



## LEARNING COMMUNITY STRATEGY 2018-2023

### 2022 SUMMARY OF ACHIEVEMENTS

#### LEARNING IN WYNDHAM

According to recent data, the City of Wyndham continues to undergo rapid change and growth in its demographics and character, due to a high and increasing birth rate and a large influx of new residents. The Australian Bureau of Statistics recently released data from the 2021 Census, which showed that in 2021 Wyndham's population grew to 292,010, an increase of 74,889 (34.5%) people. Wyndham experienced one of the largest increases in population in Victoria, and the third largest in Australia behind Brisbane and the Gold Coast. With significant cultural diversity including the largest population of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the Greater Melbourne area, the richness of culture is woven throughout the entire community.

As a part of its important advocacy work to support learning and education in Wyndham, Wyndham City Council called on the State Government to urgently fund construction of six new schools as part of their 2022-23 State Budget funding to meet demand in Wyndham's fastest growing suburbs.

As a member of the Global Network of Learning Cities, Wyndham utilises and strives to achieve the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) "Learning City" definition as one which:

- Promotes inclusive learning from basic to higher education
- Revitalises learning in families and communities
- Facilitates learning for and in the workplaces
- Extends the use of modern learning technologies
- Enhances quality and excellence in learning, and
- Fosters a culture of learning throughout life

#### OVERVIEW OF THE LEARNING COMMUNITY STRATEGY 2018-2023

The Learning Community Strategy 2018-2023 (LCS) identifies the driving imperatives behind facilitating lifelong and life-wide learning in Wyndham. The LCS is Wyndham's driver for innovation and change in learning, and functions as a roadmap for developing an equitable, inclusive, and innovative learning community. Lifelong Learning forms the guiding principle of the Strategy, driving

social, economic, environmental, and cultural life in the community. The Strategy includes 18 key actions, which are organised according to 4 themes:

- CELEBRATING living and Learning
- ADVOCATING for equity and quality in service provision
- FACILITATING partnerships and collaboration across sectors
- INNOVATING learning and fostering new entrepreneurial spirit

## **SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

- The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a universal call to action comprising 17 interlinked global goals designed to create a better, equal, and more sustainable future for all. The SDGs were agreed up on in 2015 by the United Nations General Assembly with the goal to achieve them by 2030. Through its Learning Community Strategy 2018-2023 and the principle of lifelong learning, Wyndham City Council supports the 2030 SDG Agenda and recognises that learning underpins the achievement of many of the SDGs. Council continues to collaborate with the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) to help progress the SDG agenda through our work in lifelong learning and embeds the goals in each action to link local to global to ensure our work improves the lives of all.

## **PROGRESS IN ADDRESSING KEY ACTIONS:**

*Theme: Celebrating living and learning in Wyndham*

### **ACTION 1: Learning Festival as Wyndham's Signature learning event**

The Wyndham Learning Festival (WLF) is Wyndham's largest annual learning event, focusing on promoting and celebrating learning across the lifespan. Following the challenges of the past two years, it was a relief to return to in-person WLF events, whilst also offering the flexibility and accessibility of some online events.

Now in its seventh year, the WLF is led by Wyndham Community and Education Centre (Wyndham CEC) with support from Wyndham City Council (WCC) – both organisations share a passion for learning and recognise the far-reaching social, economic, environmental, and cultural benefits of promoting lifelong learning.

With the theme of "Building a Resilient, Sustainable Wyndham", the FREE festival offered something for all ages and interests from 1-7 September and celebrated and encouraged lifelong learning with over 70 activities from across the Arts, the World of Work & S.T.E.M, Environment and Sustainability to Health & Wellbeing, Culture & Diversity, Food & Cooking, and Families and Children! Events were as varied as a Young Scientist of Wyndham Competition; Thai Cooking; a Photography Workshop; Recycling; a Multicultural Sports Expo; Lawn Bowls; Building Resilience in Children; Gardening; Sustainability; a Farm tour; a Werribee River walk; an author talk with Morris Gleitzman, and many, many more! Each of the curated events provided a fun, engaging, and stimulating learning experience.

The Wyndham Learning Festival's signature 'WynTalk: Building a Resilient, Sustainable Wyndham: Stories from the Heart of Wyndham' was held on Saturday 3 September at Encore Events Centre,

featuring ABC presenter and The Age Journalist Jon Faine and local Wyndham panelists, Ally Eley, Chevy Lowndes, Dylan Wishart, Lisa Field and Dr Sarifa Alonto-Younes.

