held a series of safety networking events for our contractors. It was an important reminder that RMIT is a live, dynamic environment and we wish to ensure that students, staff, or academic operations are not adversely affected by contractor works around the university. The Team also received recognition for their comprehensive hazmat and asbestos management plan, winning the Facility Management Association Award in the 'Occupant Safety & Wellbeing' category.

	2015	2016	2017
<b>Lost time injury frequency rate</b>	2.07	2.73	2.01
Change to previous year	+14%	+32%	-26%
<b>WorkCover claims submitted</b>	37	33	34
Change to previous year	+15%	-10%	+3%
<b>OHS Incident reports</b>	370	541	299
Change to previous year	-13%	+46%	-55%
<b>WorkSafe notifiable incidents</b>	23	20	12
Change to previous year	+77%	-13%	-40%
<b>WorkSafe improvement notices</b>	1	0	3

### OHS Hazards, Incidents Standard Claims, Associated Costs

	2015	2016	2017
Number of lost-time standard claims per 100 FTE	0.23	0.21	0.16
Average cost per claim (payment to date + estimate of outstanding claim cost)	\$21,361	\$53,201	\$48,493
Hazard and incident reports/100FTE	3.7	5.41*	2.99

\*Increase in hazard and incident reporting reflects greater focus on health and safety across RMIT and implementation of the Global Safety Model project

# 11. Sustainable built environment

**RMIT is a big, complex and diverse institution with a far-reaching global footprint. It is vital that we manage resources to enhance our long-term performance and increase our ability to adapt and renew over time. Our management of financial, physical, social and environmental assets focuses on improving long-term performance and delivering the best possible campus experience for our students and staff.**

## 11.1 New Academic Street

The university invested more than AU\$200M to transform the City campus, refurbishing five floors across seven older buildings into a revitalised student hub. First constructed in the 1970s, the 'New Academic Street' (NAS) project has integrated a new major entry point for the University, as well as a variety of arcades and laneways to open up large sections of the existing façade. In keeping with Melbourne's laneway culture, these arteries provide clear way-finding and urban experiences, and enable greater connectivity to the rest of the campus and with Melbourne's CBD including public transport links.

An additional 4,600 seats have been created throughout the campus precinct for study and relaxation, resulting in a vibrant hub that provides a strong student experience. The university library has been expanded by 44 per cent and incorporates a mixture of spaces for informal learning, quiet reflection and collaboration.

In September 2017, RMIT officially opened the New Academic Street (NAS). The launch of NAS was not just an acknowledgement of the transformation that took place on our City campus, but it was also a celebration of our 130-year contribution to education. The celebration of both milestones is a timely reminder that we are long-term custodians of our buildings and have an opportunity to create a lasting legacy for our students, staff and the city.

### Smart and sustainable design to underpin innovation

Sustainability in the University's construction projects is vitally important, to reduce the impact of our portfolio and to demonstrate leadership to our environmentally aware community.

The application of environmentally sustainable design strategies ensures a comfortable internal environment to support formal and informal learning. Our built environment utilises both natural and mechanical ventilation schemes so that more favourable outdoor weather conditions can permeate the building. Occupant comfort is monitored using sensors and actuators, and is enhanced in winter and summer using ceiling fans and gas heaters. Embracing the concept of 'Adaptive Re-use,' the lower levels of the existing concrete-encased steel buildings have been stripped back, with floor plates repurposed to meet the needs of current and future students. Large dark two-storey lecture theatres are now innovative, light and comfortable tiered student study spaces. Once impermeable façades, they are now opened up resulting in a blurring of the outdoor and indoor environments.

A brand new, four-storey Garden Building and Terrace has been integrated into the campus, creating additional social spaces for staff and students. Built using lower impact cross-laminate timber, the building is characterised by the widespread use of greenery and open garden space to enhance the urban environment. Other sustainability initiatives include thermal heat recovery, stormwater management and a creation of linked open air terraces on level seven of the buildings creating easy access to open air roof spaces for students and staff. The sustainability principles upon which the project is based complete the picture, with the project aiming to be one of the first educational facilities to be given a five star rating under the Green Building Council of Australia's Green Star Interiors (pilot) tool.

The NAS student experience snapshot, demonstrates that capital projects can be leverage to deliver substantial academic and work experience outcomes for students.



## Empire of Dirt

Empire of Dirt by artist James Geurts is a sculptural installation where art and science collide to make us think about the darkness and complexity of the living earth beneath our feet. The piece explored how soil adapts to survive when the world is at its ecological tipping point.

Emerging from RMIT's Centre for Art Society and Transformation, the project was designed in collaboration with a number of partners, including Carbon Arts and New Academic Street's Urban Animators: Living Laboratory program, to test public art's role in bringing science and sustainability conversation to a broader audience.

Inspired by the evolving architecture and infrastructure of RMIT's New Academic Street, the temporary artwork was born from a soil sample taken at the construction site. Enlisting the help of environmental microbiologist and Distinguished Professor Andy Ball, Geurts studied the dynamics of the soil on microscopic levels, discovering the complex process of microorganisms as they navigate our urban landscapes and the micro-plastics, pollutants and metals that come with it.

The resulting public installation weaved a narrative of how microbiological insects evolve and transform the soil fabric into giant complex living structures, echoing the great termite mounds of the Northern Territory.

