



The Sali Shepparton Scholarship Program

Contributing to realising the aspirations and economic participation
of Aboriginal people in the Goulburn Murray region

La Trobe University and the Kaiela Institute

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RUMBALARA
FOOTBALL NETBALL CLUB



Two organisations, a shared vision

The Kaeila Institute and La Trobe University are organisations striving to make a difference in Shepparton and the broader Goulburn Murray region. The Sali Shepparton gift offers the valuable opportunity for the two to work side-by-side to achieve a shared goal: increasing the capacity of Aboriginal community members to wholly and equitably participate in the economy of the region and benefit from the socio-economic benefits participation delivers.

Increasing capacity, equity and participation are key goals; however, Kaeila Institute and La Trobe also acknowledge the critical position that creating opportunities for access plays. The development of leadership skills and attributes is also essential so that members of the Shepparton Aboriginal community are well prepared to take leadership roles in business, their community and community circles.

Shepparton is an important part of the Sali story and the links are strong: Radek's grandparents settled in Shepparton upon arriving in Australia from Albania and Radek's father was born there. Radek is an alumnus of La Trobe, is a member of the La Trobe Campaign Cabinet, and he and Helen Sali have a strong commitment to supporting Aboriginal people and communities. La Trobe is proud to be associated with the Sali name and is deeply grateful for Mr and Mrs Sali's generosity.

The proposal

In initial discussions with La Trobe, the Kaeila Institute identified two key things: 1) that there is a distinct need for qualifications in business among the Aboriginal community and; 2) that participation in the economy of the area was often dependent on a university bachelors degree and industry experience but that the cost of undertaking business degrees is largely prohibitive for Aboriginal community members. Yet, there is current demand for business graduates in the Shepparton and Goulburn Murray regions, particularly in financial services and agribusiness. As identified growth areas for the region, this demand is expected to increase over coming years.

La Trobe and the Kaeila Institute thus propose to establish scholarships for Aboriginal community members in the Shepparton and broader Goulburn Murray region to undertake Bachelor of Business degrees.

The scholarships and accompanying program would:

- Give Aboriginal people living in Shepparton and the Goulburn Murray region the opportunity to apply for a scholarship to undertake a Bachelor of Business online or Bachelor of Business (Agribusiness) online
- Not confine eligibility to recent school leavers, but be open to any eligible Aboriginal person
- Provide vital financial support for tuition, living costs, technology, books and resources, travel and accommodation
- Include on-campus support provided by our Aboriginal Strategy, Education and Community Liaison Office, including access to tutoring
- Include a bespoke face-to-face mentoring support program
- Include a 'work-integrated learning' experience (that is, work experience in business) which is an opportunity built into all La Trobe Bachelor of Business degrees. This may include internships with Light Warrior (Mr Sali's company)
- Include leadership-development programs and activities as part of the degree course

Projected outcomes and impact

Closing the Aboriginal Gap in the Goulburn Murray Region, a report undertaken by Deloitte Access Economics for the Kaiela Institute in 2018, develops two alternative scenarios that are used as inputs for economic modelling. The first (the baseline) assumes that current trends in Aboriginal life expectancy, employment and workforce productivity prevail through to 2036. The other scenario maps gradual improvement across these domains to a closing of the gap by 2036.

The modelling shows that the gross regional product (GRP) for the Goulburn Murray region would be \$150 million higher (2016-17 prices) in the second scenario. In addition, GRP increases by \$16 million for the rest of Victoria and \$5 million for the rest of Australia. Increasing the capacity of Aboriginal people in the region has a flow-on effect to the rest of the community through aspiration-raising – ‘if they can do it, why not me?’ – and the benefits that accrue to siblings, children and extended kinship groups through an increase in employability and thus greater participation in the regional economy.

The report notes that programs developed as a result of engagement with the Aboriginal community that promote Aboriginal prosperity and encourage economic participation, rather than interventions or welfare, are far more likely to succeed.

