



2024 – 2029

# Learning Community

## Strategy Update 1 – 2024







## Acknowledgement of Country

Wyndham recognises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Custodians of the lands on which Australia was founded. We acknowledge the Bunurong and Wadawurrung people as the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which Wyndham is being built. We pay respect to their Ancestors and Elders who always have, and always will, care for Country and community, today and for future generations. We acknowledge the custodians of the land on which we work and live, and where learning takes place across Australia and globally. We pay respect to their Elders and the diversity of Aboriginal communities past, present, and future, and the richness our Aboriginal community members bring to Wyndham and their learning that has been passed across generations for thousands of years.

## Message from the Wyndham Mayor

As Wyndham City's Mayor, I am proud to be reporting on the first Update of the Learning Community Strategy 2024-2029 and thrilled with the progress and important learning achievements throughout 2024.

The Learning Community Strategy provides a strategic framework to support Council's vision to deliver on Wyndham's learning goals and enable equal community access to lifelong and life-wide learning opportunities.

The strategy identifies four areas of focus for strengthening learning in Wyndham: First Nations First, Learning to Learn and Foundation Skills, Employability, Work Skills and Building Careers, and Leadership and New Learning.

Wyndham libraries play a critical role in supporting our learning goals, delivering a wide range of initiatives, activities and events for all ages and stages. Patronage and borrowings, including hard copy and e-books, has increased.

Council's Learning Community unit hosted the 2024 Education Roundtable, which brought together 35 enthusiastic education stakeholders. It provided the opportunity to harness the power of collective knowledge and experience, while supporting Council's commitment to learning and education.

Council's Community Centres also offer a large number of lifelong learning opportunities with programs and events for all ages.

Council prioritises collaborative partnerships and works with all Wyndham schools and their principals, and the Education Roundtable delivered positive outcomes for our community.

Aligning with our commitment to First Nations people, WynTalk Cultural Yarn with Uncle Pakana, Journey to Reconciliation: Finding Our Voice, provided insight and thoughtful discussion and encouraged deep conversations about Aboriginal culture and identity.

The theme for this year's annual Wyndham Learning Festival – Empowering Communities Through Lifelong Learning, featured more than 90 unique learning events. The signature event, WynTalk, featured Dr Karl and his Eco-Expedition into Sustainable Science and Climate. This informative and interesting session provided participants with practical tips on making sustainable choices in daily life. The Festival, which will celebrate its 10th year in 2025, aims to celebrate learning and promote a lifelong love of learning at all life stages. It also recognises the importance of far-reaching social, economic, environmental, and cultural benefits of lifelong learning.

Wyndham City, together with our community, is looking forward to a positive learning future.

*Cr Mia Shaw*

Wyndham City Mayor





# Overview of the Learning Community Strategy 2024-2029

The purpose of the Learning Community Strategy is to provide a strategic and integrated framework for the creation of a community of lifelong learning. It is used as the basis for Council to lead, advocate, influence, facilitate, deliver, innovate, and celebrate Wyndham's learning goals. It clearly defines Council's role in improving learning outcomes.

As a UNESCO Learning City, Wyndham seeks to enhance individual empowerment and social inclusion whilst promoting economic development, cultural safety and prosperity and environmental sustainability. Its Learning Community Strategy 2024 – 2029 (LCS) focuses, through a variety of learning opportunities and approaches, on First Nations cultural awareness, inclusion, lifelong and life-wide learning, and sustainability for people of all ages, including early years, children and teens, adults, and older people, through a variety of learning opportunities and approaches.

The LCS identifies four foundational areas of focus, or "pillars," for strengthening learning in Wyndham. These pillars are:

- **First Nations 1st** - embedding First Nations knowledge, culture, and language into learning across life.
- **Learning to Learn and Foundation Skills** - strengthening language, literacy, numeracy, and digital literacy skills.
- **Employability, Work Skills, and Building Careers** - support the development of employability and career pathways.
- **Leadership and New Learning** - building community leadership through social and action learning, strengthening workforce skills and capability of local businesses, exploring new digital technologies in education, and facilitating civics learning.

Underpinning the pillars is consideration of health, including mental health, and wellbeing impacts, environmental sustainability and climate change, availability of culturally safe spaces and places for learning, deepening the reach of the Strategy in Wyndham's communities, integrating actions across Council, and measuring engagement and impact.

This Community Update is the first update of the new Learning Community Strategy 2024-2029 which was endorsed at the April 2024 Council Meeting.

The Strategy identifies four areas of focus or 'pillars' for strengthening learning in Wyndham, being:



# 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. Data obtained from *.idcommunity demographic resources* showed that in 2024 Wyndham's population grew to over 325,000 and is predicted to reach over 500,000 by 2040. Wyndham has seen one of the most significant population increases in both the state and the nation. It boasts a vibrant cultural diversity, featuring the largest community of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the Greater Melbourne area, enriching the fabric of the entire community.

This population surge is driven by several factors, including higher net overseas migration, increased fertility rates, and the availability of affordable family housing. However, this rapid growth presents various challenges for the environment, residents, infrastructure, and resources.

As a member of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) Global Network of Learning Cities, Wyndham utilises and strives to achieve UNESCO's "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.







# 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 upon in 2015 by the United Nations General Assembly with the goal to achieve them by 2030. Through the Learning Community Strategy 2024-2029 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.



**unesco**

Member  
Global Network of  
Learning Cities

<b>1</b> NO POVERTY 	<b>2</b> ZERO HUNGER 	<b>3</b> GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING 	<b>4</b> QUALITY EDUCATION 	<b>5</b> GENDER EQUALITY 	<b>6</b> CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION 
<b>7</b> AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY 	<b>8</b> DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH 	<b>9</b> INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE 	<b>10</b> REDUCED INEQUALITIES 	<b>11</b> SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES 	<b>12</b> RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION 
<b>13</b> CLIMATE ACTION 	<b>14</b> LIFE BELOW WATER 	<b>15</b> LIFE ON LAND 	<b>16</b> PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS 	<b>17</b> PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS 	

# PROGRESS IN ADDRESSING KEY ACTIONS:

## Pillar 1: First Nations 1st

1

**First Nations 1st**

### Action 1.01: Engage with WRAC to inform the rollout of the Learning Community Action Plan

The establishment of the Wyndham Reconciliation Advisory Committee (WRAC), consisting of nine First Nations community members and three non-Indigenous community members has provided 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 Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). The RAP provides Council with a framework to understand and achieve our vision for Reconciliation with First Nations People. As a learning community, there is a responsibility for all to contribute to reconciliation through our own sphere of influence, through thoughtful engagement, innovation and codesign to strongly show our commitment to implementing our RAP to bring about long-term systemic change.

The intention of this action was to strengthen collaboration with the WRAC, providing the Committee with opportunities to shape and guide the implementation of the Learning Community Action Plan. Through ongoing engagement, the WRAC will play a key role in integrating First Nations perspectives and promoting cultural awareness within the community's learning initiatives.

This engagement included the sharing of a short report with the WRAC co-chairs in September 2024, outlining how the WRAC can support the implementation of the Strategy's Action Plan, including suggestions of conducting cultural assessments with Traditional Owner Corporations, and promoting First Nations cultural awareness through events such as WynTalks and the Principal's Breakfast. A summary of Learning Community First Nations activities was also presented to the WRAC as part of the final RAP Management Group meeting.

Engaging with the WRAC over the lifetime of the Strategy is key to ensuring the Learning Community Action Plan reflects reconciliation and cultural awareness, strengthening connections with the First Nations community and supporting the Strategy's goals.





### Action 1.02: Explore the potential for a cultural values assessment of Wyndham with a focus on learning



This action was initiated by exploring options to conduct a comprehensive assessment of First Nations cultural values within the Wyndham area, with a focus on learning. The initial step, informed through close communication between Council's Learning Community and First Nations Units, involved preliminary discussions with each Traditional Owner (TO) group to introduce the project and discuss options.

Formal requests were submitted to both the Wadawurrung and Bunurong Traditional Owner groups to discuss the proposed cultural values assessment and seek their input and advice on what might be feasible. A formal meeting took place with the Bunurong Land Council in November, with discussions on a possible Cultural Learning Resource Kit initiated. A meeting with the Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Corporation is anticipated to take place in 2025.

Separately, staff from Council's Environment team have a Cultural Values Assessment in progress, informing their plans for an Interpretive trail along the Werribee River. Plans include two nodes of Traditional Owner information and knowledge sharing, including information sharing on rehabilitating the river and on the bird habitat along the river.

### Action 1.03: Explore First Nations training for all WCC staff including WCC leaders



The First Nations team invited all staff to broaden their skills and knowledge to deliver services in a culturally informed way by taking part in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Awareness Training sessions, delivered by Jillian West, a local Indigenous Mentor and Consultant, in 2024.

A total of eight training sessions involving 109 staff served to strengthen staff capacity to identify and engage effectively with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to foster a more inclusive workplace culture and interaction with the community, where the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are understood and respected.

The First Nations unit piloted a Deadly Induction Program for First Nations identified employees in February, engaging with current Wyndham staff members of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander backgrounds. The pilot aimed to develop a targeted induction program that complements the current organisational induction and included a strong focus on cultural safety, education, acknowledgement and connecting with other First Nations staff members.

A second Deadly Induction Program for First Nations identified employees of Wyndham City Council was run in March. The program included a welcome to country and smoking ceremony provided by Bunurong Land Council traditional owners, Uncle Shane Clark, and Uncle Mark Brown, who also shared the importance, significance and history of a smoking ceremony, and the plants used. First Nations employees were given the opportunity to speak about where they come from and their own personal history.