Empire of Dirt was installed in Rodda Lane, just off La Trobe Street on the City campus in May 2017. It formed part of Wonderment Walk, Victoria's growing open air gallery, combining science, mathematics and art to engage passers-by with wonder, delight and curiosity.

"I think we, as humans, have become disconnected from the land. Through Geurts' work, and the artist's eye, we get a clearer insight into what's happening in response to man-made contaminants and are able to better communicate this to the public," says Professor Ball, who was motivated by this project to instigate future artist-in-residence opportunities at his research centre.

James Geurts is an artist based in Melbourne and The Hague, completing his Master of Fine Art at RMIT, and The Vrije Academie, GEMAK, Netherlands. He has been producing large scale, site and time-specific projects and gallery works in international contexts since 2002.





**What we did:**

- Replaced infrastructure that had exceeded its economic life cycle.
- Replaced 12 aging chillers with locally manufactured, highly efficient chiller units covering 300,000m<sup>2</sup> of space across 37 buildings.
- Replaced 11 end-of-life boilers with modern condensing units covering 200,000m<sup>2</sup> across 26 buildings.
- Allocated \$4.8 million to support learning and teaching projects, interdisciplinary research projects and PhD scholarships to ensure sustainability is ingrained in our academic approach.
- Installed Tri-generation and Co-generation natural gas fired generators onsite, which provides highly efficient production of electricity and heat; recovers wasted thermal energy and distributes it as heating and/or cooling through the HVAC system.
- Upgraded HVAC to allow variable volumes of airflow across multiple zones to be able to best manage occupancy and thermal comfort demands in an efficient manner.
- Centralised precinct based networks to aggregate the benefits of energy conservation measures across the whole site.
- Upgraded Building Management Systems to better optimise the buildings mechanical and electrical equipment systems so that the greatest energy efficiencies can be achieved while meeting the needs of building occupants.
- Installed a 100kW Solar Photovoltaic array in Bundoora East.
- Replaced 40,000 light fittings to energy efficient LED lighting.
- Installed 1,500 water efficient fittings.



**What we achieved:**

- 30,000 tonnes reduction in carbon equivalent emissions per annum, which is more than a third of RMIT's total annual emissions.
- 52 million litres of water saved per annum.
- 53 per cent grid electricity saved through direct savings and embedded generation.

As the largest project of its type in the Southern Hemisphere, SUPP cements RMIT's long standing commitment to sustainability and innovation.

These achievements resulted in SUPP being recognised as a leader in industry at the National Energy Efficiency Awards, by winning the 'Best Smart Energy' project for 2017.

**53%**  
grid electricity saved through direct savings and embedded generation.

**52**  
million litres of water saved per annum.



**11.2 Sustainable Urban Precinct Program (SUPP)**

A significant milestone for RMIT this year was the completion of all major works related to SUPP. The SUPP journey began back in 2009, and culminated in 2017.

Through our ambitious \$128 million dollar commitment towards sustainable infrastructure we were able to carry out works on 77 buildings across our three main Melbourne campuses to cut water usage and greenhouse gas emissions.

**11.3 Solar Projects**

RMIT is committed to energy conservation. Strategies for achieving our targets for greenhouse gas emission reductions lie in making existing facilities and infrastructure more efficient, on-site energy generation and achieving efficiencies in the development of new infrastructure.

To further complement the achievements of SUPP, the University expanded its solar program by installing an additional 100kW of solar photovoltaic (PV) cells in our Carlton precinct on Buildings 51, 56, 96 and 100. These panels not only reduce our emissions through onsite renewable energy generation but they have also been a valuable learning tool for our students. School of Property, Construction and Project Management students were able to conduct projects on solar PV feasibility and modelling that formed the basis of the project.

RMIT will continue to expand the roll out of Solar PV in 2018 and into the future, with a significant roll out plan currently in development.

**11.4 Bundoora campus**

The Bundoora campus, in the north-eastern suburbs of Melbourne, is set in a tranquil environment surrounded by open spaces and native parklands. The campus is home to many of our engineering, health, medical sciences and education programs, supported by specialist technical and laboratory spaces, as well as exceptional sporting grounds.

This year, RMIT's landmark John W Ross Building constructed in 1972 was significantly refurbished to create an activated student facility for the whole campus. The redevelopment focused on the ground level of what is known as Building 202 to establish a campus identity that celebrates the uniqueness of the Bundoora location.

Having undergone several partial internal refurbishments over the years, the existing layout was outdated and did not provide efficient spatial use of this central student space. The spaces were constrained by the location of the café, the underused central corridor, little natural light and restricted views to the southern and eastern landscaped areas.

The redevelopment has delivered vastly improved student and staff spaces based on the New Academic Street model (see section 11.1), consistent with the universal student experiences being rolled out across all RMIT campuses.

The spatial transformation enhanced amenities such as the cafe, study spaces and student lounge, and consolidated student-facing services with RMIT Connect co-located with the Student Union (RUSU) offices to support students and encourage after-hours use.

