

# EQUITY, DIVERSITY, & INCLUSION



## STRATEGY

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

**LA TROBE UNIVERSITY ACKNOWLEDGES THAT OUR CAMPUSES ARE LOCATED ON THE UNCEDED LANDS OF MANY TRADITIONAL CUSTODIANS IN VICTORIA AND NEW SOUTH WALES. WE RECOGNISE THEIR ONGOING CONNECTION TO THE LAND AND VALUE THEIR UNIQUE CONTRIBUTION TO THE UNIVERSITY AND WIDER AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY.**

La Trobe University is committed to providing opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, both as people and communities through teaching and learning, research and community partnerships across all of our campuses.

La Trobe University has campuses and undertakes teaching, learning and research activities in the traditional lands of the following people:

- Wurundjeri
- Boonerwung
- Jaara Jaara
- Latji Latji
- Gadigal
- Barkindji
- Muthi Muthi
- Wiradjuri
- Dhudhuroa
- Yorta Yorta
- Bangerang
- Taunerong
- WayWurru

We pay our respects to their Elders, past and present and thank them for their ongoing care of the land, skies and waterways of this beautiful country. We acknowledge our Indigenous staff and students for their valuable contributions, dedication and ongoing support of our strategic objectives.

<sup>1</sup> Indigenous peoples is used in this document when acknowledging the diverse populations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of this land. In this Strategy 'Indigenous peoples' is used as the preferred term to represent First Nations Peoples of Australia and the Countries they belong to. These terms are interchangeable.

Indigenous art by Dixon Patten of Bayila Creative

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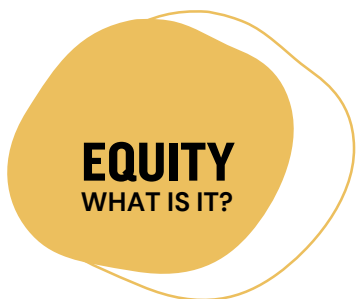
Artwork featured in this Strategy  
is by Troy Firebrace.



# INTRODUCTION

La Trobe University's Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy demonstrates our commitment to create an environment where every member of our community<sup>2</sup> —staff, students, alumni, and partners—feels respected, valued, and empowered. Using a strengths-based and intersectional<sup>3</sup> approach, ensures inclusivity for everyone at La Trobe University. Together, through commitment and action, we will create a vibrant, inclusive, and equitable university.

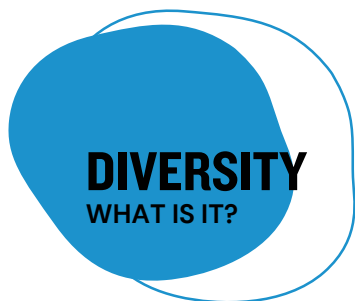
## WHAT IS EDI?



*Equity involves ensuring fair treatment, access, and opportunities for everyone. Unlike equality, which treats everyone the same, equity recognises that people may require different resources or supports to achieve similar outcomes.*

### WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

By providing tailored resources, support, and opportunities, we address disparities, create a fairer environment, and enable everyone to succeed and contribute to collective success.



*Diversity involves recognising and valuing a range of identities, perspectives, experiences, and contributions, including differences in race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, disability, socioeconomic status, religion, culture, age, qualifications, skills, lived experiences, ideas, knowledge, opinions, thinking and problem-solving approaches.*

### WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

By embracing these differences, we foster an environment where diverse contributions thrive and are considered in decision-making, enhancing learning, teaching, research, and overall institutional performance.



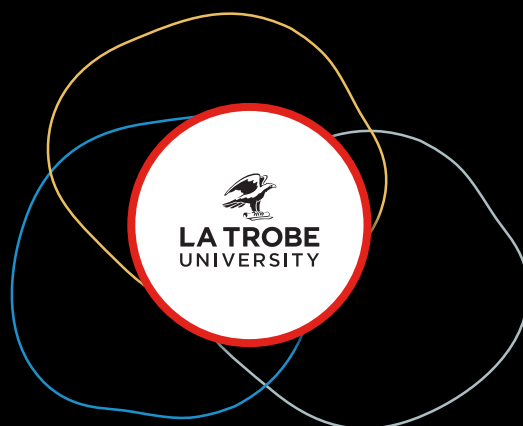
*Inclusion is the practice of creating spaces where everyone feels respected, valued, and has a sense of belonging. It involves actively engaging and empowering a diverse range of people, ensuring all voices are heard, and everyone has opportunities to fully participate and thrive.*

### WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Diversity alone is not enough, people must feel valued, heard, and empowered to contribute. True belonging enables full participation, collaboration and growth, strengthening communities and driving better outcomes for all.