Table 2.2 Labour force and household income data (2016)

	Australian non-Indigenous population	Australian Indigenous population	Goulburn Murray non-Indigenous population	Goulburn Murray Indigenous population
Labour force participation rate	64.9%	53.9%	60.1%	50.3%
Unemployment rate	6.6%	18.2%	5.4%	17.0%
Median weekly household income (\$ per week)	\$1,438*	\$1,203	\$1,135*	\$935

Source: ABS Census 2016, Indigenous population profile. (2015-2016 data used). * Weekly household income estimates do not exclude Indigenous people.

[Table: page 11 of the Deloitte report]

While there has been some improvement in the past decade, the Goulburn Murray region performs poorly on high-school completion rates of Aboriginal people compared to the national Aboriginal average and also compared to non-Aboriginal people in the region: only 25% of the Goulburn Murray adult Aboriginal population has completed year 12 compared to 38% of the local non-Indigenous population. When viewed against the national non-Aboriginal population completion rate of 57% the gap is stark – it also shows the relative disadvantage of the Goulburn Murray region.

But it is the figures on post-school education attainment that are most pertinent here. In the Goulburn Murray region, 13% of non-Aboriginal people hold a bachelor's degree or higher, compared with only 5% of Aboriginal people, though the attainment of diploma and certificate-level qualifications is approximately equal between the two groups.

The report also notes the heavy under-representation of Aboriginal Australians in a number of higher-wage occupations in the Goulburn Murray region. This includes

- Managers – 9% of employed Aboriginal persons versus 17% of employed non-Aboriginal persons

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- Professionals: 13% of employed Aboriginal persons as opposed to 15% of employed non-Aboriginal persons (the gap is much larger at the national level – at 14% and 23% respectively)

While any gap is unacceptable, these figures show that inequity in the 'Manager' category is particularly notable, with Aboriginal community members seeming to be 'locked out' of advancing to this level.

This scholarship program seeks to address this directly by enabling Aboriginal people in the Goulburn Murray region to undertake La Trobe Bachelor of Business degrees that provide work experience and leadership-development skills to prepare graduates to move into manager-level roles.

The proposed program: details

One of the barriers to undertaking and completing university degrees for people in regional areas is cost. The Sali Shepparton Scholarship Program would provide not only fee coverage but also a living allowance for students which would allow them to concentrate on their studies by reducing the need for excessive outside-work responsibilities. These would be provided for the three years of the degree. A one-off bursary would be provided in the first year to fund the cost of any technology required to undertake the degree online, and another one-off bursary in the second or third year to fund travel and accommodation associated with Mr Sali's generous offer of a work-integrated-learning experience at Light Warrior.

A contingency amount would be sequestered to fund the cost of optional additions to the program. This may include, for example, the international experience open to students in the second or third year of the degree. Students have an opportunity to undertake an International Sustainability experience and work with communities on sustainable development projects in either the second or third year of the degree. All costs of travel and accommodation are covered in the degree fees; however, the cost of visas and spending money is not.

Scholarship recipients will have access to La Trobe's existing learning and support programs, health and wellbeing services, career advice, student success services, and on-campus spaces and resources at La Trobe's Shepparton campus. In addition, there are Aboriginal specific support services available, including the Shepparton Aboriginal Student Support Office, which is managed by the Aboriginal Academic Enrichment Coordinator, and the Aboriginal Academic Enrichment Program (IAEP) which provides one-on-one or group tutoring and exam preparation, and social gatherings. The Sali Shepparton Scholarship Program will fund a bi-weekly face-to-face "Yarning Session" mentoring program specifically for these scholarship recipients, featuring mentors and guest speakers from the La Trobe alumni community, the La Trobe Business School and the Kaiela Institute. This is designed to ensure that students have the chance to develop face-to-face relationships with their peers, who can support and motivate each other over the duration of the online degree.

The scholarship will, where possible, link in with existing La Trobe outreach and access programs, including the Bradford Shepparton Pathways Program, which is delivered at the Greater Shepparton Secondary College, and the I-Aspire program, which rewards Aboriginal students engaged in leadership and community work by offering them an early conditional offer to La Trobe University.

