



2025-2026 Mission-Based Compact Between the Commonwealth of Australia and La Trobe University

Purpose

This compact is an agreement between the Commonwealth and the University. Entering into a Compact is one of the quality and accountability requirements, which a higher education provider must meet under the *Higher Education Support Act 2003* (HESA) as a condition of receiving a grant. Specifically, subsection 19-110(1) of HESA requires that Table A and Table B providers must, in respect of each year for which a grant is paid to the provider under HESA, enter into a Mission-Based Compact with the Commonwealth for a period that includes that year.

All strategies should provide qualitative and/or quantitative measures of assessment.

Mission and Strategic Planning

La Trobe University's refreshed [Strategic Plan 2025-2030](#) articulates our vision to be a university where inclusion and innovation produce real-world impact. It focuses on fields addressing Australia's workforce needs – health, science and education – underpinned by an AI-first mindset driving innovation across curriculum, student support, and impactful research.

Addressing workforce and skills needs

We continue to roll-out our \$170 million investment in our Health Innovation Program to deliver new clinical teaching facilities across our entire campus network. This program will enable us to increase our student numbers in Nursing, Psychology, Dentistry and Allied Health by 40%, with the goal of producing over 5,000 graduates annually by 2030.

We are also investing in our capacity to drive innovation and produce the future teacher workforce, leveraging our award-winning [SOLAR literacy](#) and [Nexus](#) employment-based teacher training programs, with growing demand for our undergraduate and postgraduate courses across regional and metropolitan Victoria.

Measures of success: 24% increase in health enrolments and 29% increase in ITE enrolments by the end of 2026 (from 2024 baseline).

Student and staff safety

Through our Safer Community service, in 2025 and 2026 we will:

- expand awareness campaigns and training, especially for international students and those in accommodation
- continue to roll-out training on misconduct, sexual harm prevention, and respectful behaviour
- improve processes for reporting, response, and support
- collaborate with student groups, staff, and external partners to address emerging risks and promote a safe, inclusive environment.

We will also continually refine and implement our [Anti-racism Action Plan 2025-2030](#).

Importantly, our work will be underpinned by evidence. La Trobe's [reGEN network](#) is undertaking evaluations of community-led primary and secondary prevention of sexual violence interventions. [The research](#), which will run for three years and is funded by the Commonwealth Government, will be harnessed to inform La Trobe's own strategies to prevent sexual violence on campus.

Countering foreign interference, cyber and data security

La Trobe's 'Cybersecurity Resilience Strategy' is a multi-year roadmap to uplift maturity and reduce risk. Over the compact period, we will prioritise:

- growing our internal capacity to improve skills and response capability
- regular staff training and phishing stimulations
- updating policies and standards to set clear rules for safe technology
- improving our technical and access controls around sensitive data
- testing disaster recovery plans and incident response to ensure quick recovery from attacks
- uplifting technical backup and disaster recovery systems

We have also established a Foreign Engagement Framework, assessed by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) as best practice in mitigating foreign interference. Key elements include:

- Governance: a university-wide Foreign Engagement Policy and reporting risks of foreign interference mechanisms via Safer Community
- Due diligence: a mandatory Foreign Engagement Risk Assessment Tool ensures all international activities and partnerships are assessed prior to approval
- Awareness and training: all staff complete mandatory training; targeted outreach is provided for higher-risk areas and researchers; and regular communications with students is undertaken
- Sector and government engagement: ongoing collaboration with DFAT and national security agencies, and active membership of the National Foreign Interference Network of practice

Upholding freedom of speech and academic freedom

La Trobe will review and update its policies that protect and uphold freedom of speech and academic freedom to ensure they remain fit for purpose.

Strategies for Improving Equality of Opportunity in Higher Education

La Trobe has a longstanding commitment to equity in Higher Education.

Regional, rural and remote

Through our [Regional Growth and Innovation 2030 Strategy](#), we will reduce the participation gap between metropolitan and regional communities. By 2030, we aim to increase the number of students undertaking their studies on-campus, via hybrid and online courses by four times the growth rate of the domestic student population in regional Victoria.