As there was overlap with Melton's Lifelong learning festival, Wyndham collaborated on an online event *A Healthy and Sustainable Future – YOU Can Make a Difference!* that featured in both Festivals. Social change advocate Linh Do – Director of Leaders for Global Sustainability at the University of Melbourne, and advisor to the United Nations Environment Program, led the event connecting local stories of climate and environmental issues around the world.

Linh delivered a keynote setting the global scene – what is climate change, what are the risks and issues? Then the audience heard about the Melton/Wyndham emergency services response plan. Our respective Council Sustainability Officers took questions on disposing of waste, composting, electricity, and recycling. The audience were encouraged to take small and big actions to be part of the solution and influence change.

The WLF evaluation report is available here: <https://www.wyndham.vic.gov.au/services/wyndham-learning-city/learning-city-resources>

## **ACTION 2: Transformative Education Showcase**

Wyndham Community & Education Centre's Transformative Education Showcase was held on 7 November as part of the 2022 Global Learning Festival and featured a panel of young people who are advancing education in their local communities. Each of the presenting organisations provide innovative services to school communities.

The panellists included Dylan Nguyen with his BUGBOX robotic program and promotion of STEM engagement in schools, Thara Brown from Wala Connections showcasing Aboriginal Dance and Wellbeing performing arts programs and connecting in-school and out-of-school activities, Jefferey Lai from EqualEd, a social enterprise supporting young people with tutoring support, career development, mentoring, and Mohamed Semra of Endeavour Youth Australia highlighting mentoring and training programs for young people.

The Showcase highlighted innovative practices in education and learning models and was very well received by an enthusiastic online audience.

*Theme – Advocating for Equity and Quality in Service Provision*

## **ACTION 3: Strong Advocacy to Ensure Learning for All**

### **Schools4Wyndham Campaigns**

Wyndham's schools are under increasing pressure to accommodate a growing number of students. Wyndham City's [schools4wyndham](#) campaign has been advocating for schools to be built in the areas they are needed most since 2017, calling on the State Government to provide Wyndham's growth areas with a fair share of the 100 new schools the state government committed to build by 2026.

Campaign activities (aligned with COVID-19 restrictions) for the schools4wyndham campaign during the 2021-22 year brought wider attention to the issue of a shortage of schools in Wyndham, and included:

- Coordinating an online petition call for the State Government to fund additional schools in Wyndham. The petition, signed by more than 600 residents, was promoted at a series of popup session at local shopping centres and the Children's picnic at Werribee Mansion.
- Growing community support for the campaign online through a regular presence on Facebook, with campaign videos highlighting the needs of Wyndham's growing suburbs and campaign updates from the Mayor.
- Advocating to local MPs for the construction of schools and school upgrades as part of the State Government's COVID-19 economic stimulus package.
- Ongoing discussions with the Victorian School Building Authority on the State Government's plans and presentations of Wyndham's analysis of the school needs of our community, including plans for specialist schools and mainstream schools.
- Pre-budget briefings to local MPs on Wyndham's most urgently needed schools in their electorates.
- Advocacy to ensure that planned non-government school sites are used for schools and not other purposes, including correspondence with the former Victorian Education Minister, James Merlino, the former Planning Minister, Richard Wynne, and local MPs.
- Updates on the campaign website on what schools Wyndham needs and when, promoted to local online audiences through Google Ads.
- Email updates to campaign subscribers recruited from the campaign website.
- An online survey of residents' concerns regarding school availability.
- Advertisements at Village Cinema Werribee providing campaign exposure around Wyndham.

In the 2022/23 State Budget the Victorian Government committed to building six new schools in Wyndham. These include:

- Black Forest East Primary School (Interim Name), opening in 2024
- Tarneit North Primary School (Interim Name), opening in 2024
- Truganina North Primary School (Interim Name), opening in 2024
- Riverdale Secondary School (Interim Name), opening in 2024
- Lollypop Creek Secondary School (Interim Name), opening in 2024
- Lollypop Creek Specialist School (Interim Name), opening in 2024

The budget also allocated funding for an additional stage at Truganina North Secondary School (Interim Name), land acquisition for Riverdale North Primary School (interim name) and a \$14.7m upgrade at Warringa Park School.

#### **State election:**

- As candidates announced their candidacy for the November state election, Council shared our advocacy priorities with each in the form of an email or a face-to-face meeting. A key priority was investment in schools to support the fast-growing community. Many commitments on education were made, with the re-elected Andrews Government having committed funding for planning for new schools including:
  - P-9 in Point Cook
  - A specialist school in Point Cook
  - Tarneit Plains Primary School

- Riverdale North Primary School
- And funding for an upgrade of Manorvale Primary School.