The Deadly Induction included a connection with culture Wyndham tour with Dr Heather Threadgold who guided the group through historical locations in Wyndham. Guest speakers in the program included Council's CEO, Mayor and Directors and other key personnel.

The Deadly Induction provides new employees the chance to network, gain knowledge about Council and how it works, training and the chance to get to know each other and become comfortable with colleagues in a culturally safe environment and the program will now be incorporated as a regular feature of Council inductions for new Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.

Council staff participated in Reconciliation Victoria's Maggolee Webinar: First Peoples Employment in Local Government in February, engaging actively in the broader discussion of supporting and advancing reconciliation and empowering First Peoples in the workplace.

The First Nations Unit partnered with Arrilla Indigenous Consulting, to conduct a desktop review of several Council Strategies to inform the development of the Council's First Nations Workforce Strategy.



**Action 1.04: Explore the potential for cultural awareness events, cultural tours on Country and walking tours that promote truth-telling, cultural awareness, and knowledge sharing**



Wyndham City's launch of the *Unite for Diversity: Listen, Share, Understand* initiative represents an ambitious attempt to foster mutual understanding, and trust, and address racism and discrimination within the community. Spanning April and May, the program offered an array of free workshops and activities aimed at promoting cultural exchange and awareness, ranging from First Nations cultural exchanges and community meals to interfaith open days and a Youth Healing Workshop. Additionally, Inclusion & Diversity Training workshops were offered to local sports clubs to enhance cultural awareness and inclusivity, as well as workshops focused on the community impacts of racism and strategies for allyship and advocacy.

As part of the Campaign, a Cultural Exchange Day took place in April at Wunggurrwil Dhurrung Community Centre showcasing Aboriginal artifacts, history, and culture along with the 'exchange' of Indian singing and dancing, and a Māori Haka including community participation. The day was a great success with over 80 people in attendance.

The final activity of the campaign, a Youth Healing Workshop, was aimed at young people. Held at Youth Services on 29 May, the workshop provided a warm and welcoming space for 10 young people to listen and share their stories and heal together around the impacts of racism.

National Apology Day was recognised on 13 February at the Civic Centre, with a strong turnout including CEO Stephen Wall, the Mayor Cr Jennie Barrera, Cr Robert Szatkowski and Council's leadership team observing a Welcome to Country, flag raising, and a viewing of the 2008 National Apology. It was a profound day, marked by thoughtful reflections by Uncle Shane Clarke of the Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation, during the Welcome to Country.

The Mayor, Cr Barrera acknowledged:

**“Every day is another opportunity for each and every one of us to play an important role and make a positive contribution towards championing our First Nations people, truth telling and acknowledge the past.”**

Cultural awareness was further strengthened through the program *“Yarn and Create Your Own Acknowledgement of Country”* held at the Wunggurrwil Dhurrung Centre. The desire for First Nations cultural awareness and knowledge was evident with the popularity of this event, booking out quickly and with a long waiting list. Participants engaged in respectful discussions while creating their own personal Acknowledgments, fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation of Indigenous culture and heritage.

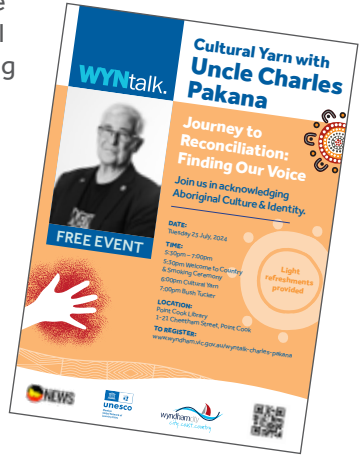
**Action 1.05: WYNtalk on Treaty or First Nations Theme**



The first WynTalk of 2024 took place in July at Point Cook Library, featuring Uncle Charles Pakana's *“Journey to Reconciliation: Finding Our Voice,”* through a profound yarning with Council's First Nations Unit Coordinator. The audience of 55 were deeply engaged and moved as Uncle Charles emphasised the importance of educating ourselves and each other about Aboriginal culture and identity, as he generously shared personal stories and cultural insights, promoting reflection and commitment to reconciliation.

Local Indigenous businesses were engaged to support the event including Indigenous photographer T.J. Garvie, and Jarrah Catering showcasing local talent and bush tucker-inspired food. Council was proud to feature a display of Wyndham Libraries' First Nations collections including free resources for attendees.

**The event's significance towards steps to reconciliation and a deeper understanding of Aboriginal culture in the Wyndham community is evidenced through audience feedback:**



**“Well done for creating space for these conversations.”**  
– Sophie Kahl, Victorian Aboriginal News

**“Uncle Charles' personal stories were impactful and educational.”**

**“Informative session, building knowledge on being an active ally.”**

**“Thoroughly enjoyable and informative, with actionable insights.”**





**Action 1.06: Principal's Breakfast with theme of First Nations services and supports**



Community and Council First Nation's service providers made a series of impactful presentations during the 2024 Principal's Breakfast, with the goal of deepening understanding of each other's challenges and fostering collaborative ways of working together. The information was welcomed by the 80 school leaders and educators in attendance. The Principal's Network Co-Chair reported that the information was well-received and that it was a very worthwhile event for participants.

**Positive feedback included:**

*It was an absolute pleasure to learn about the great work that is happening in Wyndham, we are very committed to seeing how we can link in with your unit to progress the work of Marrung further with our Koorie community, and to improve educational outcomes for our students.*  
- Principal's Breakfast Participant

*Thank you very much for having me at the breakfast. It was an amazing event with some of our community leaders. I look forward to being involved again. I really do hope everyone reaches out so that we can all support each other in the first nations space.* - Principal's Breakfast Presenter

**Action 1.07: Promoting Library services as welcoming spaces for First Nations people**



See Action 1.05: WynTalk, above.

As part of their winter school holiday program, Wyndham City Libraries celebrated NAIDOC week with themed craft Story Times, and an incursion from Indigenous Infusion. These activities provided children and their parents with a greater understanding and appreciation of First Nations' culture, history, and achievements, and celebrated the oldest, continuous living culture on earth. Wyndham Libraries rounded out NAIDOC week celebrations with a Bushtukka Workshop for Adults; a screening of The Last Daughter a documentary feature film; Storytelling through Art workshops for kids and First Nations displays and booklists in all branches.

To support the respectful representation of First Nations culture at community events, Council's First Nations Team offers two complete flag sets and ten banner sets available for event use. Each set includes three flags: First Nations, Australian, and Torres Strait Islander.

**The Yarn Circle: Creativity in Conversation/Treaty in the Park, November 24, 2024.**

The Art Yarn Circle: Creativity in Conversation program showcased four First Nations artists who each hosted a drop-in creative activity at Treaty in the Park. Through self-directed projects, supported by onsite staff, these experiences offered participants meaningful insights into each artist's practice and cultural connections. Approximately 350 people engaged with these activities across the event's duration. The program was enriched by two yarnning sessions: "Living and Working on Country" and "At Home in Community", offered by the artists who shared how their connections to land, culture, and community shaped both their artistic practice and the interactive activities they developed for the event.







### Action 1.08: Presentation on Indigital Schools Master Class outcomes

At the annual Principal's Breakfast (see Action 1.06 above), Sam Nikolsky, Director, Wyndham Tech School, delivered an engaging and insightful presentation on the *Indigital Schools Masterclass* and *Koorie Students Tech Day* initiatives.

The Indigital Schools Masterclass, a collaborative effort between Wyndham Tech School, Indigenous TechEd company Indigital, Microsoft, and the Bunurong Community, offered participants an exclusive, hands-on exploration of augmented reality (AR) and cutting-edge technology. This one-day in-person event was both immersive and inspiring.

The Deadly Tech Day, hosted by Wyndham Tech School, provided an exciting platform for students to experiment with innovative technologies while being mentored by accomplished Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander industry professionals. With free lunch and transportation included, it was a day of discovery, creativity, and connection!

Both programs highlight the Tech School's commitment to fostering inclusivity, innovation, and collaboration through technology.





## Pillar 2: Learning to Learning and Foundation Skills

# 2

### Learning to Learn and Foundation Skills

#### Action 2.01: Promote language, literacy, numeracy, and digital training including new technologies in Wyndham for all life stages and diverse demographics

This action has been achieved through the many programs delivered across Libraries & Community Centres and by the Social and Economic Inclusion Unit. Wyndham Libraries delivered a remarkable 3002 literacy, numeracy, and digital training library programs in 2024, with a total of 81,701 attendees.

In 2023/24, the Social and Economic Inclusion unit engaged over 100 local employers around inclusive employment, assisted 1,138 job seekers, and facilitated 189 placements across key sectors such as healthcare, farming, warehousing, and education. This engagement supports business growth and contributes to the wider local economy.

Beyond the established timetable of programs, Wyndham Libraries, in collaboration with Hey Dee Ho, presented eight special Sing and Sign Rhyme Time sessions at two different library branches. Williams Landing and Hoppers Crossing Libraries were thrilled to host these weekly sessions where attendees learnt basic AUSLAN Signs, whilst simultaneously promoting early literacy and other library services.

Over eight sessions, 212 preschool aged children and their carers were welcomed into the libraries, hosted by the exceptional Melissa Smile, or "Smiley", and learnt basic AUSLAN signs that appealed to children including simple greetings, actions, colours, and animals. The sessions were a great success, and Libraries are planning on hosting further Hey Dee Ho Sing and Sign Rhyme Time sessions in the future.