Supporting investments include:

- [Regional Pathways Program](#): helping young people to build confidence and assist their transition from secondary school into tertiary education. With philanthropic funding, from 2026 we aim to enlist a further 100 students annually and extend into more schools across central and northern Victoria.
- Scholarships: a new single, scalable regional scholarship framework to support more regional cohorts—including non-school leavers, postgraduate, and Indigenous students.
- Infrastructure: accelerating regional innovation with more than \$73M being invested in new health and teaching facilities across our four regional campuses, marked most recently by the opening of our \$21M

Dentistry School in Bendigo. In 2026, work will continue to deliver new \$50M student accommodation in Bendigo's CBD, which will be complete by 2028.

Measures of success: annual growth in regional enrolments; retention and completion uplift; number of regional students supported via Pathways and scholarships; outcomes reported through QILT and La Trobe Experience Surveys.

Indigenous students

Our [Indigenous Strategy 2023–2030](#) commits us to achieving population parity in Indigenous student participation and success, with following goals over the compact period:

- Participation in our successful university pathway [RISE](#) will grow by a further 25%, supporting at least 200 students.
- We will increase the proportion of commencing Indigenous students in receipt of a scholarship or bursary from 80% (2024) to 90%.
- We will expand tailored academic and cultural activities at dedicated and culturally safe spaces.

Measures of success: number of students in RISE and nested programs (e.g., Indigenous Academic Enrichment Program), % of commencing Indigenous students receiving a scholarship, parity of outcomes (retention, completion, success, participation).

Students with a disability or health condition

We will continue to implement our [Universal Design and Inclusion Action Plan](#) to foster an inclusive, welcoming, and enabling university. We will provide tailored support for diverse student needs, co-designed with community. Our Student Advising (Accessibility) program will help us to achieve parity or better on student achievement and satisfaction.

Measures of success: engagement, retention, success, and nine-year completion rates, and experience as measured by the QILT Student Experience Survey, employment outcomes measured by the Graduate Outcomes Survey, number of research studies co-designed with disability community.

Partnering with TAFEs and Study Hubs

We will continue to expand our partnerships with TAFE to offer collaborative programs, articulations and study pathways to reduce barriers to higher education.

Additionally:

- Our MoU with Country Universities Centre and collaborations with Regional University Study Hubs will enable more regional and rural students to access local study spaces.
- Our new Northern Study Hubs in Epping and Broadmeadows, delivered with local government, Melbourne Polytechnic and Bendigo Kangan Institute, will improve participation for communities in Melbourne's outer north.

Measures of success: Number of regional students enrolled via articulation pathways, participation in mentoring, outreach programs, student registrations across study hub network

HECG Grant

La Trobe is in receipt of an Higher Education Continuity Guarantee (HECG) and in 2026 and 207 will invest those funds to support new regional scholarships, expand placement bursaries, expand learning support services and on initiatives to support Indigenous students.

Strategies for Improving Teaching and Learning

La Trobe is driving a step-change in curriculum and student outcomes, with equity and inclusion at the centre of our approach. We empower students to engage with content in ways that suit their lives, offering hybrid or fully online classes, including through our [StudyFlex](#) courses and subjects. Our ambition is to deliver world-class learning where all students achieve their version of success, regardless of their background, previous educational attainment, campus location or study mode.

Our 'Education2030' initiative will embed AI in every course to ensure all students are confident and creative career-ready users of next generation digital technologies. Staff will be upskilled in integrating AI to improve teaching quality. 'Education2030' will also create stackable lifelong learning pathways so that graduates can access professional learning to stay current in a rapidly evolving world of work.

Measures of success: *La Trobe Experience Survey (Teaching Quality, Course Quality), QILT Student Experience Survey (Teaching Quality, Learning Resources), La Trobe Student Feedback on Subjects, StudyFlex enrolments by course location, number of StudyFlex subjects and courses.*

Employability and career readiness

[Career Ready Advantage](#) is our hallmark [employability program](#) that offers students opportunities to develop industry-ready skills and attributes. Building on a program which has already been accessed by 20,000 students, we will embed employability across our entire curriculum and deepen our work with industry to create meaningful experiences for students to connect with industry in every course. Our commitment will see every student experience work-integrated learning, ultimately supporting their successful transition from university to their career.