### *Theme - Facilitating Partnerships and Collaboration*

## **ACTION 4: Education Roundtable**

On 28 July 2022, the Learning Community Team delivered the 2022 Wyndham Education Roundtable. Facilitated by the team from Management Governance Australia, an interesting consultation and discussion unfolded with the goal of updating each other on outcomes from the 2021 Roundtable Action Plan and re-setting collaborative plans for the coming year. The attendee list included over 35 dynamic education and learning leaders from across Wyndham. With a nod to the Education Roundtable experience of 2021, the 2022 Roundtable was moved online, due to last minute advice from the Chief Health Officer. The team worked hard to adjust the event to remain engaging and interactive, and even gained some registrations with the switch to the online format. By incorporating MURAL as a tool, the participants were able to be fully involved; virtual breakout rooms enabled the educators and community leaders to exchange ideas about their vision for the future of learning in the municipality, in the context of our wider Education and Learning Strategy focused on supporting the community to be lifetime learners.

Updates on outcomes from the 2021 Action Plan included:

- 1.1 Walk Through Education – John Sheen, Director of Education, WCEC
- 1.2 Future Health Skills – David Ball, Head of Centre, Health & Community Services, The Gordon
- 1.4 Information sharing strategy – Karen Thomson, Middle Years Working Group, WCC
- 2.1 Access to learning and employment for people with disability – Wendy Campbell, General Manager, Education and Skills Training, Victoria University.

## **ACTION 5: Principal's Breakfast**

The Principal's Breakfast reaffirms Council's commitment to support and develop collaborative partnerships with Wyndham principals and all local schools. Council recognises the importance of a collaborative approach that builds partnerships that will help to deliver outcomes for all in our community. The intention of the Breakfast was to strengthen our partnerships through our willingness to listen, collaborate and work together to promote learning and education in Wyndham.

Over 60 Principals and Assistant Principals gathered on 26 October at the Civic Centre to enjoy a delicious breakfast and networking opportunity. Councillors and Council staff were able to network with the Principals before presentations from various Council units were delivered on a range of key programs and services that Council offers that intersect directly with schools and communities, including Libraries and Learning; Youth Services; Environment; Kindergartens; Service Planning, Partnering and Reform; Service Development & Strategy; Inclusion & Participation; and Social & Economic Inclusion. Feedback received directly from the Wyndham Principal's Network Chair indicated that the group were very pleased with the event and gained useful insights into the range of Council programs.

## **ACTION 7: Inclusion and Equity**

The Wyndham Integrated Learning Group (WILG2), co-chaired by Council and Deakin's National Disability Coordinator Officer, met bi-monthly in 2022, and featured a different guest speaker to enhance the knowledge of members around inclusion and learning for Wyndham.

With the goal of enhancing inclusion and equity in learning for People with Disability aged 15-30 in Wyndham, WILG2 comprises 15 community and Council leaders from learning sectors, local government, disability action groups and higher education. The group utilises evidence-based approaches to support equitable pathways and outcomes for place-based learning needs for the target cohort in Wyndham, with ambitious goals including:

- Supporting the enhancement of learning providers' organisational culture, structures, systems, processes and practices to ensure they are designing learning for People with Disability from the target age cohort
- Advocating for learning recruitment and promotion which targets People with Disability
- Advocating that choice and control drives learning opportunities for 15-30-year-olds with disability in Wyndham
- Supporting learning providers in Wyndham to continuously adjust teaching and learning strategies to support learning for People with Disability

In 2022 over 20 VET stakeholders were supported to develop their equitable learning, pathways and outcomes for students with disability. WILG delivered on a range of topics to improve the culture, structures, processes and practices to ensure they are designing and delivering learning for people with disability across Wyndham, one of the fastest growing LGA's in Victoria.

Industry experts and representatives from various organisations were invited to speak on topics identified by the VET stakeholders as an area of interest or required learning, some of these sessions included were:

- Monash University who shared insights on the Universal Design for Learning (UDL)
- Deakin University who gave useful advice on developing 'Accessible Documents'
- Special Broadcasting Services (SBS) spoke on graduate employment broadly, including graduate employment opportunities at SBS
- Richmond Football Club, invited Chris Henderson, captain of the Richmond Tigers Wheelchair Football team on his experiences living with MS and his need for self-advocacy
- Wyndham Libraries on making libraries more accessible
- David Tran (WILG co-chair) delivered a session on reasonable adjustments

The Learning Community Unit were invited to take part in the annual Mock Job Interview Program with Warringa Park Specialist School in July. This program provides secondary school students with the experience of being interviewed for an employment opportunity, in a safe environment with support and encouragement. During the mock interview, students are supported to practice and build interview techniques using role play with typical interview questions and scenarios. Students gain confidence to answer questions, connection with an adult role model, engagement with career pathways and awareness of body language. These events are fun and fulfilling for both students and interviewers and are a valuable step in the student's career education.