Wyndham Libraries hosted monthly Q&A sessions with Speech Pathologist Lisa Decker; and a Comms Accessibility workshop was held providing insights on literacy for Communications professionals.

Throughout 2024, Wyndham Community and Education Centre in collaboration with Wyndham Council delivered impactful programs across many of its community centres to support language, numeracy, and foundational skills development:

- Formal Pre-Accredited Programs: A total of 1,001 participants enrolled in formal pre-accredited programs delivered at Council-managed community centres, collectively completing 28,050 program hours.
- Volunteer-Led English Conversation Classes: Across Featherbrook and Point Cook community centres, 116 participants engaged in six volunteer-led English conversation classes, contributing to 5,472 program hours.

These programs, delivered at multiple community centres, underscore Wyndham Council's dedication to providing accessible, inclusive learning opportunities for its diverse community.

Council successfully partnered with the Western Bulldogs Community Foundation and WynActive to deliver the Sons of the West program, a 10-week initiative empowering men to prioritise their health and well-being by providing them with essential tools and knowledge. Participants gathered weekly at Eagle Stadium to engage with guest speakers on topics including nutrition, mental fitness, health screenings, and local services. Guest speakers presented during the 'What's on in Your Backyard' sessions in April, sharing programs and services that connect men to their community.

The Learning Community unit exhibited at the 2024 Volunteer Expo in May, in collaboration with Wyndham Community Education Centre (Wyndham CEC), with the goal of connecting with the local community, providing information about learning community events, and networking with other local organisations. With over 400 attendees and 50+ local stallholders participating, the Expo was a positive experience for the community to discover volunteering opportunities and register their interest with exhibitors. Attendees seeking community activities received





information on the upcoming 2024 Wyndham Learning Festival in September, details about Libraries programs and events, WynLearn What's On, and learning opportunities at Wyndham CEC.

The Expo also provided a valuable opportunity to connect with the community following the recent endorsement of the Learning Community Strategy 2024–2029 in April. The team shared details about the new Strategy and how it will guide lifelong learning initiatives in Wyndham over the next five years, while gathering further insights to strengthen partnerships and inform implementation efforts. With registrations for event holders to submit events for the 2024 Wyndham Learning Festival open, the Expo helped raise awareness of the Festival and reinforced strong community connections, supporting the promotion of lifelong learning across Wyndham.

A further crucial element of this Action has been the work of Council's Advocacy team supporting the establishment of several new schools in Wyndham in 2024. Wyndham welcomed a range of new educational facilities in 2024, providing essential learning spaces to support the region's growing community.

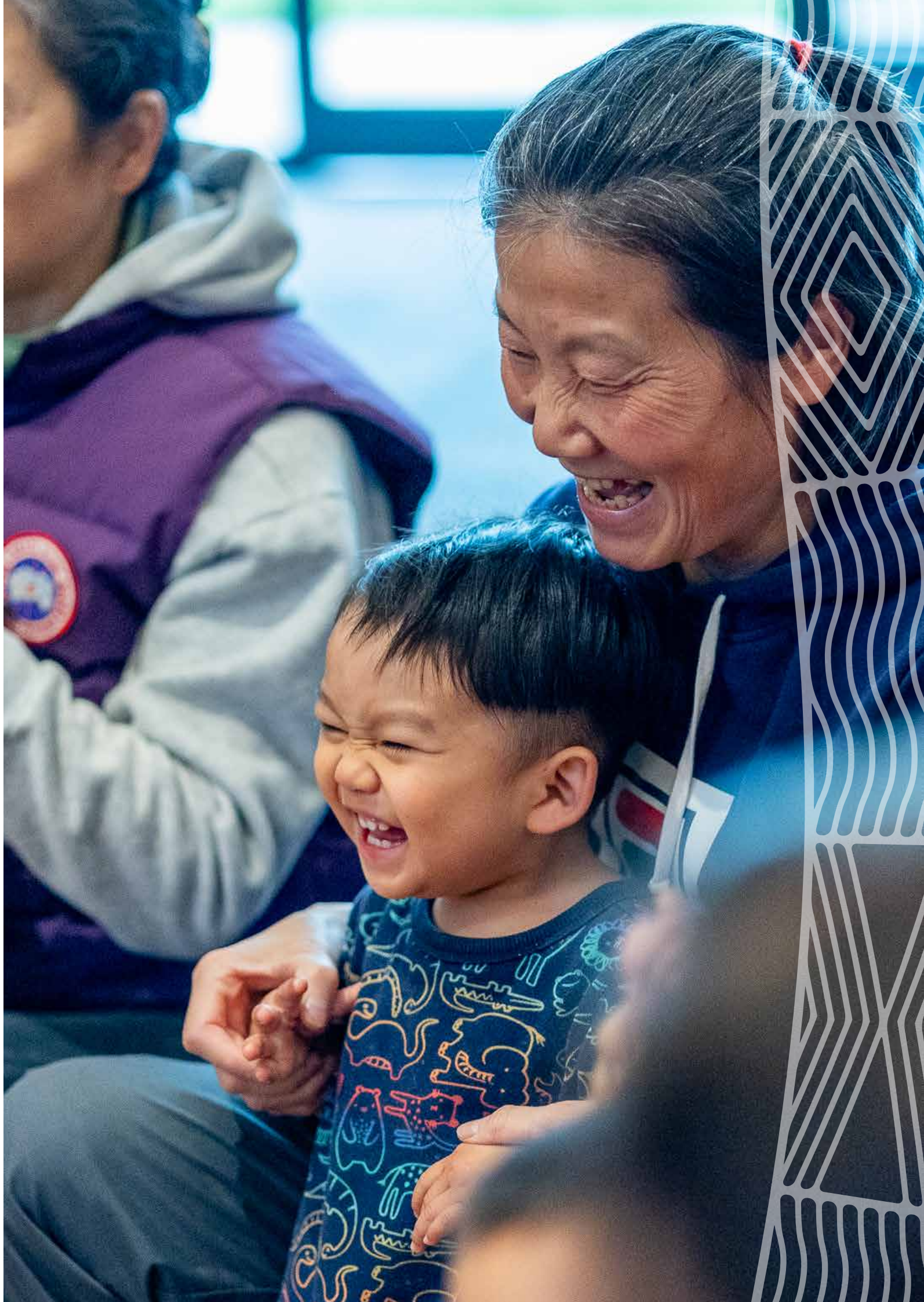
Laa Yulta Primary School (pronounced la yule-ta; Wadawurrung words meaning many stones) opened in Mambourin, with the Laa Yulta Primary School Kindergarten co-located on the same site.

Wimba Primary School (pronounced wim-bah; meaning white wallaby in the Bunurong language) and Brinbeal Secondary College (pronounced brin-bill; meaning rainbow in the Bunurong language), both in Tarneit;

Warreen Primary School (pronounced wah-reen; Bunurong word for wombat) and Bemim Secondary College (pronounced bee-min; Bunurong word for ring tail possum) in Truganina;

Walcom Ngarrwa Secondary College (pronounced wel-cum nar-wa; Wadawurrung words meaning steps to knowledge) and next-door, Nganboo Borron School (pronounced naan-boo bore-on; Wadawurrung words meaning children first, nurturing on your shoulder) in Werribee.

These new schools represent significant progress in advocacy for increased educational infrastructure in Wyndham, addressing the needs of a rapidly expanding population and supporting the city's commitment to lifelong learning for all community members.





### Action 2.02 Support the Early Years “Sharing Stories Help Your Child Learn from Birth” Project



The Sharing Stories project, developed by the Libraries Children’s Team, is an early years program aimed at engaging hard-to-reach and vulnerable families in Wyndham, with a focus on promoting literacy development from birth. This initiative was created in response to data highlighting high levels of developmental vulnerability in Wyndham, exacerbated by the impacts of COVID.

The program collaborates closely with local organisations and internal departments, including VicSeg (supporting asylum seekers and refugee families), the VACCA Koorie Kids Playgroup, Community Playgroups, Maternal & Child Health First Time Parent Groups, and IPC Health (Hungry Little Caterpillars Playgroup), to identify families who could benefit from the initiative.

Library staff conduct rhyme time and baby time sessions, providing each family with a library bag containing various resources and information, along with a token for a free board book redeemable at any library, and a variety of early literacy information and resources.

In 2023-2024, the program delivered 57 sessions to 1145 participants. Partnerships play a crucial role in this program, enhancing its reach and effectiveness in supporting early literacy and family engagement.

The Sharing Stories project will continue into the first half of 2025.



### Action 2.03: Explore intergenerational learning, community learning and alternative learning models to build foundation skills and cross-cultural understanding



An Intergenerational learning report examining alternative models that foster intergenerational learning and community education to strengthen foundational skills and cultural understanding was completed by a RMIT Masters of Global Studies workplace student, who completed their placement with the Learning Community unit. The student gathered data on intergenerational learning creating a report that offers insights into community learning practices and provides a foundation for the planning of the 2025 Transformative Education Showcase.

Council is excited to announce that the “Joining the Dots” newsletter rebranded as “Families in Wyndham eNews” launched in March 2024. This monthly update shares information on free local programs, resources, and activities for children (0-12 years) and families, covering:

- Activities for children aged 0-12
- Family-friendly community events
- Support services for children, parents, and carers
- Learning opportunities for both children and parents/carers

[www.wyndham.vic.gov.au/services/childrens-services/subscribe-families-wyndham-enews](http://www.wyndham.vic.gov.au/services/childrens-services/subscribe-families-wyndham-enews)

As mentioned in action 2.01 above, through a collaboration with the Western Bulldogs Community Foundation and WynActive, Council delivered the Sons of the West program – a 10-week initiative focused on men’s health and well-being. Participants attended sessions on topics including nutrition, mental fitness, and health screenings, held weekly at Eagle Stadium. During the What’s on in Your Backyard sessions in April, the Learning Community Unit provided vital information on local programs, connecting participants with resources and community services that support lifelong and intergenerational learning.