The partnership with the Kaiela Institute will add yet another rich element to scholarship recipients' university and learning experience by providing them with additional support services. Kaiela's headquarters will serve as an additional 'home' or 'base' for students where they will have the chance to meet and network with people in their

community, broadening their career aspirations and setting them up for life post-university. The Rumbalara Football Netball Club is closely associated with Kaiela and is another community for students to get involved with.

Eligibility requirements for the scholarship will be developed with the Kaiela Institute; however, in principle applications will be assessed on La Trobe's existing merit and equity criteria, and open to any Aboriginal person in the Shepparton and Goulburn Murray region for study online at La Trobe's Shepparton campus. Applications from Yorta Yorta people living outside the region will be considered on a case by case basis.

We estimate that the Sali gift will support two (2) students through a three-year degree program. This will make a significant contribution not only to the futures and economic potential of those individual students, but to building capacity in the Goulburn Murray region for Aboriginal people to progress to manager-level positions in the region. The social returns of this will be immense: as more Aboriginal people take their place in the business-leader community, aspirations more broadly will rise. This will, it is hoped, have more broad-reaching, cumulative effects on other barriers for Aboriginal people in the region, including aspirations to complete secondary schooling in order to move on to bachelor-level degrees.

Estimated costs of the Sali Shepparton Scholarship Program:

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	TOTAL
Estimated fees	\$11,200	\$11,200	\$11,200	
Living allowance	\$26,000	\$26,000	\$26,000	
Textbooks	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	
Technology allowance	\$ 2,000			
Travel/accommodation for WIL at Light Warrior		\$ 2,500		
TOTAL per annum	\$40,200	\$40,700	\$38,200	\$119,100
TOTAL 2 x students				\$238,200
Mentoring program x 2 hrs p/wk of semester	\$ 2,400	\$ 2,400	\$ 2,400	\$ 7,200
Contingency				\$ 5,000
TOTAL program cost over 3 years				\$250,400

La Trobe and the Kaiela Institute are committed to jointly marketing and promoting the Sali Shepparton Scholarship Program to their networks in the local community and are committed to finding the best candidates. The Program will be formally launched at an event held at the Rumbalara Football Netball Club Shepparton, building awareness of the Sali's, La Trobe's and the Kaiela Institute's shared goal of increasing the capacity of Aboriginal community members to wholly and equitably participate in the economy of the region and benefit from the socio-economic benefits participation delivers, and celebrate the impact that this scholarship program will have on achieving this goal.

Appendix 1: The La Trobe Bachelor of Business Course Structure

— First year				
Semester 1	BUS1SBY	BUS1AFB	MGT1OBE	OPTION
	Sustainability	Principles of Accounting and Finance	Organisational Behaviour	Major, Minor or Level 1 Elective subject (15 cp)
Semester 2	BUS1BUE	BUS1BAN	MKT1MDP	OPTION
	Economic Issues and Public Policy	Analysing Business Data	Fundamentals of Marketing	Major or Level 1 Elective subject (15 cp)
— Second year				
Semester 1	LST2BSL	OPTION	OPTION	OPTION
	Introduction to Business Law and Ethics	Major, Level 1 or Level 2 Elective subject (15 cp)	Major, Level 1 or Level 2 Elective subject (15 cp)	Minor or Level 2 Elective subject (15 cp)
Semester 2	BUS2TBS	MGT2IMG	OPTION	OPTION
	Trends in Modern Business and Society	Managing Across Borders	Major or Level 2 Elective subject (15 cp)	Level 2 Elective subject (15 cp)
— Third year				
Semester 1	BUS3DIG	MGT3LWM	OPTION	OPTION
	Digital Business	Leadership	Major or Level 3 Elective subject (15 cp)	Major, Minor or Level 3 Elective subject (15 cp)
Semester 2	BUS3ENT	OPTION	OPTION	OPTION
	Entrepreneurship	Major or Level 3 Elective subject (15 cp)	Level 3 Elective subject (15 cp)	Minor or Level 3 Elective subject (15 cp)

Business majors available in Shepparton

- Accounting
- Agribusiness
- Management and Marketing

Majors from outside the Business School:

- English
- History
- Sociology

Business minors available in Shepparton:

- Environmental Management
- Management
- Marketing