## **ACTION 9: Aboriginal Culture Driving New Ways to Learn**

Some key highlights from across Council units include:

- Sharing of resources and links with Education networks to support commitments to embedding Aboriginal perspectives across all aspects of learning, including a rich array of materials and opportunities for online professional development such as the 'Making Visible: Aboriginal perspectives in the Victorian Curriculum F-10' from the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Inc (VAEAI).
- National Reconciliation Week (27 May to 3 June) theme this year was 'Be Brave. Make Change' challenging us to tackle the unfinished business of reconciliation. A number of events were organised across Wyndham – both community-facing events and events for staff. Many staff attended the Yarning Circle event held at the Civic Centre, featuring three members of Wyndham's Reconciliation Advisory Committee who generously shared their thoughts on reconciliation and answered questions from the audience.
- Koling wada-ngal, in partnership with Council Youth Services, invited young people, their families and allies to a community healing event held on 17 November at the Wunggurrwil Dhurrung Community Centre. The evening promoted collective healing for community in the West, providing a space for our youth and families to share their voices and reflect on the year, including the significant amount of loss the First Nations community has experienced in 2022.
- Council is advancing the journey towards Reconciliation as work progresses on our second Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) 2023 – 2025, with Reconciliation Australia recently granting conditional endorsement. The RAP draft will now be prepared for public exhibition, followed by formal endorsement from Reconciliation Australia and adoption in May 2023.

Work commenced on the RAP in 2021 with the establishment of the Wyndham Reconciliation Advisory Committee (WRAC). WRAC membership consists of nine First Nations community members and three non-Indigenous community members who meet monthly. The WRAC has been the platform for engagement between First Nations and non-Indigenous communities with Council across a broad range of issues and in setting a new Reconciliation vision for the 2023-2025 RAP.

The RAP will provide Council with a framework to understand and achieve our vision for Reconciliation with First Nations People. It is a plan that outlines the specific actions that Council will take, over the next 2 years, to not only build relationships, respect, and opportunities with and for First Nations People but also listen to the truth.

Council's 2023-2025 RAP is one of very few in Victoria that has the inclusion of a Truth Telling Pillar. Reconciliation Australia does not include the Truth Telling pillar in their framework and guidelines. In the current climate with Victoria leading the way with a treaty, Council advocated for this important presence in its next RAP.



As a part of the Global Learning Festival in November 2022, WYNTalk keynote speaker Marlee Silva delivered an online webinar – “WYNTalk: Acknowledge, Respect and Value Aboriginal Culture and Identity – Pathway to Reconciliation”.

Able MC'd by John Sheen from Wyndham Community and Education Centre, the WYNTalk provided a platform for Marlee to guide the audience to foster learning environments that acknowledge, respect and value Aboriginal Culture and Identity.

With 181 registrations and over 70 attendees from across Australia and the globe on the night, the audience were engaged, informed, moved, and asked many questions which were graciously answered by Marlee. As an author, radio presenter and host of her own podcast, Marlee spoke from the heart, sharing her experiences growing up in Australia and generously sharing her ideas on how we can all be better allies to Aboriginal people. She implored us to use this WYNTalk conversation to pause, reflect and make a commitment to learning, growing, and being a changemaker for a better future for us all. On a positive note, Marlee sees many exciting, positive things happening in the Aboriginal community every day and into the future.

Audience comments included

*“Marlee thank you for taking up the responsibility to work with so many members of the community to transform the conversation”; and*

*“Thank you for sharing this hard stuff with us; I'm sure it will further help us to have understanding and insight”.*

A recording of the presentation can be accessed here:

<https://www.wyndham.vic.gov.au/services/wyndham-learning-city/learning-city-resources>.

***Theme Four: Innovating learning and fostering new entrepreneurial spirit through integration with, and promotion of, Wyndham's Smart City Agenda***

## **ACTION 10: Developing Local Leaders in Local Communities**

Under the theme ‘Resilient Wyndham, Stronger Together’ the 2022 Wyndham Building Blocks program sought to mobilise and support emerging community leaders to learn, share and work together in creating a Wyndham that is better prepared to respond to future shocks and stresses and emerge stronger. Delivered over fifteen weeks, the program had an enrolment of 20 local residents, fifteen of whom successfully completed the program. Three project groups implemented a project each:

- **Trivia Night for Zero Waste** - Family oriented, fun filled trivia event involving residents from Truganina and Tarneit, focussed on raising awareness of waste reduction, recycling and myth busting.
- **Backyard Gardening** - to encourage the local community to think and act on food sustainability and backyard gardening including skill building and growing community networks.
- **Weaving Community Together** - An event to build positive community connection and harness the richness of cultural traditions and wisdom in Wyndham that contribute to collective wellbeing and build resilience with compassion.