Measure of success: *Overall employment (QILT Graduate Outcomes survey), La Trobe Experience Survey (Careers summary), QILT Employer Satisfaction Survey*

Teaching excellence - La Trobe Academy

The La Trobe Academy ensures all teaching academics are well equipped to harness effective and evidence-based teaching methods. It offers personalised professional development, credentialing pathways and forums for knowledge exchange. Over the compact period, our focus will be on lifting staff capability in AI integration and assessment design.

Measures of success: *Student Feedback on Teaching data, number of HEA Fellowships awarded, Graduate Certificate enrolments, attendance at annual La Trobe Learning & Teaching Summit*

Student advising and early intervention

Our [Student Advising](#) model integrates predictive analytics, engagement data, and socio-demographic insights to identify at-risk students early. Proactive campaigns, aligned with real-time data, ensure interventions are timely and targeted. Early assessment in every subject provides a lead indicator of students at academic risk, and we also offer dedicated support for international and Indigenous student cohorts.

Measures of success: *retention, attrition and student success (by equity cohort and study mode), engagement with Student Advisors, number of students identified as 'at risk', academic support engagement for 'at risk' students.*

Transparency - Inherent Requirements Project

To improve admissions transparency and student choice, inherent requirements will continue to be published across all undergraduate courses to facilitate informed decisions by prospective students about admission requirements and degree pathways.

Measure of success: % of undergraduate courses with published inherent requirements

Strategies for Improving Research, Research Training, and Innovation

La Trobe is committed to transformative research that shapes the future, tackles societal challenges and drives global impact. Our [Research and Innovation 2030 Strategy](#) focuses investment in our areas of strength—health and wellbeing, sustainable agriculture and food systems, and cutting-edge digital technologies including AI—while leveraging our broad disciplinary expertise.

Through partnerships with industry, government, community, and international collaborators, we aim to create economic growth, jobs, and equitable development in Melbourne’s north, regional Victoria, and beyond, aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals and Australia’s National Science and Research Priorities.

Our strategy is anchored on three pillars: Global, Industry and Community Engagement; Workforce Development; and Research Investment.

We are building a vibrant, inclusive, and high-performing research workforce through initiatives like the Research Leaders Accelerator Program and targeted investment in flagship institutes, offering researchers with world-class infrastructure, mentoring, and resourcing, especially in health and the sciences. Coordinated training programs will enhance researcher capabilities in responsible AI, ethics, data management, Indigenous data sovereignty, commercialisation, and graduate research supervision.

La Trobe’s [Gabra Biik, Wurruwila Wutja Research Centre](#) has been established to advance Indigenous-led research by facilitating Indigenous community research partnerships, providing a culturally safe space for Indigenous researchers, and building academic Indigenous knowledge and research capacity. By drawing on traditional knowledge, lived experience and ethical cutting-edge research in rural and remote communities, we aim to generate valuable shared intellectual property, promote sustainable development and community prosperity. One example is La Trobe’s proposed ARC Centre of Excellence for Community-Led Sensor Innovation that seeks to contribute to achieving Australia’s Close the Gap targets by co-creating sensor technologies with Indigenous communities to tackle the disparity in health outcomes that disproportionately affects Indigenous Australians.

We will expand graduate research opportunities and training by increasing our HDR course offerings, prioritising graduate research scholarships and supporting excellent, well-resourced and externally funded programs of research, providing an exceptional environment for training with access to appropriate infrastructure and operational resources. Students will gain real-world experience through Industry PhDs, Clinician Researcher PhDs, and global Joint-PhD programs, building skills in entrepreneurship, innovation, and professional networks.

La Trobe will continue to implement our [Commercialisation Plan 2022–2030](#) to support researchers and students to translate ideas to market, including licensing, co-funded ventures, and spinouts, and to help connect start-up businesses to overseas markets through global innovation corridors. We will also launch Eagle Works, a new innovation centre, integrating our [Digital Innovation Hub](#), [Bio Innovation Hub](#), along with entrepreneurship training, dedicated proof-of-concept and venture funding, and accelerator programs focused on health, biotechnology, agriculture, and digital technologies.