# Pillar 3: Employability, Work Skills, and Building Careers

3

Employability,  
Work Skills and  
Building Careers

## Action 3.01: Education Roundtable to present innovative models developing employability skills and promotion of workplace learning

The Education Roundtable took place in November, bringing together over 35 stakeholders from across Wyndham's learning community, including educators, policymakers, industry leaders, and community partners. The event supported Council's commitment to learning and education, aiming to align Wyndham's education quality and provision with community needs and aspirations.

The event opened with a welcome from Mayor Cr Mia Shaw, who reaffirmed Council's dedication to fostering collaboration and strengthening partnerships to promote learning and education in Wyndham. Dallian D'Cruz, CEO of WynBayLLEN, delivered a keynote presentation on Wyndham's demographics, highlighting rapid population growth and its implications for education. He emphasised the importance of early childhood education, the need to address literacy and numeracy challenges, and the value of targeted interventions to reduce school disengagement.

Snapshot presentations followed, showcasing innovative education and employment pathways in Wyndham, including:

1. Opportunity Wyndham Partnerships – Supporting youth employment.
2. Alternative Education Models – Presentations from Julia Gillard Community College and Hester Hornbrook Academy.
3. CALD Community Hub – Wyndham Central College's initiatives.
4. Navigator Program – Supporting disengaged youth.
5. Mock Job Interviews & Work Experience Program – WynBay LLEN initiatives.

Breakout roundtable sessions allowed attendees to engage deeply with presenters, fostering vibrant discussions, collaboration, and networking.

**Survey feedback highlighted the success of the event:**

*Well-structured with a diverse and engaging line-up of presenters – highly satisfied!*

*I valued the opportunity for discussion and made great connections I wouldn't have had otherwise!*

The Roundtable reinforced the importance of adapting education and training programs to address changing industry needs, with a focus on inclusivity, innovation, and creating equitable opportunities for all.





### Action 3.02: Celebrate and promote local career pathways and living, learning, and working in Wyndham

#### Learning Community Unit:

Local career pathways and living, learning, and working in Wyndham are celebrated through Wyndham's largest learning event each year, the Wyndham Learning Festival (WLF). The WLF is an annual celebration and promotion of learning for all ages and interests throughout Wyndham, with a week of free learning activities held 1-7 September.

Stay connected with Learning Festival news: [www.wynlearnfestival.org.au/](http://www.wynlearnfestival.org.au/)

Throughout the year, information on learning opportunities, events and news can be accessed through the informative Learning Community page on Council's website, your gateway to a vast range of lifelong learning opportunities across Wyndham in the many and varied learning activities, events, and programs on offer.

Discover a world of learning: [www.wyndham.vic.gov.au/services/wyndham-learning-city](http://www.wyndham.vic.gov.au/services/wyndham-learning-city)

#### Libraries:

As one of Wyndham City Councils recognised Days of Significance – IDAHOBIT (International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia, Intersexism and Transphobia)- a representative from Libraries and Learning serves on the IDAHOBIT working group to represent the department's commitment to inclusion and support for the LGBTQIA+ community.

IDAHOBIT contributions from libraries included social media posts via library and hub channels; book displays at library venues; curated reading lists and book recommendations for library users; suggested readings for book clubs; author talks and other themed events and activities. These initiatives promote awareness, inclusivity, and education throughout the community.

Wyndham Libraries further promoted and celebrated living, learning, and working in Wyndham through a redesigned Libraries Community Languages page featuring enhanced content about the collection of Languages Other Than English (LOTE) offerings, with Community Languages now listed under the 'Most Popular' links on the homepage for easier access. Additionally, a series of Facebook posts were published during Cultural Diversity Week (18-24 March) to promote the LOTE collections, encouraging greater community engagement.

#### Sport & Recreation:

Wyndham's community sporting clubs provide valuable hands-on training and experience in the sports industry. These clubs actively engage volunteers in roles such as coaching, umpiring, canteen management, and strategic positions in finance and planning, offering a pathway to employment in sports and recreation. Some clubs also offer entry-level and part-time paid roles. Sport & Recreation is currently exploring initiatives to better connect the community with these enriching opportunities.

#### Economic Development:

Locally owned businesses are encouraged to leverage Wyndham's wide range of business support services, including training, mentorship, and marketing initiatives. Programs like the "Love Your Local" campaign and the "Proudly Wyndham Business Expo" showcase and celebrate local businesses, fostering their growth and success in Wyndham's dynamic economy.



### Action 3.03: Engage local employers in creating greater visibility of local career pathways for people with disability and skills development options

#### 2024 Mock Job Interviews Program:

A range of Council staff and stakeholders supported Warringa Park School in the 2024 Mock Job Interviews Program. Organised by Wyndham and Hobsons Bay Local Learning & Employment Network (WynBay LLEN), the program aims to build sustainable partnerships that enhance education and transition outcomes for young people, particularly by increasing career opportunities. Through mock interviews, students engage in realistic job interview experiences, honing their responses, building confidence, and receiving constructive feedback. The program strengthens connections between schools and local employers, promoting skill development, communication, and confidence-building for students as they prepare for the workforce. Feedback from WynBay LLEN and participants emphasised the value of this program in preparing students for future employment.

#### Hidden Disability Sunflower Initiative and Library Staff Training:

Library staff participated in the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower initiative, providing discreet support for individuals with hidden disabilities. Staff offer items from a dedicated merchandise box to those who self-identify, including supportive options for carers and parents. This initiative also includes accommodations like quiet study spaces or seating adjustments during events to create an inclusive environment.

#### Wyndham Disability Services Network and Accessibility Updates:

Meeting bi-monthly, the Wyndham Disability Services Network brings together over 30 service providers to share updates, initiatives, and resources to improve accessibility across the city. The network reviewed the annual report of the Accessibility and Inclusion Plan, including Hidden Disability training for event staff and the Sunflower Initiative at the Visitor Centre, and selected new working group members for the upcoming Wyndham Forum Expo 2025.





**Social and Economic Inclusion:**

Opportunity Wyndham is a partnership between Wyndham City Council, local employment and educational service providers and local businesses, with support from the Victorian State Government, delivering tailored support to foster inclusive workplaces. Services include free recruitment tools, access to a diverse talent pool, and resources aimed at simplifying the hiring process through Inclusive Recruitment services and Toolkits.

In 2023/24, over 100 local employers were engaged around inclusive employment, 1,138 job seekers were assisted and 189 placements were facilitated across key sectors including healthcare, farming, warehousing, and education. This engagement supports business growth and contributes to the wider local economy.

Opportunity Wyndham’s unique Inclusive Recruitment services begin with consultations to understand the needs of each business. Beyond providing recruitment services, there is close collaboration with leading local educational partners such as AMES Australia, The Gordon, and Wyndham Community and Education Centre to design and deliver training that meets the evolving needs of local businesses. The model also includes direct collaboration with local businesses to co-design Industry Mentoring and Employee Retention toolkits, ensuring businesses have access to resources that not only attract but also retain a diverse workforce.

While economic challenges persist—particularly high interest rates, the high cost of living, and low consumer confidence affecting financial stability—these unique services continue to equip local businesses with the tools needed to address their recruitment and staff training needs.

Wyndham’s population and economy are expected to grow, alongside easing interest rates, which will lead to further expansion of small to medium enterprise. The SEI team is streamlining collaboration with local employment and educational service partners to create a “one-stop-shop” for local businesses. This initiative will provide businesses with easier access to coordinated employment, education, and recruitment support services from federal, state, and local resources.

To further enhance support provided, a package of Inclusive Toolkits will be launched in 2025, consisting of an Inclusive Industries Toolkit, Industry Mentoring Toolkit, and Employee Retention Toolkit. These comprehensive resources will help businesses attract, build, and retain a diverse and inclusive workforce, ensuring long-term growth as Wyndham’s economy strengthens.

See Action 3.01: Education Roundtable, above.







### Action 3.04: Determine future skills requirements of small to medium size businesses



The Economic Development unit's service highlights and achievements include the delivery of a series of hallmark business events to enhance knowledge, entrepreneurship and innovation and celebrated business excellence:

- **WYNnovation 2024 – The Festival of Human Connection** — featured a week-long celebration in May igniting innovation, creativity, connection, and inclusivity drawing 450 leaders from diverse sectors to participate in the masterclass, summit, and pitch finale; with practical insights, tips, and resources available in a free digital eBook: Build a Better Business. WYNnovation 2024 was a proud finalist in the National Economic Development Australia Awards of Excellence for Strategic Thinking.
- At the **Spark Innovation Hub** 20 startups thrived in 2024, supported by strategic partnerships with Deakin Digital Futures Network, with pioneering research in Wyndham's entrepreneurial ecosystem and Women in STEM to fuel future skills, jobs, and employment.
- A **SPARK** member survey reported significant gains in skill sets, business credibility, expanded networks and markets, satisfaction with guidance and mentoring, and increased revenues, underpinning SPARK's role in fostering entrepreneurial success and community engagement within Wyndham.
- From February to June 2024, Wyndham's **Innovation Business Growth Programs** supported 20 local small to medium businesses, joining an alumni of 123 graduates since 2018.
- Throughout the year, Wyndham hosted 13 impactful **business training sessions**, with 842 registrations and 338 highly satisfied attendees, learning about essential topics including social media, personal brand, grants and tenders to sales and business growth on platforms like Google, LinkedIn and TikTok.
- Led more than 280 **personalised business engagements and business enquiries** from home-based start-ups to major investors and global brands and facilitating 996 small business permits for new entrepreneurs across Wyndham.
- The **Annual Business Confidence Survey** 2024 ensures Council remains on the pulse and responsive to evolving business needs in an uncertain economic climate
- Review of the **Small Business Entrepreneurship & Innovation Fund (SBEIF)**, Economic Development Strategy midterm refresh, and kickstarting the Agribusiness Strategy will drive future growth and investment.
- New initiatives like the **Love Your Local Campaign** and Proudly Wyndham Business Expo will strengthen local support.