With an average community attendance of 40 people at each, the successful implementation of these group projects is a demonstration of community leadership skills in practice and strengthened connections within the participant group and with their local communities.

Planning is now underway for a Reconciliation themed community leadership program, due to launch in early 2023.

## **ACTION 11: Alumni as Leadership Mentors**

Over the past year the Community Strengthening Unit has continued engaging with building blocks alumnae to participate in various initiatives through a monthly alumnae newsletter, volunteering in community projects, encouraging involvement in committees as well as sharing their community leadership journeys with building blocks participants and at citizenship ceremonies.

- Targeted learning opportunities were offered to Building Blocks alumnae through the Building Blocks Masterclass series. The topics covered included Diversity and Inclusion, Workshop Facilitation, Communication for Collective Action, Building Effective Partnerships, Enhancing Leadership Awareness and Wellbeing, and Advocacy. In addition, Wyndham CEC delivered an online mentoring workshop to a group of Building Block alumni members in November. The workshop included an overview of mentoring key concepts, as well as presentations from organisations providing leadership and mentoring programs in Wyndham, including Profound Leadership, Red Cross, Equal Ed and the Whitelion Breakthrough Mentoring program. While the masterclasses were offered online, face to face and in hybrid modes, participation in these training offerings was significantly affected due to the pandemic and the post lockdown environment and uncertainty.
- Wyndham CEC, in partnership with local manufacturing company Vertech Hume, is currently piloting a mentor program focussing on upskilling workers from refugee backgrounds to transition into leadership roles. The pilot is an element of a Capstone Project conceived by participants undertaking the Gordon Institute's Executive Leadership program, that is supported by Wyndham City. Based on the success of the pilot so far, Wyndham CEC is developing an upskilling mentoring model that can be offered to other employers in Wyndham, who are also seeking to upskills workers from refugee backgrounds. .

## **ACTION 12: Engaging, Participating and Leading Globally**

Throughout 2022 Wyndham has continued its global engagement and participation. The following is a snapshot of some of Wyndham's global contributions:

The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) Libraries interviewed Wyndham's Learning Community unit and Wollongong City Council's Learning City unit about their roles in the Global Learning Festival and its work driving lifelong learning. This featured in the IFLA Southeast Asia Working Group webinar on Southeast Asian Libraries work on the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in June. The webinar focused on the best practices by Southeast Asian libraries and librarians to support the UN SDGs.

A representative from Wyndham continues to hold a place on the executive of the Australian Learning Communities Network (ALCN), chairing this important network and offering secretariat

support enabling the ALCN to continue to offer proactive collegiate support and resources to learning cities and communities across Australia.

In May the Australian Learning Cities Networks *Global to Local - Local to Global* highly engaging and well-received webinar provided the opportunity for Australian Learning Cities to come together for the first time to discuss how their cities and communities address the big issues facing communities around the world. Issues addressed included climate crisis, public health challenges, rapid technological change, changing world of work, inequality, gender equality. Discussions involved solutions tackled at a local level through a commitment to lifelong learning.

The opening address was given by David Atchoarena, Director of the UNESCO Institute of Lifelong Learning, who spoke about why learning cities are important; reflected on learning city achievements and outcomes which were shared at the UNESCO 5<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Learning Cities (held in 2021 in Korea) and why a commitment to lifelong learning principles is so important, particularly at this time.

Wyndham Learning Community unit's keynote speaker provided the audience with the background to Australian Learning Cities and the context for the panel discussion and showcased Wyndham's own lifelong learning journey to becoming a learning city. The audience followed Wyndham's journey through establishing a Learning Community Strategy in 2006 to being accepted as a member of the UNSECO's Global Network of Learning Cities in 2019 and further recognized in 2021 when Wyndham was the proud recipient of a UNESCO GNLC Learning Cities award and the first Australian City to be inducted into Asia Pacific Learning Cities' Hall of Fame.

The CEO of Adult Learning Australia then moderated a panel of speakers representing Canning City Council (WA), Circular Head Council (TAS), Melton City Council (VIC), Wollongong City Council (NSW). The panel provided the audience with many inspirational examples of a broad range of work going on - programs, learning opportunities, outreaching into the community - addressing some of the challenges that are being faced by communities. Cities gave examples of how they are listening to their communities, hearing what their priorities are, and collaborating to address these challenges.