**Features of the project included:**

- Strategically positioning the café in the northern corner of the floor print, allowing food to be served internally and externally, especially to the highly-activated northern plaza.
- Positioning the RMIT Connect front-of-house in the centre with access from the northern façade to maximise entry from Spine and the use of natural light.
- The design and operation of the space provides flexibility and is able to flip between student and staff use. The consultation rooms, mega flex rooms, RMIT Connect front-of-house and RUSU (part) are available for after-hours student use.
- Removing the central corridor to provide student breakout spaces across the floor circulation.
- Installing comprehensive changing facilities adjacent to the secure bike hub, providing showers, lockers, ironing facilities and gender-neutral provisions.
- Landscaping design to the external spaces and improved connection to the pedestrian Spine, with the internal layout designed to facilitate the use of the existing doors in the northern glazed façade.
- Changing Places accessible assisted change facilities, provide additional features and space to meet the needs of students and staff with profound disability and their carers including height adjustable adult-sized changing bench, tracking hoist system and increased footprint.

### 11.5 RMIT City Campus Children's Centre

As part of RMIT's commitment to work/life balance, it is essential that the University provides a long-day childcare centre for staff and students.

RMIT City Campus Children's Centre commenced operation in 1989 on the site of West Melbourne Primary school in Eades Place, West Melbourne and was known as Eades Place Children's Centre. In 1996 RMIT became the proprietor and, from 1998 to 2017, the Centre occupied leased premises on Franklin Street.

In 2017, the University saw an opportunity to deliver a brand new centre on Lygon Street, which not only could offer an additional 24 places (total 84 places), but allowed RMIT to invest in its own building creating a more sustainable, accessible and dynamic educational space.

The project established the following underpinning principles that had to be considered in the development of the design:

- **Aesthetics** - spaces to be a thing of beauty and light, reflect the lives and interest of people who occupy the space.
- **Active Learning** - supported by a stimulating environment that offers choices and a range of open ended materials.
- **Collaboration** - supporting children to develop skills working with others in groups
- **Bringing the outdoors in** - attention on the importance of the natural world in children's lives and learning.
- **Relationship** - the importance of the relationship of materials to other materials of people and groups using the centre and the connections between children's experiences and theory.

- **Reciprocity** - the environment is not static but responsive to the needs of children and interests.
- **Sustainability** - sustainable practices including the design of the facility and operational practises of the service.
- **Flexible** - each setting is to have a high degree of flexibility to enable the unique personalities of the children, educators and families who are part of the learning environment, to be reflected.

The project repurposed a small site, retaining the exterior walls of the two storey previous RMIT building to incorporate a new four-level facility which includes substantial outdoor play spaces on each level. The design includes an internal child friendly stair linking all levels with a series of destination play platforms, directly linked to internal learning environments. The spaces are created with low impact materials, utilise light wells to provide good access to natural light and vertical outdoor spaces for access to nature and fresh air. The project also incorporates energy and water efficiency measures including LED lights and solar PV.

The operation of the Children's Centre also deeply supports sustainability through initiatives including:

- Incorporate the diverse cultural needs of families and children through dramatic play, music, literature and food.
- Promoting equity and avoiding discrimination on the basis of gender, race, religion or ability. All children regardless of their gender are encouraged to have a wide range of experiences so they have equal opportunity to reach their full potential.
- Using cotton nappies which are washed on site to reduce the environmental impact of the Centre.

- Children are encouraged to participate in a variety of activities and experiences that introduce children to a wide range of elements including sand, soil, water, clay, paint etc. The Centre has outdoor growing spaces for the children to learn and interact with nature.
- Provision of healthy food, the menu is designed to provide for the nutritional needs of all children and includes provision for babies and special diets. Fresh ingredients are purchased on a weekly and/or daily basis, with sugar, salt and preservatives kept to a minimum.
- The new spaces have been created to provide play and learning experiences that respond to age and development characteristics. Internal learning environments are paired with outdoor play areas making the space both efficient and collaborative.



**In 2017, the University saw an opportunity to deliver a brand new centre on Lygon Street.**



# 12. Sustainable operations

## 12.1 Energy and emissions reduction

Energy and emissions are a major impact for the University, primarily due to the size and scale of the University's operations. RMIT maintains over 500,000m<sup>2</sup> of space worldwide and is the largest landholder within the Melbourne CBD. RMIT also operates two large on-site power generation facilities and triggers the thresholds under national emissions legislation.

RMIT reports on its energy and emissions profile at regular intervals, including formally reporting under the National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting Scheme.

In 2016 RMIT achieved our emissions reduction target four years ahead of schedule. In 2017 we went further and recorded a 34 per cent decrease in greenhouse gas emissions on a 2007 baseline.

In early 2018, RMIT finished \$128m of energy efficiency work under the Sustainable Urban Precinct Program, this work has delivered the majority of the savings to date and is expected to realise a 30,000 tCO<sub>2</sub>-e reduction in the 2018 calendar year.

This has included the installation and operation of a 1.2MW tri-generation plant at our Bundoora West campus and a 3.2MW co-generation plant at our City campus (additional details are included under section 11.2).

RMIT is a proud partner in the Melbourne Renewable Energy Project to collectively purchase renewable energy from a new wind farm to be built in Victoria in 2018. RMIT will be purchasing 25 per cent of our electricity from the wind farm from 2019 onwards. The project highlights our important role in lower our emissions on campus but also to drive change through partnerships in the city.