Measures of success: By 2026, relative to 2024, we aim to increase research income by 23% to \$127 million, grow HDR student load by 16%, boost publication citation rates by 14%, and improve our reputation by demonstrating our societal impact at scale through tangible examples.

Strategies for Engaging with Industry

La Trobe is building a world-class innovation ecosystem where industry, researchers, and students collaborate to tackle major challenges in health, biotechnology, agriculture, digital technology, and sustainability.

We are investing in facilities and collaborations that position La Trobe as a partner of choice for industry:

- Deployment of Australia's first AI supercomputer, a NVIDIA DGX H200 system, by La Trobe's Australian Centre for AI in Medical Innovation (ACAMI), providing machine learning capability for drug discovery, genomics and precision agriculture.
- Through our partnership with BioNTech and its clinical-scale manufacturing facility at our Melbourne (Bundoora) campus, we are supporting sovereign mRNA and immunotherapy capability, with long-term benefits for health security.
- Our new Bio Innovation Corridor with India is connecting researchers, start-ups, and biotech companies across two nations, opening new global markets and opportunities for cross-border collaboration.
- Through leadership of the recently launched [Care Economy CRC](#), we are supporting industry to respond to the technology and workforce needs of the healthcare sector.
- Our [Bio Innovation Hub](#) is providing early-stage biotechnology companies with access to PC2 laboratory facilities, research infrastructure and a knowledge ecosystem.
- In partnership with CISCO and Optus, our [Digital Innovation Hub](#) is providing access to advanced facilities in AI, software development, data analytics and networking, to help accelerate digital innovation in industry, a key example being La Trobe's support of the development of the [Victorian Virtual Emergency Department](#).

In addition, over the next two years, La Trobe will:

- Build more partnerships with metropolitan and regional health organisations to support clinical health research and workforce development.
- Seek to establish a *Northern Melbourne Food Precinct* in partnership with RMIT, supporting business innovation in the production of healthy, high-quality food, and directly addressing recommendations of the 2025 House Standing Committee inquiry into food and Beveridge manufacturing in Australia.
- Pursue innovation corridors to Europe.
- Seek to expand our Research and Innovation Precinct in Melbourne, a core part of La Trobe's University City, through the creation of a hub supporting biotech businesses scaling-up operations in mRNA and immunotherapy.

Innovation and entrepreneurship are embedded across all facets of the university. A three-phase commercialisation model guides the journey from invention to market, encompassing licensing, co-funded ventures, and spinouts, with dedicated funds and accelerator programmes targeting health, biotech, agriculture, and digital technologies. La Trobe offers a suite of programs for emerging founders—including students, researchers, and community members—through tailored workshops, challenges, and mentoring. More than 2,500 students, 500 start-ups, and 2,000 entrepreneurs have engaged in these initiatives, supported by alumni and over 150 industry partners.

Alongside infrastructure, La Trobe is embedding industry engagement into research training and workforce development. Programs such as the Industry PhD and Clinician Researcher PhD give students hands-on experience in industry, while short courses and microcredentials, co-designed with partners, deliver tailored upskilling for workforces.

Measures of success: growth in industry research income, patents commercialised, start-ups supported, workforce training uptake, industry co-location at La Trobe's Melbourne and regional campuses and demonstrable impact at scale through industry adoption of new technologies and services.

SIGNED for and on behalf of

In the presence of:

THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

by

Jessica Mohr

Rachel Searl

Full name (please print)

Witness (please print)

First Assistant Secretary

Executive Officer

Position
of the Department of Education

Position or profession of witness (please
print)

Signature
01/12/2025

Signature

Date

SIGNED for and on behalf of
LA TROBE UNIVESRITY

In the presence of:

by

THEO FARRELL

Rosemary Nanev

Full name (please print)

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Position

Position or profession of witness (please
print)

Signature

Signature