A further collaboration between Wyndham & ALCN was the hosting of the *Evaluation of Learning Cities and Regions - Case studies from Northern Ireland and Australia* webinar in November, one of the key Global Learning Festival events. Evaluation plays an important role in learning cities and regions, indicating if we are achieving the intended outcomes of our lifelong learning strategies and initiatives and helping us to communicate the impact of our work to stakeholders. This event featured case studies from two learning city practitioners from the City of Canning in Western Australia and Derry & Strabane in Northern Ireland, showcasing approaches to evaluation at program and strategic levels in both urban and rural contexts.

The Learning for Earning Festival returned for its second year in May 2022. This is a unique cross council collaboration between six councils from Western and Northern Melbourne that form the LearnWest network. Members of LearnWest work together to support their various communities in learning and earning to improve outcomes across the north and west. Councils involved were Wyndham City Council, Melton City Council, Brimbank City Council, Hobson's Bay City Council, Maribyrnong City Council and Darebin City Council. This model of collaboration amongst Councils has meant a greater collective impact amongst our communities.

The Learning for Earning Festival was designed to provide participants with the knowledge and skills they need to upskill and look at different pathways to employment and to gain knowledge about starting or changing careers, learning about leading and emerging industries and discover opportunities for the future, through the three key flagship online forums:

**Opportunities in the West:** providing an insight into employment opportunities for local communities; **Meet the Major Employers in the West:** featuring a range of major employers who shared their current and varied vacancies and what they look for in candidates, and providing insightful and timely commentary on current vacancies, career paths, and recruitment tips; and **Want to Work in Local Government?:** highlighting the varied employment experiences of representatives of Wyndham, Hobson's Bay, Melton, and Brimbank Councils, including current vacancies in each of the Council areas, gender equity in recruitment, flexible working arrangements, what recruiters look for in applicants, transferable skills, and tips on searching and applying for vacancies.

The three online forums were scaffolded by a series of live events held in each Council's library featuring mock interview workshops; resume help; an introduction to online job searching; and social media workshops. All events were free.

The [PASCAL International Observatory](#), a global alliance of researchers, policy analysts, decision makers and locally engaged practitioners from government, higher education, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and the private sector, hosted their 16<sup>th</sup> Conference in Tampere, Finland via a blended mode of face to face and virtual registration.

The main theme of the conference **Learning and Crises: Future-proofing City Responses** highlighted responses made by cities and regions, and their citizens, in their path to recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. Conference presentations explored the sorts of transformations that cities and regions have made themselves to adapt to the pandemic with a particular focus on education and lifelong learning, social support, health services and environmental services.

Wyndham's Learning Community unit, along with a representative from Wollongong City Council's Learning City unit, co-presented a paper entitled *"Libraries and Learning Cities: Exploring varying roles of engagement across the Globe"*. The presentation included an exploration of the varying roles that libraries play in learning regions, cities, communities, and towns; and showcased the ways in which public libraries met the learning needs of residents during the COVID-19 pandemic and are now futureproofing them for future crises through lifelong learning. Case studies from Wyndham; Brimbank; Dunedin, New Zealand; Espoo, Finland; and Wollongong were presented highlighting the different roles libraries have played in the learning community space.

The Global Learning Festival (GLF) co-hosted by Wyndham City Council and Melton City Council, together with members of UNESCO learning cities and learning communities across the globe took place 6-9 November. In its third year, the GLF continues to be a powerful opportunity to promote lifelong learning to a global audience. The GLF brings the world to Wyndham and takes Wyndham to the world. It is a central place for learners to come together to share their knowledge, skills, culture and traditions. Featuring 47 free online events, there was something for everyone in the GLF program, to suit all ages and interests and all time zones. Wyndham's Learning Community unit was proud to host one of our annual WYNtalks as our contribution to the GLF. The 'WynTalk: Acknowledge, Respect and Value Aboriginal Culture and Identity – Pathway to Reconciliation with

Marlee Silva' provided the audience a chance to be part of the conversation about Reconciliation; to hear young Aboriginal woman Marlee Silva, author, podcaster and social media activist champion indigenous voices through her strength-based storytelling.