We also expanded our on-site solar PV by 90kW, which we plan to increase significantly again in 2018 (details included under section 11.3 Solar Projects). RMIT continued to uphold its commitment to offset 20% of our electricity consumption profile, 12,000 tCO<sub>2</sub>-e of offsets were selected through the application of the University's carbon offset strategy. The offsets purchased again strategically aligned with the location of our Vietnam campus.

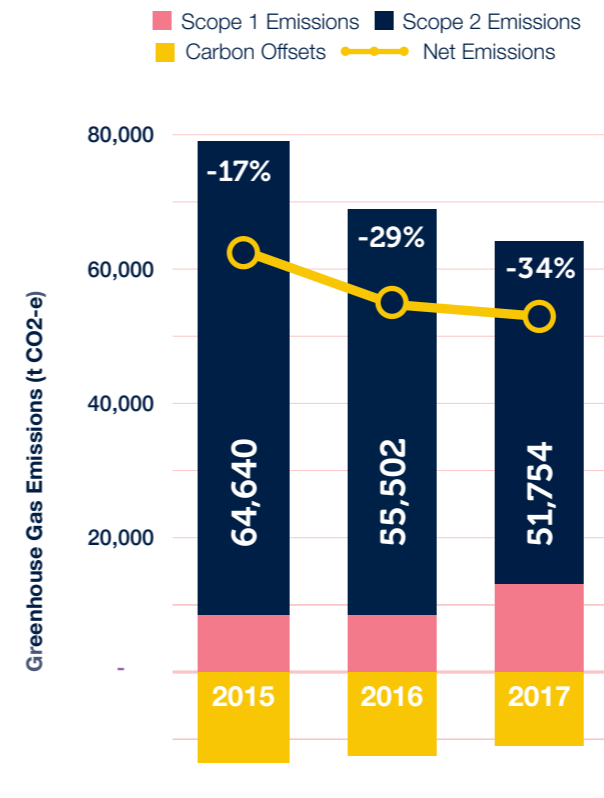
In this report, we account for all energy and emissions produced and consumed on our Australian campuses and regional sites. We will work to include emissions from our international operations in future reports but due to the complexity involved we do not yet have a timeframe for completing this.

We calculate all emissions results (Scope 1 and 2, emissions intensity and emissions reductions) according to time appropriate Australian Government factors, using 2007 as our base year in line with the ATN agreement.

In 2017 our total net building emissions were 51,754 tCO<sub>2</sub>-e. In comparison, our emissions were 78,120 tCO<sub>2</sub>-e in 2007. RMIT follows the Greenhouse Gas Protocol in calculating building Scope 1 and 2 emissions; our profile includes all Australian campuses in alignment with the National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting (NGER) legislation requirements. All applicable emissions calculations use factors sourced from the Australian Government Department of the Environment and Energy relevant at the time of consumption.

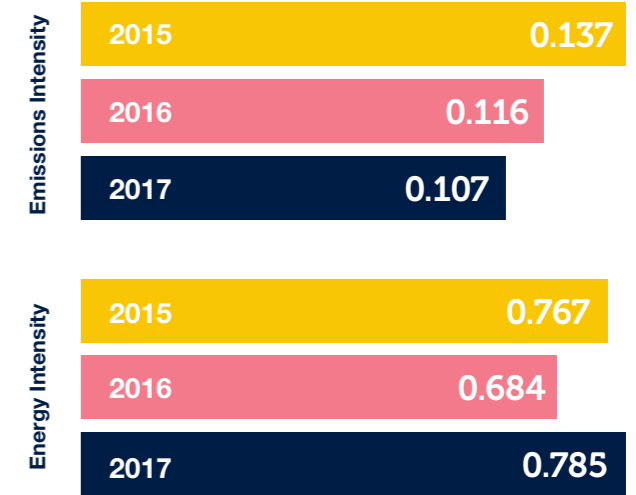
**-34%**  
decrease in greenhouse emissions since 2007

**25%**  
of electricity to be sourced directly from renewables from 2019



Energy and Emissions Intensity Ratios

\* Overall emissions include scope 1 and scope 2 associated with building use only (electricity and natural gas) as well as carbon offsets. Scope 3 and transport emissions are excluded.



Energy and Emissions Intensity Ratios

\* Emissions intensity ratio measured as net tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent per square meter of gross floor area (tCO<sub>2</sub>-e/m<sup>2</sup>) from building energy use only (electricity and natural gas). Scope 3 and transport emissions are excluded.

Energy Consumption	2015	2016	2017
Electricity	62,294,495 kWh	55,908,498 kWh	49,216,846 kWh
Natural Gas	136,478 GJ	124,108 GJ	200,775 GJ
Emissions Offset	14,325 tCO <sub>2</sub> -e	13,000 tCO <sub>2</sub> -e	12,000 tCO <sub>2</sub> -e

\* RMIT has only begun collecting overall data on renewable energy generation, in 2017 RMIT generated (and consumed) 158,000 kWh primarily from on-site solar PV