For more on Wyndham's business support programs, visit [www.wyndham.vic.gov.au/businesssupport](http://www.wyndham.vic.gov.au/businesssupport)





# Pillar 4: Leadership and New Learning

4

Leadership and New Learning

## Action 4.01: Capture stories of learning in Wyndham and promote and celebrate



### LearnWest:

Wyndham plays a key role in LearnWest, a collaborative network including Wyndham, Melton, Brimbank, Hobson’s Bay, Maribyrnong, Hume, and Darebin (LGA’s). LearnWest provides a shared platform for experienced and emerging learning practitioners across Melbourne’s North and West. In 2024, the network delivered “CONNECT – SHARE – LEARN”, a project that showcased diverse learner stories to promote lifelong learning through social media. Launched during Adult Learners Week (1-7 September), the stories emphasised the social and economic value of lifelong learning across member LGAs and contributed to a collection that fosters social connection and intergenerational learning. The project promoted, showcased, celebrated, and fostered lifelong learning, and its benefits for social connection, intergenerational learning, positive health, and economic outcomes.



Explore the collection of inspiring stories [www.learnwest.org/](http://www.learnwest.org/)

### What’s On In Your Backyard – Sons of the West Program:

Council, in partnership with the Western Bulldogs Community Foundation and WynActive, supported the Sons of the West program. This 10-week initiative engaged men in prioritising health and well-being, featuring topics such as nutrition, mental fitness, and local resources. The Learning Community Unit collaborated with this initiative by providing key information on learning in Wyndham during sessions in April, connecting participants to community resources.

### Wyndham Community & Education Centre’s 50-Year Celebration:

Wyndham Community & Education Centre marked its 50th anniversary in October, celebrating 50 years of delivering education programs and community services to Wyndham. After delivering Year 11 and 12 senior secondary programs as a non-school senior secondary registered provider since 2005, Wyndham CEC was granted registration as a school which launched in 2024. The 50th Anniversary Celebrations included the announcement of the newly rebranded Julia Gillard Community College (by none other than Julia Gillard herself!), signalling a new era as an independent senior secondary provider, continuing its dedication to education in Wyndham.

### Cultural Diversity Week 2024:

Held from March 18-24, Cultural Diversity Week celebrated Wyndham’s multicultural vibrancy under the theme “Our Shared Stories, Celebrating Together.” The week featured a range of activities promoting inclusivity and understanding through cultural cuisine, traditional dances, and dialogues on cultural heritage, reinforcing Wyndham’s commitment to embracing diversity.





**Action 4.02: Promote the Youth Services Civic Participation Program**

The Wyndham Youth Civic Participation Project, designed for individuals aged 18 to 25 interested in governance, ran successfully from July to September in 2024, engaging aspiring lawyers, policymakers, and community leaders in a comprehensive exploration of Local, State, and Federal politics.

Participants had the unique opportunity to interact with Councillors, senior public servants, and Council staff, gaining valuable insights into their roles and responsibilities within government. Throughout the program, participants connected with like-minded peers and visited significant locations, including the Wyndham City Council and the State Parliament House in Melbourne. The program culminated in a four-day tour to Canberra, exploring the Federal Parliament House, the Museum of Australian Democracy, the High Court of Australia, and the Australian War Museum.

Wyndham Citizen and Young Citizen of the Year Awards celebrate the exceptional contributions of Wyndham City residents who have significantly enhanced the community through their hard work and dedication. Community nominations were invited to recognise individuals making a positive impact in Wyndham The Young Citizen of the Year award, open to residents aged 16–25, was awarded to Krushnadevsinh (Kano) for his contributions leading to youth empowerment, better mental health, inclusivity, and leadership inspiration, as the youngest member of the Western Metropolitan Partnership. The accolade for Citizen of the Year award, for those aged 26 and above, went to Melba Waugh, for her tireless community work and advocacy, seeking to provide connection and companionship to disadvantaged and isolated people in the community.



**Action 4.03: Utilise Place-based Social and Action Learning to identify areas where learning in action can have most impact in a local community**

The Wyndham Learning Community Annual Forum, held on 31 October at the Civic Centre, was a resounding success, with 50 registered attendees. A short video highlighted achievements made arising from the 2024 LCS Action Plan, in addition to the opportunity to reflect on shared intel from key stakeholders, through a series of presentations including “New and Emerging Learning Needs” (Wyndham CEC), “Place-based Learning in our Community Centres” (Neighbourhood Hubs), and “Community Engagement and Feedback” (Social and Economic Inclusion). A facilitated discussion then provided input into shaping the Learning Community Strategy 2024-2029 Action Plan for 2025. The updated LCS 2024-2029 action plan for 2025 will be available for distribution in early 2025.





### Action 4.04: Active participation in Australian Learning Communities Network (ALCN) and LearnWest Network

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.

Arising from a collaboration between the Learning Cities of Wyndham and Melton and the ALCN has been the *Learning Forums*, an informal series of “conversations” about issues learning communities are facing locally and nationally. Led by leading-edge learning practitioners, highlights from 2024 included:

- **Governance and Frameworks Forum:** centred on governance in learning partnerships, this Learning Forum provided a platform for a range of national experts to share valuable insights. The importance of transparent decision-making, collaborative networks, and inclusive participation was highlighted, and discussion included the need for a strong emphasis on clear governance models, continuous partnerships, ongoing collaboration, future-proofing governance structures, underscoring the essential need for ongoing cooperation, adaptability, and strategic alignment with community needs.
- **Community Needs Analysis Workshop:** explored how to better understand and respond to what communities need in terms of learning. Participants gained ideas for creating tailored learning programs that reflect the priorities of their local areas.
- **Climate Resilience Forum:** focused on sustainability and highlighted how learning can play a role in addressing environmental challenges. Case studies from Melton and Port Adelaide showcased community-driven initiatives like the “*Living Lightly Locally*” project, which encourages sustainable living through practical education.

The Forums attract a healthy number of attendees from a range of local, national, and international audiences, generate thoughtful and inspirational dialogue and have spun off into the sharing of resources and other collaborations in areas of interest.

In July the Learning Community Unit, in collaboration with the ALCN, hosted the webinar *Driving Local Action on Sustainable Development Goals for Long-Term Impact*. This webinar included a panel discussion featuring representatives from Cork and Limerick (Ireland), Wyndham (Australia), and Durban (South Africa), all members of the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities and the PASCAL International Observatory’s Learning Cities Networks. The session was expertly moderated by Jenny Macaffer from Adult Learning Australia, with an opening address from the PASCAL International Observatory, highlighting the significance of Learning Festivals in fostering community engagement and lifelong learning, particularly among “hard-to-reach” and “overlooked” learner groups.

The online event shared real-life knowledge of hosting Learning Festivals, drawing on over 28 years of collective experience from the panellists. The session attracted 101 registrations, from diverse locations including Wyndham, Melton, Brimbank, Hume, Ballarat, Tasmania, Argentina, Switzerland, UK, USA and more, alongside a representative from UNESCO and PASCAL.



#### Key Insights Shared:

- Cork emphasised its commitment to lifelong learning by integrating it into the city’s economic plan, involving community input through a “bottom-up” approach in their Festival planning.
- Wyndham highlighted the successful partnership between the Wyndham Community & Education Centre and Wyndham City Council, showcasing how co-leading initiatives can enhance community impact through a collaborative working group.
- Limerick’s Festival motto, “*Communities Connecting Learning*,” reflects its efforts to connect event hosts through networking workshops that empower them to utilize social capital for reaching underserved learners. This year, they launched a Learning Ambassadors model to spotlight learner stories.
- Durban discussed their strategy for incorporating global perspectives into local Festivals, aiming for their inaugural Learning Festival, and shared a framework that unites industry, community, academia, and local government to promote enjoyable learning experiences.

The webinar concluded with a summary of key insights and reinforced the importance of sharing experiences and learning from one another. It also highlighted Learning Festivals as a powerful tool for promoting lifelong learning and community engagement.

#### Positive Feedback Included:

“  
So interesting and useful to share experiences. Look forward to more opportunities to learn and share!  
”

“  
Thank you for a fantastic learning experience; it was a great webinar!  
”

“  
Greetings from UNESCO UIL! Thank you for organising this session, and to all speakers for the inspiring presentations celebrating learning in your cities!  
”

“  
Great to connect with our lifelong learning colleagues globally, especially in Australia.  
”



See Action 4.01 above for LearnWest Network Shared Project Update



### Action 4.05: Maintain connections with PASCAL, UNESCO and GNLC

The Learning Community Unit (LCU) successfully maintained and nurtured active connections with the PASCAL International Observatory, UNESCO, and the Global Network of Learning Cities (GNLC), particularly within the context of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). Wyndham has continued engagement with the ESD Cluster of the UNESCO GNLC, participating in regular online meetings that facilitate peer exchange, networking, and knowledge-sharing activities among city focal points dedicated to ESD. Current participating cities include Shanghai, Hamburg, Athens, Espoo, Eunpyeong, Okayama, Sukhothai, Durban, Manchester, and Wyndham.