## EDI IN AN ORGANISATION

In an EDI context, organisations commit to policies, practices, and cultures that promote equity, embrace diversity, and foster inclusion, creating environments where all individuals can thrive and reach their full potential.



<sup>2</sup> Community encompasses our staff, students, alumni, and partners and the surrounding communities we serve.

<sup>3</sup> Intersectionality: We recognise that people have diverse identities and experiences shaped by intersecting factors such as race, gender, ability, socioeconomic background, and more. Our commitment to intersectionality means understanding these systems of privilege and oppression and addressing the unique challenges to create an inclusive environment for all.

## EDI AT LA TROBE

# HONOURING OUR HISTORY, SHAPING OUR FUTURE

La Trobe has a long-standing history for academic excellence, progressive thought and strong community engagement.

Established in 1967, La Trobe was the third university founded in Victoria. Our Bundoora location, amongst Melbourne's outer-suburban communities, enabled us to attract a diverse student body, including many first-generation university students.

From the outset, La Trobe differentiated itself by specialising in the sciences and humanities, distinct from other universities. Our early years were defined by intellectual inquiry, social activism and a commitment to social justice. We are proud to be a university founded on and driven by social justice, which continues to drive us today.

Our regional campuses play a critical role in expanding access to higher education for students in regional and rural communities. With campuses in Albury-Wodonga, Bendigo, Shepparton, and Mildura, and most recently in Sydney, we have deepened our connection to these communities and strengthened our commitment to equity in education. These campuses not only provide pathways to university for students, but also foster regional development through research, partnerships and community engagement.

## RECENT GLOBAL RECOGNITION

TOP 20  
GLOBALLY

FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO UN  
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (2024)

#1  
VICTORIA

FOR GENDER EQUALITY  
(THE IMPACT RANKINGS 2024)

TOP 4  
AUSTRALIA

TOP 250  
GLOBALLY

IN THE QS WORLD  
UNIVERSITY RANKINGS (2025)

#4  
AUSTRALIA

FOR ADVANCING HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES  
AND HEALTH EQUITY (2024)

12<sup>TH</sup>  
GLOBALLY

## KEY MILESTONES

# EDI AT LA TROBE

**1980s**

**Pioneering Gender Studies**

Launched one of Australia's first **Women's Studies** courses, later evolving into **Gender, Sexuality, and Diversity Studies**.

**1990s**

**Expanding Regional Access**

**Established campuses** in Albury-Wodonga, Bendigo, Shepparton, and Mildura, strengthening equity in education for regional communities.

**1993**

**Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society (ARCSHS)** – Advancing research on sex, sexuality, health, education, and social justice.

**2008**

**Olga Tennison Autism Research Centre (OTARC)** – Australia's first dedicated Autism research centre.

**2019**

**Achieved Science in Australia Gender Equity (SAGE) Bronze Accreditation** for gender equity in higher education and STEM.

Appointment of **inaugural Pro Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous)**

**2017**

**Sydney Campus**

**Expanded beyond Victoria** with our first New South Wales campus.

**2017**

Established the **Gender Equity and Diversity (GEDI) Function**, focused on advancing gender equity and inclusion.

**2022**

Established **EDI Committee**, and **CALD, Disability, Gender Equity and LGBTIQ+ Working Groups**.

**2021-2023**

**Launched a series of interconnected Action Plans:** Gender Equality Action Plan (2021), SAGE Silver Action Plan (2021), Universal Design and Inclusion Action Plan (2023), Sexual Harm Prevention and Response Action Plan (2023), and Indigenous Strategy (2022).

**2023**

**Care Economy Research Institute** – Australia's first multidisciplinary research centre focused on the Care Economy.

**2023**

Launched the **Gender Affirmation Support Plan** and introduced **Paid Gender Affirmation Leave**.