## 12.2 Materials and waste

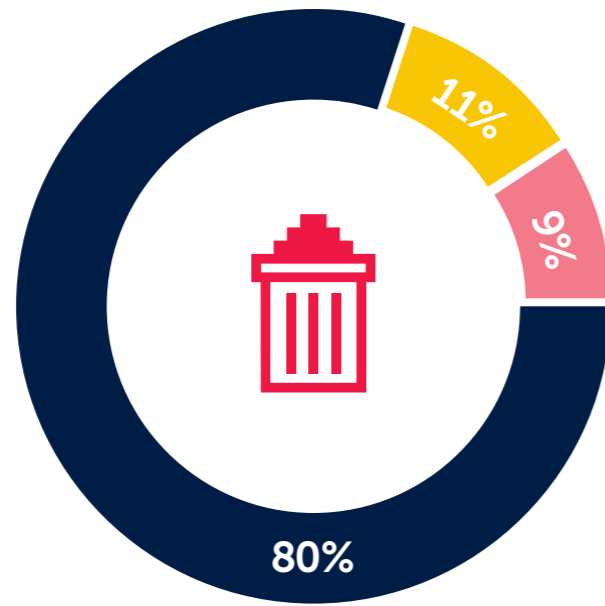
RMIT understands that managing materials and waste efficiently to minimise environmental impact is important. RMIT now operates under a consolidated waste contract across all sites and is beginning to make progress in waste management and reporting.

The RMIT waste profile is provided by our waste contractor and includes waste from all University operations within Australia, excluding confidential paper waste and construction waste. In 2017 the University produced a total of 1,151 tonnes of waste (using a volume to weight conversion it is 18,140 cubic meters of waste).

RMIT had a landfill diversion rate of 20.11 per cent, primarily made up of our mixed recycling and paper / cardboard recycling streams.

A university-wide Waste Management Plan was developed in 2017 and is currently being implemented. Rolling out consistent infrastructure that promotes the segregation of waste and recycling remains a priority throughout 2018.

### Waste and Recycling Ratios



● Mixed Recycling ● General Waste  
● Paper & Cardboard Recycling

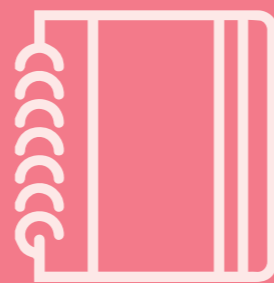


### Sustainable Events Guide

In 2017, the Sustainability Team published the Sustainable Events Guide, an online resource for students and staff to create successful events that not only minimise negative impacts on the environment but also foster a strong sense of community. The guide was originally developed by an RMIT student through a Sustainability Committee 'seedlings' grant.

The guide is designed to be applicable to the different types and scales of events across the University. It provides staff with direction by addressing all aspects of the event planning, such as location, food services, energy consumption, transportation and waste. The guide aims to reduce environmental impacts, add value to the local economy, engage the University and wider community and educate those involved.

With the introduction of the guide, RMIT hopes to minimise environmental impacts, promote corporate social responsibility, support local suppliers and strengthen our position as a sustainable university.



### Melbourne Renewable Energy Project

The Melbourne Renewable Energy Project is an Australian first, bringing together a group of local governments, cultural institutions, universities and corporations collectively purchasing renewable energy from a newly built facility.

As a result of the project it has supported the construction of a new wind farm at Crowlands, a small agricultural community about 2.5 hours from Melbourne by car. The 39-turbine 80 MW capacity wind farm will be twenty kilometres north east of Ararat, in Western Victoria. It will be owned and operated by Melbourne-based clean energy company Pacific Hydro, and the power will be supplied by its retail arm, Tango Energy.

Led by the City of Melbourne, the purchasing group include RMIT University, University of Melbourne, Australia Post, NAB, NEXTDC, Zoos Victoria, the City of Port Phillip, Moreland City Council, the City of Yarra, Citywide, Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre and Bank Australia. Through the project it is expected that a renewable energy generation facility will be built in regional Australia, supporting up to 140 jobs in the construction phase and 8 ongoing jobs in the operation of the facility.

The project also provides a blueprint that can be used to drive joint investment in any kind of renewable energy by organisations all over the world. The Guide to Renewable Energy Procurement provides case studies and tips drawn from the experience of the Melbourne Renewable Energy Project group and other similar projects.



## The Metro Tunnel Project

The Metro Tunnel Project is the largest transport project in Victoria since the City Loop, delivering five new underground stations and a twin nine-kilometre tunnel. The project will not only free up the existing train network and enable more trains in and out of the city, which will provide a less congested and more reliable train network, but it will deliver more modes of transport to and from the University, alleviating road traffic and creating a better environmental outcome for Melbourne. Throughout 2017, the Metro Tunnel Early Works (MTEW) carried out utility service relocations and other works in preparation of construction sites.

Part of this city shaping Government project is the new State Library Station, which will be located under Swanston Street between La Trobe Street and Franklin Street, thus on the doorstep of RMIT City campus. With a new station on our doorstep, RMIT emerges as a key stakeholder in the project, a project which will create nearly 7000 jobs, including 500 apprentices, trainees and engineering cadets working as part of the Tunnels and Stations package.

We are continuing to work closely with the Melbourne Metro Rail Authority to ensure students and staff stay informed of the development and opportunities throughout the construction program. Once complete this new station will significantly increase the accessibility of our campus and support sustainable transport.

Further information can be on the project found on [www.rmit.edu.au/metrotunnel](http://www.rmit.edu.au/metrotunnel)



## 12.3 Water

Through the Sustainable Urban Precincts Program, RMIT continues to monitor water usage across the largest consuming sites. This monitoring program continues to identify and contain a number of leaks and increased consumption events.