#### Engagement with PASCAL:

The LCU is actively engaged with the PASCAL Learning Cities Network, specifically the 'Reimagining Inclusive Economic Futures' group. This involvement allows the LCU to collaborate with other members to create and support a global network of cities focused on economic resilience and the advancement of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Such collaborations enhance Wyndham's contributions to the global dialogue on sustainable community development.

#### Collaborative Efforts:

Wyndham contributed to a collaborative presentation at the 17th PASCAL Observatory Conference, held in July in Taipei, Taiwan. The session, titled "Evolving Frameworks to Analyse the Vital Actions of Place-Based Learning Cities and Learning Communities", initiated crucial discussions around sharing practices and analysing the impact of learning cities. The Wyndham Learning Community unit contributed a case study on its efforts within Wyndham City Council, demonstrating how frameworks can enhance community development and learning outcomes.

#### Engagement with GNLC:

The Mayor of UNESCO Learning City Icheon, South Korea, invited Wyndham Learning City to attend their *Sustainable Learning Cities International Forum* as a panellist, presenting and sharing projects delivered in Wyndham and as a member of the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) Education for Sustainable Development Cluster. This Forum, which focused on innovative strategies and practices for advancing education for sustainable development in urban environments, took place in September. Wyndham's presentation was very well received and featured the impressive 10-year-strong Green Living Series, with the support and input of Wyndham's Green Living Team, together with an overview of key sustainability events and programs arising from the work of the Libraries and Community Centres Department, showcasing Wyndham's commitment to promoting sustainable development and educational advancement in cities. Projects included the two major keynotes featured in the 2024 Wyndham Learning Festival (Dr Karl's "Eco-Expedition into Sustainable Science and Climate" and the Green Living 10-year anniversary celebration featuring Hannah Moloney); sustainability events featured in previous Wyndham Learning Festivals, the Seed Library, and the Climate Futures Youth Leaders Volunteers.

This was an invaluable opportunity to contribute to the dialogue on sustainable urban solutions, showcasing successful Wyndham projects and engaging with other experts and stakeholders in the field. This was made possible through the generosity of Icheon City, who kindly paid all travel and accommodation costs.



Delegates included members of the PASCAL International Observatory, UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities ESD Cluster; Korean National Association for Lifelong Learning Cities; The Future Planet Association; International Management Education Development Institute; and representatives from Learning Cities around the globe including Italy, Hungary, Belgium, Germany, Mexico, Columbia, Thailand, and of course South Korea. Interesting discussions between similar sized cities, sharing best practices, highlighted the correlation between higher community engagement and effective and involved political/civic institutions; the importance of fostering lifelong learning to promote and encourage sustainability; the importance of partnering with other institutions and key stakeholders to achieve maximise effective outcomes.

Participating in such a Forum provides an opportunity to showcase the meaningful and valuable work taking place in Wyndham, together with the chance to gather new ideas and experiences from other practitioners across the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities and strengthen Wyndham's international connections.

In November, Wyndham's Climate and Resilience unit contributed to UNESCO's monthly webinar series on "Building green, inclusive, and climate-resilient urban communities – the learning cities approach", addressing the topic "Shifting paradigms: fostering sustainable lifestyles and rethinking our relationship with nature" with a presentation featuring Wyndham's "My Smart Garden: Collaboration for Nature in Urban Settings". The Director of Institute of Lifelong Learning (UIL) welcomed the audience from across the globe, emphasising the importance and urgency of climate action. Whilst many places are experiencing serious climate crises, there are a range of agreements and partnerships that provide collaborative frameworks to further sustainability and combat the climate crisis. The importance of local action was highlighted in helping the SDGs to be a reality in the community.

UNESCO learning cities Wyndham and Hamburg were then invited to present their climate action cases as examples of local action contributing to climate action. Wyndham's presentation highlighted the benefits and outcomes of the "My Smart Garden" program, just one of the many sustainability actions inspiring real climate change emerging from the Learning Community Strategy 2024-2029 and the Resilient Wyndham 2021-2025 strategies.





Taking place only 10 days in advance of UNESCO's Sixth International Learning Cities Conference, the webinar also provided a prominent occasion to launch UNESCO's Online Collection on Lifelong Learning for Climate Action, a contribution to UNESCO's Greening Education Partnership and an instrument for the implementation of the Marrakech Framework for Action, describing lifelong learning as a key lever for equipping individuals with the knowledge and skills needed to address the climate crisis and to empower them to become role models for change.

The online collection, showing how UNESCO learning cities from around the globe are using the transformative power of lifelong learning to combat the climate crisis can be seen here - [www.uil.unesco.org/en/global-network-learning-cities-collection-lifelong-learning-climate-action](https://www.uil.unesco.org/en/global-network-learning-cities-collection-lifelong-learning-climate-action). Wyndham features as one of the 12 practical cases presented in the first online collection, along with UNESCO Learning Cities: Bandar Khamir, Bogotá, Edmonton, Espoo, Eupyeong, Hamburg, Jubail Industrial City, Marrakech, N'Zérékoré, Okayama, and Shanghai.

The Sixth International Conference on Learning Cities (ICLC 6) took place in December in Jubail Industrial City, Saudi Arabia. This significant event, organised by the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities (GNLC), addressed the theme *"Learning Cities at the Forefront of Climate Action"*.

The conference attracted over 700 participants from around the globe, aiming to address the urgent climate crisis by leveraging the power of education and lifelong learning to foster sustainable, green, and climate-resilient communities.

Though unable to participate in person, Wyndham Learning City was invited to submit a video showcasing efforts in Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in Wyndham. This video highlighted Wyndham's innovative programs and initiatives aimed at fostering sustainability, lifelong learning for climate action and environmental awareness within the community and showcased the Green Living Series, delivered by Council's Sustainability team as best practice in fostering engagement and building sustainable living skills.

The video also highlighted future plans to advance ESD through various programs and events aimed at promoting sustainability and community engagement:

- **Wyndham's Green Living Series**, an annual program of workshops and events focused on sustainable living.
- **My Smart Garden**, a free initiative helping residents transform outdoor spaces into productive gardens.
- **The Wyndham Seed Library**, which builds food resilience by offering free seeds and promoting sustainable gardening practices through community participation.
- **Open Gardens Victoria**, encouraging the community to connect through garden tours and supporting educational gardening projects.

Link to video <https://youtu.be/cEscAtv7M1E>

Wyndham's Learning Community Unit finalised reporting back to the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) as part of our commitment to the Learning Cities initiative. This three-yearly requirement is a testament to our ongoing dedication to building a dynamic, inclusive, and sustainable learning community in Wyndham, and meeting the requirements to remain a member of UNESCO's Global Network of Learning Cities. The Learning City framework, supported by UNESCO, emphasises the importance of lifelong learning, community engagement, and local development through education. Wyndham's report highlighted the significant progress we have made in key areas from September 2022 to September 2024 including Community Engagement in Learning; Inclusive Education Initiatives; Partnerships and Collaboration; Promotion of health and well-being through learning; promotion of global citizenship; progress on achieving measures to support decent work and entrepreneurship, skilling and reskilling and technical and vocational education; Sustainable Development through Learning, and highlighting how our work aligns with the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Through these efforts, Wyndham is at the forefront of promoting innovative approaches to community education and development, aligning with our vision of creating a vibrant and inclusive learning environment. The collaborative efforts and active participation in global networks not only amplify Wyndham's profile as a learning city but also contribute to meaningful local and international discussions on lifelong learning and community engagement.



### Action 4.06: Extend and promote Civic Learning initiatives

The *Allies for Reconciliation* Building Blocks program was successfully delivered through a collaborative co-design process involving First Nations participants, Building Blocks alumni, faith-based groups, and intergenerational representatives. This inclusive approach was crucial for the program's success, as it honoured self-determination and integrated the expertise of First Nations communities.

The learning design reflected First Nations cultural processes, incorporating immersive experiences such as Yarning Circles, ceremonies, and Walks on Country. Collective leadership was a cornerstone of the initiative, with First Nations facilitators, guest speakers, and Elders guiding participants and enriching the learning experience through social procurement practices. A key focus of the program was transformation, emphasising the principles of decolonisation and anti-racism, and fostering a culturally safe environment with the support of a Cultural Safety Facilitator.

Participants engaged with critical content that connected local and national narratives, addressing historical and contemporary issues, including the Treaty and The Voice referendum. The curriculum integrated First Nations beliefs, protocols, and ceremonies, which enhanced the authenticity of the learning experience. Participants also developed their allyship skills through reflective practices, acknowledging the importance of cultural connections and participating in significant community events.

Participants gained a deeper understanding of reconciliation and their roles as allies within the community and were empowered to successfully execute projects aimed at promoting reconciliation, highlighting the importance of community development values and First Nations knowledge in fostering strong community outcomes. Overall, the program has made significant strides in advancing meaningful reconciliation efforts and has contributed to the broader objectives of the Learning Community Strategy 2024-2029 by embedding First Nations knowledge and building community leadership into its framework.

Following the conclusion of the Alumni Master Classes Series pilot project, Council's Community Strengthening Unit has continued to engage Wyndham Building Blocks alumni. This engagement focuses on gathering feedback for council initiatives and inviting alumni to participate in local learning opportunities offered through the Community Training Calendar. Additionally, alumni were invited to participate in the Wyndham Learning Festival, where they served as hosts for learning activities and engaged in various educational opportunities across the municipality.



