Snapshot of success: Delivering on the Future of Adult Community Education in Victoria 2020–25 | Ministerial Statement



VICTORIA
State Government

Background: Strengthening adult community education in Victoria

Adult community education is an essential part of the skills and training system. It provides adult learners with the core skills and confidence they need for work, further study, and to help them participate in their communities.

In Victoria, a central part of this learner-centred system is the Learn Local program, which funds around 200 place-based, community organisations to deliver flexible pre-accredited foundation skills training, including language, literacy, numeracy, employability and digital skills to learners in communities across the state.

The Learn Local program in Victoria provides benefits that extend well beyond the individual learner. Evaluations of adult community education internationally and in Australia consistently find that the benefits extend well beyond employment. Returns are seen through:

- increased earnings and productivity
- reduced welfare dependency
- improved health and wellbeing
- increased volunteering
- stronger community participation
- lower justice and healthcare costs
- greater social inclusion.

As such, the Learn Local program represents both an education initiative and a long-term investment in Victoria's economic prosperity and social wellbeing. By supporting people who are often least likely to engage in traditional education, Learn Local providers help to expand the state's skilled workforce while strengthening the social fabric of local communities.

In 2025, funding supported training for around 28,000 Victorians, helping to improve access to learning opportunities for a diverse learner group. At Learn Local providers:

- 70% of learners are women
- more than half of learners are from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- a quarter of learners are from regional Victoria
- 17% of learners are people with disability
- 2% of learners are First Peoples.

Learn Local providers are critical to the delivery of foundation skills in Victoria. Being embedded deeply in communities, these organisations pride themselves on providing an inviting, accessible and flexible environment. They reach the members of the community who often face barriers to participation, including:

- more than 35% of learners have a concession card
- almost 30% of learners were unemployed before training
- more than 20% of learners are early school-leavers
- learners who are vulnerable workers at risk of retrenchment.*

The Future of Adult Community Education in Victoria 2020–25 Ministerial Statement was developed with the Adult, Community and Further Education Board, Learn Local providers, TAFEs, employers and unions. The Ministerial Statement sets out a clear and shared vision to support and strengthen adult community education so it can best meet the needs of learners and communities. In addition, peak bodies such as Neighbourhood Houses Victoria, Adult Community Education Victoria and the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Inc. are key delivery partners who have been essential in achieving these goals.

Guided by this Ministerial Statement, the Victorian Government and adult community education providers have together achieved the shared goals of:

- strengthening focus on learners
- building recognition of adult community education
- supporting provider adaptation
- fostering collaboration.

*Note: Learners can be counted in more than one learner group.

Snapshot of success: What we have achieved

Achievement highlights

Delivery of adult community education by Learn Local providers has rebounded since the significant disruption of the COVID-19 pandemic. This strong growth is testament to the resilience and commitment of providers.

The **number of learners engaged each year increased by nearly 50%** from 19,000 in 2020 to 28,000 in 2025.

Student survey results showed that **learner satisfaction met or exceeded key targets** across learning environments, teaching quality and learner experience.

More than 90% of learners found their training welcoming, conveniently located, well supported and responsive to their learning needs.

More than 80% of learners achieved their main goal for study, whether increasing confidence, progressing to further training, gaining employment or securing a better job.

Our Learners

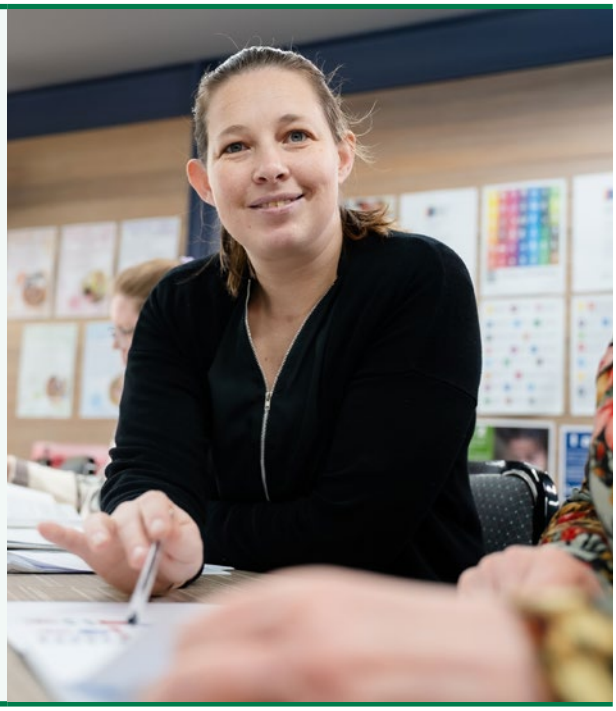
LEARNER STORY

Jessica

While managing the impacts of her partner's car accident, Jessica enrolled in the *Launch your Hospital Career* course at Community College Gippsland, which she undertook alongside caring responsibilities for her children.