Partnerships and collaborations in the 2022 GLF included the PASCAL International Observatory, the Australian Learning Communities Network (ALCN), Adult Learning Australia, UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities, WISE Qatar Foundation and RMIT University. Each year we are privileged to have new and returning organisations and learning cities from around the world offer their time and expertise in hosting online events during the Festival. We were honoured to include 51 organisations and cities in 2022. Events registered from 15 countries including Australia, the USA, the U.K, Northern Ireland, China, Kenya, Greece, Palestine, the Netherlands, Turkey, Nigeria, Laos, Canada, Taiwan, and Thailand. Popular themes included 21st Century Education; Reconciliation; Climate Change; Sustainability; Building and Strengthening Learning Cities; Evaluating Learning Cities; Active Citizenship; Peace- and Community-building; Refugee and Migrant stories of resilience; Indigenous Astronomy; Self Care; and Cultural and Recreational pursuits including local history, baking, theatre, craft, cycling and photography. Highlights include a session on Running a Lifelong Learning Festival delivered by the Irish Network of Learning Cities; a Transformative Education Showcase run by Wyndham Community & Education Centre; and a session on Inclusion and Innovation in Flexible Learning in and for the Workplace co-hosted by the Australian Learning Communities Network and Adult Learning Australia. Many of the GLF events were recorded and will be uploaded onto the GLF website over time.

The Wyndham Learning Community unit were invited to present at the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities International Webinar "2022 UNESCO GNLC Activities" in December. Network member city of Goyang in the Republic of Korea, hosted this international webinar, bringing the network together to reflect on major international developments in lifelong learning in relation to the city level, as well as to look back on the network's key milestones in 2022 and expected directions for 2023. Raul Valdes Coteria (UNESCO Institute for Lifelong) and Dong Hwan Lee, (Mayor of Goyang) delivered the welcome addresses, followed by an overview of GNLC trends and strategies. Wyndham's presentation on best practices drawn from case studies and projects supporting the Learning Community Strategy was joined by contributions from other members of the UNESCO GNLC including Marrakech (Morocco) and Larissa (Greece).

### **ACTION 13: WynTalks**

WYNtalk 1: *"Building a Resilient, Sustainable Wyndham – Stories from the Heart of Wyndham"*

Wyndham Learning Festival's signature event WYNtalk *"Building a Resilient, Sustainable Wyndham – Stories from the Heart of Wyndham"* featured ABC presenter and The Age Journalist Jon Faine and local Wyndham panellists, Ally Eley, Chevy Lowndes, Dylan Wishart, Lisa Field and Dr Sarifa Alonto-Younes. The panel were insightful, informative, and inspiring. Ally Eley, and her guitarist Steve, gave an entertaining performance featuring some of Ally's original songs; a mini sustainable expo of local stall holders shared their ideas and information with the attendees; and audience members watched a screening of "Regenerating Australia", the latest film from Damon Gameau, director of "2040" and "That Sugar Film". Held at the Encore Events Centre, attendees were engaged, informed, moved, and showed displays of spontaneous applause throughout the panellists talk. There were even a few tears amongst the audience.

## WYNTalk 2: *“Acknowledge, Respect and Value Aboriginal Culture and Identity – Pathway to Reconciliation”*

As Wyndham’s signature contribution to the Global Learning Festival, WYNTalk keynote speaker, author, radio presenter and host of her own podcast, Marlee Silva spoke from the heart, sharing her experiences growing up in Australia and generously sharing her ideas on how we can all be better allies to Aboriginal people. She implored us to use this WYNTalk conversation to pause, reflect and make a commitment to learning, growing, and being a changemaker for a better future for us all. On a positive note, Marlee sees many exciting, positive things happening in the Aboriginal community every day and into the future.

A recording of the WYNTalks can be accessed here:

<https://www.wyndham.vic.gov.au/services/wyndham-learning-city/learning-city-resources>

## **Action 14: Enabling Innovation & Entrepreneurship**

Out of the initiatives and forums delivered under this action, including WYNNovation; Innovate to Excelerate and the Annual Training Calendar, a highlight was the Barry Jones Oration, delivered by none other than the Hon. Dr. Barry Jones AC, in November. After a two-year hiatus due to COVID, Wyndham business leaders came together at The Refectory Werribee Park for another inspiring and thought-provoking Oration intended to stimulate critical and innovative thinking among Wyndham Leaders.

## **Action 15: Future Space**

Located within the East Werribee Employment Precinct at 600 Sneydes Road, SPARK has been established as a collaborative space to support and mentor digital, tech start-ups and entrepreneurs, to scale up their concepts and products, to commercialisation. SPARK, an integral part of Wyndham City’s Smart City Strategy, focuses on developing an innovative and entrepreneurial based ecosystem within, strengthening of the knowledge economy, and increasing employment in the region.