### Action 4.07: STEM Education & Industry Conference

The STEM Education & Industry Conference, held at the Wyndham Tech School, served as a networking platform to explore the collaboration between industry and education in shaping the future STEM talent pipeline. The event brought together educational leaders and industry professionals to delve into the STEM landscape through hands-on activities, engaging technology explorations, and collaborative discussions. Opportunity was provided to explore Wyndham Tech School through interactive workshops that highlighted the latest technological innovations, and participate in collaborative discussions to share industry insights, helping to align tech education with current workforce needs and industry challenges. No conference would be a success without time for networking with fellow professionals, fostering valuable connections that drive innovation and growth within the tech sector.

Innovative collaborations and the impact of emerging technologies on cultivating the next generation of tech leaders featured. As a STEM Centre of Excellence, Wyndham Tech School is dedicated to fostering curiosity and collaboration through an industry-driven curriculum that emphasises hands-on exploration of advanced technologies.



#### Key insights regarding skills and the future of work that emerged:

- **By 2025, humans and machines will spend equal time on current tasks.**
- **The Esports market revenue in Australia is projected to reach \$253 million by 2028.**
- **Currently, only 15% of STEM-qualified jobs are held by women.**
- **The Tech Sector ranks as the 7th largest employer in Australia.**
- **By 2030, 85% of jobs that will exist have not been invented yet.**
- **Australia will need 1 million AI and Machine Learning specialists by 2027.**
- **A skills shortage of 18,000 cybersecurity experts is anticipated by 2026.**

**These findings underline the importance of fostering STEM education and collaboration to prepare for future workforce demands.**





**Action 4.08: Transformative Education Showcase focusing on Increasing access to learning using multi-channel digital technology (AI, AR, VR and google translator)**

See Action 4.07: STEM Education & Industry Conference, above.



**Action 4.09: Through Wyndham Coding Champs Competition, provide opportunity for children to engage in STEAM and explore creativity and innovation**

The Wyndham Coding Champs Competition aims to provide children aged 7 to 15 with the opportunity to engage in Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts & Maths (STEAM,) fostering creativity and innovation. The competition opened on August 12, coinciding with National Science Week, and closed on October 6, during Melbourne International Games Week.

To support participants, Wyndham Libraries delivered a series of coding workshops designed to inspire and assist young coders, including beginner workshops for those just starting and intermediate sessions for those seeking to challenge themselves.

Shortlisted entries were showcased on the Wyndham Coding Champs Studio on Scratch and winners were announced and celebrated at the Wyndham Coding Champs Awards Event, held on 8 November. The Wyndham Coding Champs competition supports digital literacy amongst young people, as well as helping to foster continuing connection to the library and lifelong learning.



**Action 4.10: WynTalk to inform and educate community on environmental sustainability and climate action**

The Wyndham Learning Festival Launch on 31 August at Encore Events Centre was a resounding success, focusing on sustainability and climate action. The Launch featured Dr Karl's *“WynTalk: An Eco-Expedition into Sustainable Science & Climate.”* His keynote address on sustainable science captivated the audience, blending his passion for science with critical discussions on climate change, leaving attendees inspired and informed.

Dr. Karl emphasised the necessity of clear communication in addressing urgent issues like climate change, which are often clouded by misinformation. He shared alarming insights about microplastics now present in rain and human bodies, stating that an average 40-year-old carries enough microplastics to fill half a block of butter. He also addressed the insufficient tax contributions of fossil fuel companies despite their substantial profits and advocated for reversing climate change through existing technology at a cost lower than current subsidies to the fossil fuel industry. His message was clear: with awareness and action, it is not too late to change course.

Uncle Mark Brown delivered a powerful Welcome to Country, emphasising the significance of Indigenous voices in caring for the land. The launch also featured a mini-expo with various engaging activities, including face painting, 60-second portraits, a local school choir performance, and a garden workshop, providing an enriching experience for all participants.

The enthusiasm from the Wyndham community was evident, with 670 registrations for the launch alone, showcasing strong interest in learning and sustainability. Dr. Karl's keynote set the tone for the Festival, igniting thoughtful conversations and inspiring collective action. The event successfully united individuals of all ages and backgrounds, reinforcing a shared commitment to learning and a sustainable future for Wyndham.

Audience feedback was overwhelmingly positive, highlighting the importance of addressing environmental issues and the need to listen to Indigenous perspectives. Participants expressed appreciation for Dr. Karl's insights into sustainable science and the urgent need to combat misinformation in discussions surrounding climate change.

Over the week following the launch, the 2024 Wyndham Learning Festival (WLF), themed *“Empowering Communities Through Lifelong Learning,”* celebrated lifelong learning with over 90 free events, including workshops, talks, and interactive sessions. This festival not only highlighted the community's dedication to continuous learning but also aligned with key actions of the Learning Community Strategy 2024-2029, particularly in promoting environmental sustainability.

Keep up to date with the 2025 Wyndham Learning Festival [www.wynlearnfestival.org.au](http://www.wynlearnfestival.org.au)





### Action 4.11: Engage with UNESCO GNLC to share projects and models of engagement

See Action 4.05: Maintain connections with UNESCO and GNLC above.

Wyndham's international successes underscore our commitment to lifelong learning and sustainable development. Our participation in global initiatives has not only highlighted Wyndham's strategic approach but also positioned us as a model for other learning cities worldwide.

Significant achievements include:

#### UNESCO ESD Cluster: Thematic Discussion on ESD and Climate Actions:

As part of the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities (GNLC), Wyndham actively participates in thematic clusters to collaborate on shared issues. In 2024 Wyndham shared our Learning Community Strategy 2024-2029 during a thematic discussion on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and climate actions and shared it on the online GNLC Community of Practice site. Our Strategy was well received, sparking insightful discussions among the working group members.

Wyndham participates in the monthly thematic meetings that foster knowledge exchange, resource sharing, and the dissemination of best practices among GNLC member cities. These meetings provide a valuable platform for member cities to discuss and contribute insights on ESD implementation, enabling collective progress toward sustainable community education. This engagement has strengthened our network and fostered a valuable exchange of knowledge, resources, and best practices with other GNLC members.

#### Contribution to UNESCO GNLC Online Learning Module:

Wyndham was invited to contribute to an online learning module for the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL), titled *"Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in Learning Cities: Promoting Green and Climate-Resilient Local Communities,"* which is now a key component of a new capacity-building course on Learning City Development.

Wyndham's Learning Community unit, with support from Council's Sustainability team, successfully delivered a video presentation on *"The Case of Wyndham's Green Living Series."* UNESCO's feedback was overwhelmingly positive: *"Thank you very much for kindly sharing your excellent contribution with us. I watched your video with great interest and particularly enjoyed your consideration of key success factors/challenges through drawing on Wyndham's inspiring experiences. This will be highly useful for our students."*

View the online learning module - [https://youtu.be/Bk39aMQB\\_6g](https://youtu.be/Bk39aMQB_6g)

#### Connecting with Belfast Learning City:

Belfast Learning City, Northern Ireland sought Wyndham's insights as Belfast develop an outcomes-based performance management framework for their Learning City initiative. Along with Melton Learning City, Wyndham provided valuable insights on processes, best practices, and collective impact measurement. Belfast's feedback: *"Wyndham (and Melton) are the gold standard overseas for their Learning Community Strategy and evaluations"* was high praise indeed!

#### Wyndham presents in UNESCO Learning City Icheon, South Korea:

As mentioned in Action 4.05 above, the mayor of UNESCO Learning City Icheon invited a representative from Wyndham Learning City to attend their Sustainable Learning Cities International Forum to participate on a panel, presenting and sharing experiences of projects delivered in Wyndham and as a member of the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) Education for Sustainable Development Cluster.



Wyndham's presentation showcased successful local projects and provided the opportunity to engage with other experts and stakeholders in the field. This was made possible through the generosity of Icheon City, who kindly paid all travel and accommodation costs.

#### Education for Sustainable Development Online Course Collection:

To advance sustainability and climate action locally, Wyndham City as a UNESCO Learning City, and FutureLearn offers residents free access to the *"Education for Sustainable Development"* online course collection. These courses, open to all residents of UNESCO Learning Cities, provide a valuable opportunity for Wyndham's community members to deepen their understanding of critical topics, such as sustainable urban living, climate resilience, and environmental stewardship. This initiative not only empowered individuals to engage in sustainable practices but also reinforce Wyndham's commitment to building a resilient and environmentally conscious community.

Access to the online course collection -

[www.wyndham.vic.gov.au/services/wyndham-learning-city](http://www.wyndham.vic.gov.au/services/wyndham-learning-city)

#### "Sustainability and Creating Sustainable Networks of Learning Cities" Webinar:

Wyndham City was represented at the *"Sustainability and Creating Sustainable Networks of Learning Cities, Lifelong Learners, and Lifelong Partnerships"* webinar, hosted by the North American Alliance of Learning Cities (NAALC) and the Coalition of Lifelong Learning Organizations (COLLO). The event featured a panel discussion on the creation and nurturing of learning communities in different contexts. The honorary Director of the Australian Learning Communities Network (ALCN) was a key panellist and incorporated case studies from Wyndham in her presentation.

These achievements reflect Wyndham's leadership in promoting lifelong learning and sustainable development on a global scale, and future collaborations with international partners will continue throughout the life of the Learning Community Strategy, driving impactful initiatives that benefit our community and beyond.