Managing water resources to improve water systems and enhance efficiency remains a focus. In previous years RMIT installed a range of water saving technologies across all campuses including water efficient fixtures, rainwater harvesting and drought tolerant landscaping. RMIT plans to continue to roll out smart metering technology to allow greater visibility of water consumption across all our campuses.

Water consumption across our Australian campuses was 252,241 kilolitres in 2017 and this is sourced from state-based water utilities which also provide data through billing information. This is a 12 per cent reduction in water consumption per Equivalent Full-time Student Load (EFTSL) compared to 2007. It does however represent an increase from 2016 in absolute terms due to drain downs of heating/cooling water loops and other operational requirements. Rainwater, greywater and stormwater is also collected for irrigation and toilet flushing purposes, but this water consumption is not metered to accurately calculate water savings.


## 12.4 Sustainable transport

Sustainable transport is important to our RMIT community to encouraging healthy and active lifestyles and reducing environmental impacts of transport choices. The University developed an Integrated Sustainable Transport Plan to enable and motivate students and staff to walk, ride and use public transport for study and work.

Each RMIT campus has different advantages and challenges regarding transport options due to their location and service provisions. RMIT continues to work with Public Transport Victoria (PTV) to ensure provision of train, tram and bus services continues to meet the needs of our community.

RMIT supports cycling through the provision of free secure bike parking across all our campuses to student and staff. The Building 51 bike hub was awarded a Green Gown Award under the 'Facilities and Services' category for delivering significant sustainability benefits. The bike hub not only encourages students and staff to ride to the campus, but has created a blueprint for inclusive and engaging cycling facilities which greatly improve the user experience. This nationally recognised award was particularly special, as RMIT was this year's host of both the awards, and the annual Australasian Campuses Towards Sustainability (ACTS) Conference.

As a global University, travel plays an important role in developing and contributing to academic research, learning and teaching – facilitating collaboration, sharing knowledge and best practice. Comparatively, travel is also a significant proportion of the University's total emissions and we must look to balance this against our commitment to reducing emissions. RMIT has begun to estimate our emissions from both air travel and taxis on an annual basis and will develop a plan for tracking and mitigation in future years.

  
**12%**  
reduction in  
water consumption  
per student.

  
**Awarded  
the Green Gown  
for the Building  
51 Bike Hub.**

## 12.5 Management Systems

RMIT's Property Services Group continues its development of an Environmental Management System (EMS), which aligns to the International Standard, ISO 14001:2015. An EMS is a set of processes and practices that enable an organisation to reduce its environmental impacts and increase its operating efficiency. The scope of the management system covers capital works delivery, facilities asset management and real estate services, and includes our contractors, service providers and tenants. At present, the University is using the EMS to identify environmental risks and opportunities, which will assist in strengthening our processes in the delivery of positive environmental outcomes.

## 12.6 Supply Chain

RMIT has a very broad supply chain from staffing and infrastructure to office supplies and catering. Our top five areas of spend across University operations include employee-related costs, building infrastructure, facilities management, recruitment, and IT applications.

The University operates a service-oriented approach to purchasing, with a University-wide procurement team working across the colleges and portfolios. This team provides strategic category development advice and assistance in everyday buying needs.

RMIT has a procurement policy process in place that outlines the principles and governance framework to ensure that the acquisition of goods and services complies with a minimum set of governance standards whilst delivering fair value for money through a 'triple bottom line' of environmental, social and financial sustainability.

We are looking at extending this through development of a sustainable procurement strategy to holistically address our procurement processes in alignment with ISO20400:2017, with more information to be published in 2018.

RMIT has maintained its certification as a Fair Trade University continuing to embed fair trade products where possible on our campuses. With a dedicated paid student Fair Trade coordinator role, supported by the Sustainability Committee, we promoted fair and ethical trade through a number of engagement activities, including Fashion Revolution Week and Fair Trade Fortnight. This role will be broadened in 2018 to address sustainability outcomes throughout the student lifecycle, from orientation to graduation and will be a part of the RMIT Connect and Student Life Team.

## Asset Management

RMIT Property Services life cycle analysis is the first of its kind for any University in Australia, gaining certification to the International Standard ISO 55001 Asset Management Systems in late 2017. The asset management system provides a strategic and planned approach to asset management that allows RMIT to assess future resource requirements and compare costs of potential acquisitions over the whole lifecycle.

RMIT embarked on this journey in 2016, where the Asset Management Team involved students from the College of Science, Engineering and Health to assist in data collection and map asset attributes, providing the students with industry experience and improving graduate outcomes. This data collection resulted in the development of the Australian campus life cycle model and the initiation of a more comprehensive asset management approach to maintenance within Property Services. The Central Asset Management (CAMS) is a software tool that was developed by RMIT researchers in the School of Engineering

for deterioration forecasting and life cycle modelling to enable maintenance optimisation. The CAMS life cycle model provides a comprehensive analytical prediction model of asset failure and can model different scenarios that are relevant to business needs. Approximately 260,000 are now in the CAMS model, including those from our Vietnam campus, enabling the Property Services team to allocate funding of infrastructure renewal, preventative maintenance and building asset replacement with precision.

By utilising our assets in an efficient and reliable manner our community benefits from increases safety, comfort and amenity whilst we reduce operating costs and minimise our emissions. In recognition of this work the Asset Management Team won a Facility Management Association Awards in the category of "Excellence in Facilities Management" for their 'Advanced 40 Year life cycle model for Higher Education' project.