## **Action 16: Community “Hackathons”**

After trialling traditional “Hackathons” with limited community interest, this Action has been modified to incorporate the Annual Coding Champs Competition held between August – October. Regular coding workshops were held across Tarneit and Point Cook libraries, (including one as part of the Wyndham Learning Festival: *Getting Started with Scratch*). The competition culminates in the annual Wyndham Coding Champs Awards Night at Point Cook Library, inviting all participants and family members to come along and celebrate coding and gaming in all formats, with board games set up to play on the night as well as the OSMO’s, PS5 and the Nintendo switch. Shortlisted participants were invited to demonstrate their project on the big screen and to talk about their project. Judges and the audience were impressed to see and hear how these young people came up with their ideas and worked through some difficulties to get their end result. All the impressive entries can be seen at Smart Studio <https://scratch.mit.edu/studios/32157689>.

## Action 17: Creative Learning Programs

During the September school holidays, Wyndham Libraries partnered with the Arts, Culture & Events team to deliver a series of special Dancing Story Workshops with the Australian Ballet – The Story of Pomi & Gobba. Eighty-nine preschool and early primary aged children attended across the six free sessions held at Manor Lakes and Werribee Libraries. The children and parents were delighted to learn through dance.

Further highlights of the Arts & Culture team's contribution to the communities learning options and opportunities include:

- Public talks, workshops, and programs to support engagement and learning in the Wyndham Art Collection as well as the visual art program associated with the Wyndham Art Gallery. This included Curator Talks, Artist in Conversations and facilitated workshops to complement the 6 exhibitions across the year. The program attracts and engages diverse community members through centring relevant themes, stories, and unique cultural and diaspora experiences.
- Digital content to meet access needs of community to connect with arts learning. This included the launch of the Go Deeper podcast series as well as continuing to provide video walk throughs of the exhibitions presented at the Wyndham Art Gallery.
- Annual activity of programs included targeted participation and workshop programs in four community centres and hubs. This partnership has been able to foster connection to arts program and skills while drawing new audiences to access services provided by community centres across emerging communities of Wyndham. This has included three residency programs and over sixty in-person workshops in 2022.
- Mentoring and skills building for our local creative community, including professional development workshops and skills building sessions held throughout the year. Highlights include the launch of a new Digital Art workshops series and delivery of a partnership program with Melbourne Fringe and Science Gallery Melbourne to support a cohort of local artists to be mentored by Melbourne Science Gallery curators to produce a series of new artworks.

## Action 18: Civics Learning and Social Cohesion

Under the umbrella of the Wyndham Citizens' Academy, Wyndham CEC continued to deliver a range of civics learning programs in 2022:

- Walk through Education – the partnership with Wyndham Park Primary School continued throughout 2022 providing an opportunity for parents from refugee backgrounds to gain a greater understanding of the Australian education system. A 20-minute documentary, to be launched in 2023, is currently in production and will include VU, the Gordon, Wyndham Park Community Centre and Early Years providers.
- Walk through Health – in partnership with Werribee Mercy Hospital, delivered two men's programs and two women's programs. A 20-minute documentary is currently in production and will be launched in 2023.
- Walk through Justice – a new iteration of the program has been funded by Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (via the Opportunity Wyndham Network) as a pre-employment program for Youth Justice roles at the new Cherry Creek Youth Justice Centre. Delivery of this program will begin in 2023.



Further to these, Wyndham CEC also led additional civics and social cohesion initiatives :

- Living & Working in Australia – across 2022, Wyndham CEC delivered the Living & Working in Australia short course to 80 community members seeking Australian citizenship. The program included support from settlement case workers with clients from both MiCare and Wyndham CEC.
- Wyndham Anti-racism Support Network (WASN) – significant background work has been undertaken in 2022 to refine the WASN model in preparation for its roll out in 2023. Members of the network include MiCare, WEstjustice, Activate Youth and Wyndham City. In addition, Wyndham CEC also supported a range of anti-racism events delivered across the city.

## LOOKING FORWARD

As Wyndham emerges from several years of uncertainty due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and we move into 2023, the work of the Learning Community Strategy will be adaptive, sustainable, and responsive to the learning needs of Wyndham where lifelong and life wide learning drive equity, inclusion, and a healthy and safe environment for all.

We look forward to the opportunity to reflect on all that we have achieved under our current Learning Community Strategy 2018-2023, which will inform the development of the next Learning Community Strategy 2024-2029. We will be conducting a series of community consultations to ensure we include the priorities for learning of the community. Please contact us if you would like to be part of this process or be kept up to date [wynlearn@wyndham.vic.gov.au](mailto:wynlearn@wyndham.vic.gov.au).

## FURTHER INFORMATION AND CONTACT

For more information about the Learning Community Strategy, or to connect with our network, please contact:

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