When that didn't lead to a job, Jessica didn't give up. She completed the *Launch Your Aged Care Career* course at CCG, secured a traineeship at a new aged care facility in Warragul and completed a Certificate III in Individual Support. Now fully qualified, she works in a casual role at the aged care facility.

As Jessica says, *"At some point I felt like giving up, but the support from CCG helped me keep going and take on each new challenge."*



Achievement of priorities

We know that adult community education is best delivered in flexible, tailored and innovative ways in welcoming environments that help learners engage and build confidence. And we know that learning needs to be place-based and linked to the local community, employers and services to be truly effective in supporting social participation and cohesion.

This is why our community-based Learn Local providers are so critical to the delivery of this essential learning for Victorians.

Together, we have worked to strengthen our network of Learn Local providers through a range of investments under the 3 priority areas of the Ministerial Statement. These initiatives are shaping the future by empowering Learn Local providers to stay at the forefront of emerging trends and technological advancements. They help maintain a dynamic and future-focused approach to adult community education.

Capability building

- In partnership with the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Inc., new resources and professional development in First Peoples self-determination and participation built Learn Local providers' capability to strengthen cultural safety, participation and outcomes for First Peoples learners.
- Over the past 5 years, we invested $6 million to deliver high-quality professional development, helping Learn Local educators to implement effective teaching practices for adult learners.
- Over the past 3 years, we invested $900,000 to deliver Industry Practice Networks, enabling Learn Local providers to engage and partner with local employers through peer-learning and collaboration.



Preparing learners for work, study and full participation in society

- We delivered 70 new high-quality curriculum and teaching resources to all Learn Local providers, improving the consistency and quality of teaching and learning while reducing burden on providers for curriculum development.
- Over the past 5 years, we invested $7.2 million in one-off Training Delivery Support grants to provide new equipment and resources that supported high-quality learning experiences.
- We invested $1.82 million in 2023 through one-off Local Innovation grants to support innovative approaches that improved the learner experience.
- We invested $0.5 million in 2025 in one-off Technology and Digital grants to enhance training programs for learners through technology and digital improvements.
- We invested $1.79 million over 4 years in a program of Just in Time Industry Partnerships to deliver pre-accredited training tailored to local employer needs, creating direct pathways to employment for learners.

Inclusion and engagement

- In partnership with the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Inc., we delivered guidance and toolkits to help Learn Local providers reach First Peoples and culturally and linguistically diverse learners.
- We invested $2.45 million over 2 years for Family Learning Partnerships to create opportunities for families to engage in positive learning experiences and build the confidence and skills to take their next steps in education or employment.
- We invested $2.2 million in 2025 through one-off Learner and Program Sustainability grants to help Learn Local providers to attract new learners by strengthening curriculum and outreach strategies.

In addition, the Victorian Government delivered $59.5 million over 2020–22 in Business Continuity Funding to support Learn Local providers. This enabled Learn Locals to continue operation through major disruptions, including COVID-19, bushfire and flood through one-off grants.

Looking ahead

We are dedicated to supporting Victorians to access foundation skills training through adult community education. The National Foundation Skills Strategy 2025–35 and the Victorian Bilateral Implementation Plan set a shared direction for the Commonwealth and Victorian governments under the National Skills Agreement.

This direction cements the importance of access to quality foundation skills training for adult learners to develop the foundation skills they need to participate confidently and fully in work, education and training, and the broader community.

Victoria's Bilateral Implementation Plan under the National Skills Agreement includes agreed investments to improve foundation skills training capacity, capability, quality and accessibility. As part of this, the Victorian Government secured $15.2 million for adult community education in Victoria:

- **$4.8 million** for accredited literacy and numeracy delivery by adult community education providers who are also Registered Training Organisations.
- **$4.5 million** for scholarships in advanced qualifications and professional development for adult community education teachers.
- **$5.9 million** for pre-accredited training for digital skills delivered by Learn Local providers.

This strengthened investment acknowledges that a person with low literacy and numeracy faces barriers to participation in social and community life, employment, and education and training. At the same time, 88% of companies are affected by low literacy and numeracy skill levels (The Australian Industry Group's workforce and skills survey, 2024).

Adult community education and adult community education providers play a crucial role in Victoria's education system. There are opportunities to better integrate adult community education into the broader skills system, such as through the Victorian Digital Skills Compact – a shared commitment to equip Victorians with the tools they need to succeed in the digital age.

I look forward to continuing to work with our dedicated Learn Local providers and key delivery partners to strengthen the system and ensure adult community education supports learners and communities to achieve their goals.



Gabrielle Williams

Gabrielle Williams
Deputy Premier and Minister for Skills and Training





Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Traditional Aboriginal Owners of Country throughout Victoria and pay our respect to them, their connections to land, sea, and community. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present and future Traditional Owners.

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