# 13. Our Material Topics and Impacts

The table below shows the topics determined to be material for RMIT reflecting our significant economic, environment and social impacts and/or interest to our stakeholders. It also presents the topic boundary –

that is, where the impact related to that topic occurs and our involvement with that impact. Although issues have been prioritised this year, the overall scope and boundary of those issues has not change significantly since the previous report.

Material topic	Where the impact occurs
Ready for life and work	Employability and graduate impact - Our graduates entering the workforce and organisations where our alumni are employed or give their time.
Research Impact	Cities and communities where the outcomes of RMIT research is applied.
Learning and teaching	Current and future RMIT students and staff; communities where our graduates apply sustainability concepts.
Student health, safety and wellbeing	Current and future students studying at all our campuses including health & safety, security, wellbeing and mental health.
Diversity and inclusion	Current and future students, staff and employees who study and work at our campuses and sites worldwide including: staff gender & equality, students from low socio-economic backgrounds, culturally & linguistically diverse backgrounds, Diverse genders, sexes & sexualities, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds and disability & access.
Empowering staff	Staff at all our campuses including health & safety, security, attraction & retention, workplace stress & mental health and workforce casualisation.
Governance	Policies, systems and approaches to the governance of issues in sustainability including: academic integrity, bribery & corruption and human rights
Green buildings and infrastructure	Our buildings and infrastructure at our campuses and sites including: energy, greenhouse gas emissions, water, waste and transports & cycling.

# 14. GRI Reporting Principles

Material topic	Where the impact occurs
Stakeholder Inclusiveness	The reporting organisation shall identify its stakeholders, and explain how it has responded to their reasonable expectations and interests.
Sustainability Context	The report shall present the reporting organisation's performance in the wider context of sustainability.
Materiality	The report shall cover topics that reflect the reporting organisation's significant economic, environmental, and social impacts; or substantively influence the assessments and decisions of stakeholders.
Completeness	The report shall include coverage of material topics and their Boundaries, sufficient to reflect significant economic, environmental, and social impacts, and to enable stakeholders to assess the reporting organisation's performance in the reporting period.
Accuracy	The reported information shall be sufficiently accurate and detailed for stakeholders to assess the reporting organisation's performance.
Balance	The reported information shall reflect positive and negative aspects of the reporting organisation's performance to enable a reasoned assessment of overall performance.
Clarity	The reporting organisation shall make information available in a manner that is understandable and accessible to stakeholders using that information.
Comparability	The reporting organisation shall select, compile, and report information consistently. The reported information shall be presented in a manner that enables stakeholders to analyse changes in the organisation's performance over time, and that could support analysis relative to other organisations.

# 15. GRI Content Index

## 15.1 General Disclosures

Disclosure <sup>5</sup>	Page number(s) URL (s) and SDG
<b>GRI 101: Foundation 2016</b>	
<b>GRI 102: General Disclosures 2016</b>	
102-1 Name of the organisation.	Page 4
102-2 Primary brands, products, and services	Page 7
102-3 Location of the organization's headquarters.	Back page
102-4 Number of countries where the organization operates.	Page 7 <a href="https://www.rmit.edu.au/about/our-locations-and-facilities">https://www.rmit.edu.au/about/our-locations-and-facilities</a>
102-5 Nature of ownership and legal form.	Page 7
102-6 Markets served: geographic locations, sectors served, types of customers and beneficiaries.	<a href="https://www.rmit.edu.au/about/our-locations-and-facilities">https://www.rmit.edu.au/about/our-locations-and-facilities</a>
102-7 Scale of the organisation.	Page 7 <a href="http://www.rmit.edu.au/annualreport">www.rmit.edu.au/annualreport</a>
102-8 Total number of employees by employment contract (permanent and temporary), by gender.	Pages 31-32 (UN SDG 8)
102-9 A description of the organization's supply chain.	Pages 7 and 47 (UN SDG 12)
102-10 Significant changes to the organization's size, structure, ownership, or supply chain.	Page 7
102-11 Whether and how the organization applies the Precautionary Principle or approach	Page 9
102-12 A list of externally developed economic, environmental and social charters, principles, or other initiatives to which the organization subscribes, or which it endorses.	Page 11 (UN SDG 17)
102-13 A list of the main memberships of industry or other associations, and national or international advocacy organizations.	Page 11 (UN SDG 17)
102-14 A statement from the most senior decision maker of the organization about the relevance of sustainability to the organization and its strategy for addressing sustainability.	Page 6
102-15 A description of key impacts, risks, and opportunities.	Page 48