**Action 4.12: Education Roundtable on diversity and learning – gender equality, CALD communities, people with disability services, carers, and older people**

See Action 3.01 Education Roundtable above.

The 2024 Education Roundtable played a key role in advancing education and employment opportunities in Wyndham, aligning with the Learning Community Strategy (LCS) 2024–2029. This event brought together a range of stakeholders to promote collaboration and innovation in education. Focusing on employability and inclusive education, the Roundtable included presentations from local leaders and organisations, including a speech highlighting the importance of partnerships and reconciliation. Keynote speakers provided insights into Wyndham’s rapid growth and stressed the need for strategic investment in early education and workforce readiness. The event featured discussions and initiatives aimed at closing education and employment gaps, with contributions from local schools, community groups, and government bodies. The day reinforced the need for collaboration to create a more equitable and prosperous learning environment for Wyndham’s future.

In addition to the Education Roundtable, Wyndham City also marked other significant events that celebrate diversity, in 2024. The International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia, and Transphobia (IDAHOBIT) was observed on May 17, with a flag-raising ceremony and keynote speech as part of the city’s ongoing commitment to supporting the LGBTQIA+ community and advocating for equality and justice. The theme for IDAHOBIT this year was *“No one left behind: equality, freedom, and justice for all.”*

The Wyndham Women in Business Luncheon, held on March 8, celebrated International Women’s Day under the theme *“Count Her In: Invest in Women. Accelerate progress.”* The event featured Dr Morley Muse, Co-founder of iSTEM Co and a respected local resident, as a keynote speaker. The event aimed to bring Wyndham businesses together to recognise and support the achievements of women in business.



**Action 4.13: Promote benefits of learning across life for older people**

The Victorian Seniors Festival celebrated the contributions of older Victorians with the theme *“Explore. Engage. Evolve.”* The month-long festival featured 54 diverse events, including dancing, crafts, self-defence, concerts, First Nations Cultural Education, and a Community Dinner, with over 1,500 attendees. Bembit Bag-Rook, Koomail Tardy, Lollypop Creek, and Truganina Community Centres participated for the first time, alongside activities hosted by Wyndham Libraries, Encore, Wyndham’s Community Development Team, and community-led initiatives funded through grants. A Self-Care Bingo card was introduced to promote health and wellbeing among seniors, reinforcing the festival’s commitment to lifelong learning, connection, and self-care.

See Action 4.01: Stories of Learning, above





**Action 4.14: Connecting to the diverse stories of the communities of Wyndham including volunteering**

The Library of Stories program, initiated by Wyndham City’s Learning City Portfolio Committee, aimed to promote community engagement through the sharing of personal stories. Based on the global “*Human Library*” model, it provided a platform for “*living books*” from diverse backgrounds in Wyndham to share their experiences in small group settings, fostering understanding and community connections. The program recruited 31 individuals, with 17 attending training sessions that focused on storytelling techniques and narrative development. Four community conversation and dinner events were held, featuring presentations, networking activities, storytelling, and group reflections. Additionally, visits to schools and senior groups allowed further engagement. The program’s impact was evident for both “*living books*”, who gained confidence and a deeper connection to the community, and readers who developed a greater understanding of Wyndham’s diversity and the challenges of racism. Key learnings from the program highlight the importance of strong partnerships, clear communication, and a community-based approach.

In addition, the Library of Stories Project involved a professional development opportunity for the Wyndham Kids Storybook program. Delivered by Kids Own Publishing, the hands-on workshop taught participants how to create 8-page books with children using A3 paper and a photocopier.



**UNDERPINNING CONSIDERATIONS**

**Action 5.1: Increase awareness and promotion of possible learning and study spaces in Wyndham**

Wyndham City is enhancing access to learning and study spaces with a new online Organisational Facility Booking System, aligning with the Council Plan to “*Deliver Public Value and Excellence.*” Launched in July 2024, the system streamlines the booking process for Council-managed venues, providing real-time availability, preference filtering, and a booking history feature. Stage 1 covers community centres and halls like Saltwater and Tarneit, while Stage 2, launching in 2025, will expand to include libraries, open spaces, and major venues like Encore Events Centre. This user-friendly system simplifies bookings, improving convenience for the community and efficiency for Council staff.

Venue booking system [www.wyndham.vic.gov.au/community-centres](http://www.wyndham.vic.gov.au/community-centres)



**Action 5.2: Investigate a clever easy to navigate Portal to provide visibility over learning in Wyndham**

Work is underway to improve the existing Wyndham Learning City (LC) webpage, which, combined with a targeted social media campaign, will enhance the visibility of learning opportunities in Wyndham. By streamlining the LC page and WynLearn platform, learning resources will be more accessible and engaging for the community. This approach offers a practical and effective way to connect and inform local learners. The Wyndham Learning City page can be accessed <https://www.wyndham.vic.gov.au/services/wyndham-learning-city>



**Action 5.3: Develop high impact visual promotions of Learning Community events and promote the UNESCO Learning City brand throughout the municipality**

Diverse options were explored for creating high-impact visual promotions to enhance the visibility of Learning Community events and promote the UNESCO Learning City brand across the municipality. While some options were found to be cost prohibitive at this stage, we continue to seek creative and effective solutions to raise awareness and engage the community in upcoming events.



**5.4: Explore a simple mechanism to support the collection of relevant data**

A new reporting tool has been developed and will launch in 2025 to support stakeholders in tracking progress against the 2025 Action Plan. This tool will enhance accountability and ensure effective delivery across all business areas.





LOOKING FORWARD

As we enter 2025 and the second year of the Learning Community Strategy 2024-2029 (LCS), we are excited to reflect on the progress made and the opportunities ahead. The first year of the LCS has been a foundation for growth, with key initiatives already making a positive impact across Wyndham. Looking forward, we will continue to build on this momentum, driving innovation and inclusivity in education and learning, while ensuring our community’s learning needs are met through accessible and engaging opportunities. We are committed to strengthening the LCS as a guiding framework for lifelong learning, and we look forward to collaborating with our partners and residents to create a vibrant, connected, and thriving learning community.

Stay connected with Wyndham’s Learning Community activities by contacting [wynlearn@wyndham.vic.gov.au](mailto:wynlearn@wyndham.vic.gov.au)



Our Country is our classroom

For generations, our People have used their Traditional Knowledge to care for both the community and for Country. This piece emphasises the importance of Country and the meaningful learning that occurs when exploring, experiencing, caring for and engaging with Country. In this piece we see places of significance that are in and around the Wyndham area. This includes the Wirribi-yaluk (Werribee River) and Wurdi Youang (The You Yangs). This artwork also highlights the importance of learning through coming together and interacting with each other. In the piece we see two meeting places one representing the Wyndam City Council and their focus on promoting a culture of learning and the other representing the Wyndam community as a whole.



Artist Chloe Chatterton

Werripee Yalook

In the heart of Werribee country, the Bunurong people cherish a profound connection to our ancestral lands, nurtured through the enduring tradition of songlines and stories. This land, where the Werribee River meets the sea, holds a part of the key to our rich cultural heritage.

Amidst the rolling plains and fertile riverbanks, there lived a Bunurong youth named Jarli. From an early age, Jarli had been captivated by the stories passed down through the generations. His elders, wise and filled with knowledge, had taught him to listen to the whispers of the wind and the songs of the land.

One bright morning, Jarli set out on a journey of discovery. Guided by the songlines etched into the landscape, he traversed the Werribee River, whose flowing waters held stories of creation and transformation. Jarli listened to the songline of Bunjil, the great wedge-tailed eagle who watched over the Bunurong people, and he understood that the spirits of his ancestors were always present. He trekked through lush wetlands and marveled at the diverse birdlife, which was woven into the stories of the land. The colorful plumage and graceful dances of the birds revealed the spirits of Bunurong ancestors, guiding and protecting their people.

Jarli’s journey led him to the “Warrayn Tree,” a giant eucalyptus that stood as a sentinel to the past. The tree’s bark told stories of Bunurong celebrations and rituals, linking him to the vibrant traditions of his people.

As he wandered through the ancient “Wudja-Wudja” forest, Jarli discovered hidden caves and rock formations, each a part of the intricate songlines. These natural wonders were living chapters of his people’s history, etched in stone and whispered in the rustle of leaves. One day, while standing on the shores of “Werribee Bay,” Jarli heard the songline of the sea. The rhythmic waves told tales of endurance and resilience, mirroring the Bunurong people’s own story of survival along the coastline for countless generations.

With a heart full of wisdom and gratitude, Jarli returned to his community. He shared the stories and songlines he had encountered, passing them down to the younger generations. These tales were more than mere words – they were the connection to Werribee country, the bond between the Bunurong people and the land that had sustained them for centuries. In the age-old tradition of songlines and stories, the Bunurong people’s connection to Werribee country remains unbreakable, ensuring the preservation of our cultural heritage and the enduring link to our ancestral lands. The Werribee River, the bay, and the rich landscape continue to be sacred, a testament to the unyielding connection between the Bunurong people and the land we called home.



Artist Mark Brown





## Further information and contact

An electronic copy of the Learning Community Strategy 2024-2029 is available at:  
[www.wyndham.vic.gov.au/wyndham-learning-community-strategy-2024-2029](http://www.wyndham.vic.gov.au/wyndham-learning-community-strategy-2024-2029)

For more information about the Learning Community Strategy, or to connect with our network,  
please contact: Coordinator Learning Community, Wyndham City Council  
Email: [wynlearn@wyndham.vic.gov.au](mailto:wynlearn@wyndham.vic.gov.au) or visit [www.wyndham.vic.gov.au](http://www.wyndham.vic.gov.au)