Disclosure	Page number(s) URL (s) and SDG
<b>GRI 101: Foundation 2016</b>	
<b>GRI 102: General Disclosures 2016</b>	
102-16 A description of the organization's values, principles, standards, and norms of behaviour.	Page 9 <a href="http://www.rmit.edu.au/about/our-values">www.rmit.edu.au/about/our-values</a>
102-18 Governance structure of the organization.	Page 8
102-40 A list of stakeholder groups engaged by the organization.	Page 10
102-41 Percentage of total employees covered by collective bargaining agreements	Page 30 (UN SDG 8)
102-42 The basis for identifying and selecting stakeholders with whom to engage.	Page 10
102-43 The organization's approach to stakeholder engagement.	Page 10
102-44 Key topics and concerns raised.	Pages 4 and 48
102-45 Entities included in the consolidated financial statements.	<a href="http://www.rmit.edu.au/annualreport">www.rmit.edu.au/annualreport</a>
102-46 Defining report content and topic boundaries.	Page 4
102-47 A list of material topics.	Page 48
102-48 Restatements of information.	None
102-49 Changes in reporting.	Page 48
102-50 Reporting period.	Page 4
102-51 Date of most recent report.	Page 4
102-52 Reporting cycle.	Page 4
102-53 Contact point for questions regarding the report.	Page 4
102-54 Claims of reporting in accordance with the GRI Standards.	Page 4
102-55 GRI content index.	Pages 50-54
102-56 External assurance.	Page 4

\* Disclosure descriptions have been summarised. For detailed descriptions refer to the GRI Standards <https://www.globalreporting.org/standards>

# 15.2 Material Topics

GRI Standard	Disclosure	Page number(s) URL (s) and
<b>Material Topic – Emissions (Green Buildings)</b>		
GRI 103: Management Approach 2016	103-1 Explanation of the material topic and its Boundaries.	Pages 42-43
	103-2 The management approach and its components.	Pages 42-43 and 47
	103-3 Explanation of how the organization evaluates the management approach.	Pages 42 and 47
GRI 305-1	Direct (Scope 1) GHG emissions	Page 43 (UN SDG 13)
GRI 305-2	Energy indirect (Scope 2) GHG emissions	Page 43 (UN SDG 13)
GRI 305-4	GHG emissions intensity	Page 43 (UN SDG 13)
<b>Material Topic – Energy (Green Buildings)</b>		
GRI 103: Management Approach 2016	103-1 Explanation of the material topic and its Boundaries.	Pages 36-40 and 43
	103-2 The management approach and its components.	Pages 36, 43 and 47
	103-3 Explanation of how the organization evaluates the management approach.	Pages 42 and 47
GRI 302-1	Energy consumption within the organisation	Page 43 (UN SDG 12)
GRI 302-3	Energy intensity	Page 43 (UN SDG 12)

GRI Standard	Disclosure	Page number(s) URL (s) and
<b>Material Topic –Water (Green Buildings)</b>		
GRI 103: Management Approach 2016	103-1 Explanation of the material topic and its Boundaries.	Page 46
	103-2 The management approach and its components.	Page 46
	103-3 Explanation of how the organization evaluates the management approach.	Pages 46-47
GRI 303-1	Water withdrawal by source	Page 46 (UN SDG 12)
<b>Material Topic –Waste (Green Buildings)</b>		
GRI 103: Management Approach 2016	103-1 Explanation of the material topic and its Boundaries.	Page 44
	103-2 The management approach and its components.	Page 44
	103-3 Explanation of how the organization evaluates the management approach.	Pages 44 and 47
GRI 306-2	Waste by type and disposal method	Page 44 (UN SDG 12)
<b>Material Topic – Diversity and equal opportunity (Diversity and Inclusion)</b>		
GRI 103: Management Approach 2016	103-1 Explanation of the material topic and its Boundaries.	Page 26
	103-2 The management approach and its components.	Page 26
	103-3 Explanation of how the organization evaluates the management approach.	Page 26
GRI 405-1	Diversity of governance bodies and employees	Page 30-32 (UN SDG 5)

# 15.2 Material Topics

GRI Standard	Disclosure	Page number(s) URL (s) and
<b>Material Topic – Occupational health and safety (Staff Empowerment)</b>		
GRI 103: Management Approach 2016	103-1 Explanation of the material topic and its Boundaries.	Page 35
	103-2 The management approach and its components.	Page 35
	103-3 Explanation of how the organization evaluates the management approach.	Page 35
GRI 403-2	Types of injury and rates of injury, occupational diseases, lost days, and absenteeism, and number of work-related fatalities	Page 35 (UN SDG 3)
<b>Material Topic – Ready for life and work</b>		
GRI 103: Management Approach 2016	103-1 Explanation of the material topic and its Boundaries.	Pages 22-24 (UN SDG 4)
	103-2 The management approach and its components.	Pages 22-24
	103-3 Explanation of how the organization evaluates the management approach.	Pages 22-24
<b>Material Topic – Research impact</b>		
GRI 103: Management Approach 2016	103-1 Explanation of the material topic and its Boundaries.	Pages 15-17 (UN SDG 11)
	103-2 The management approach and its components.	Pages 15-17
	103-3 Explanation of how the organization evaluates the management approach.	Pages 15-17
<b>Material Topic – Learning and teaching</b>		
GRI 103: Management Approach 2016	103-1 Explanation of the material topic and its Boundaries.	Pages 19-20 (UN SDG 4)
	103-2 The management approach and its components.	Pages 19-20
	103-3 Explanation of how the organization evaluates the management approach.	Pages 19-20
<b>Material Topic – Designing sustainable cities</b>		
GRI 103: Management Approach 2016	103-1 Explanation of the material topic and its Boundaries.	Pages 15-17 (UN SDG 11)
	103-2 The management approach and its components.	Pages 15-17
	103-3 Explanation of how the organization evaluates the management approach.	Pages 15-17





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