**2023**

**Awarded the First SAGE Cygnet** for supporting academic promotions of women and diverse staff.

**2024**

**Awarded Second SAGE Cygnet** recognising support for carers and parents to advance their careers.

**Key**

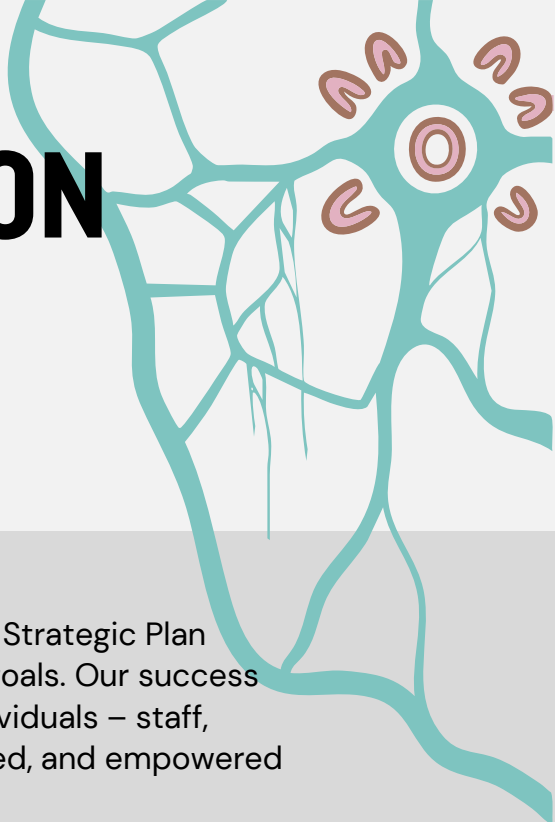
Expanding Reach

Leading Research

Progressing EDI

# DEEP CONNECTION

## LA TROBE'S STRATEGIC PLAN & EDI STRATEGY



### STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

The *EDI Strategy* is **deeply connected** to La Trobe's Strategic Plan 2025–2030, supporting our long-term institutional goals. Our success is built on the foundation of inclusivity, where all individuals – staff, students, alumni and partners – are valued, supported, and empowered to contribute their unique perspectives.

#### ▶ PEOPLE ARE AT THE HEART OF OUR STRATEGY

Achieving our strategic plan requires a strong commitment to EDI from everyone.

#### ▶ EDI IS THE FOUNDATION OF OUR SUCCESS

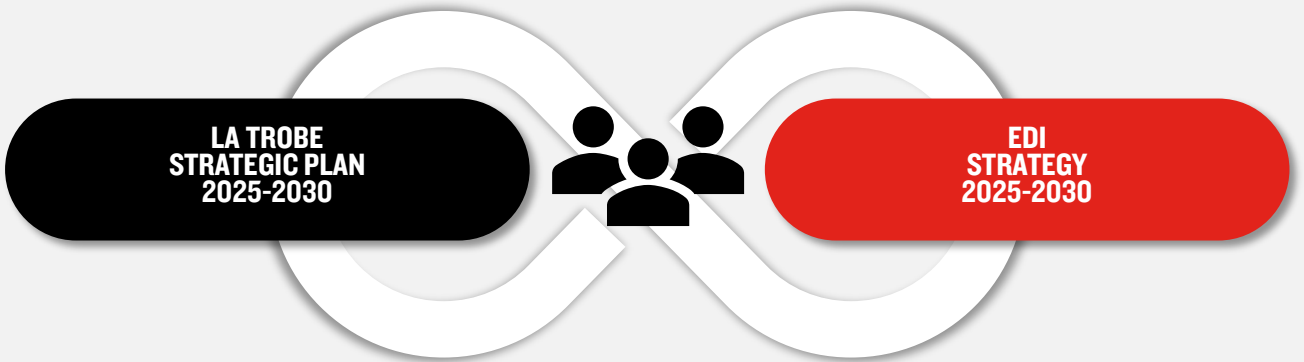
EDI cultivates an environment where everyone can thrive, driving respect, collaboration, and a unified sense of purpose.

#### ▶ IMPACT ON EXCELLENCE

Our EDI Strategy fosters a diverse, equitable, and inclusive environment that enhances learning, teaching, research, and overall institutional excellence.

#### ▶ INTEGRATED EDI APPROACH

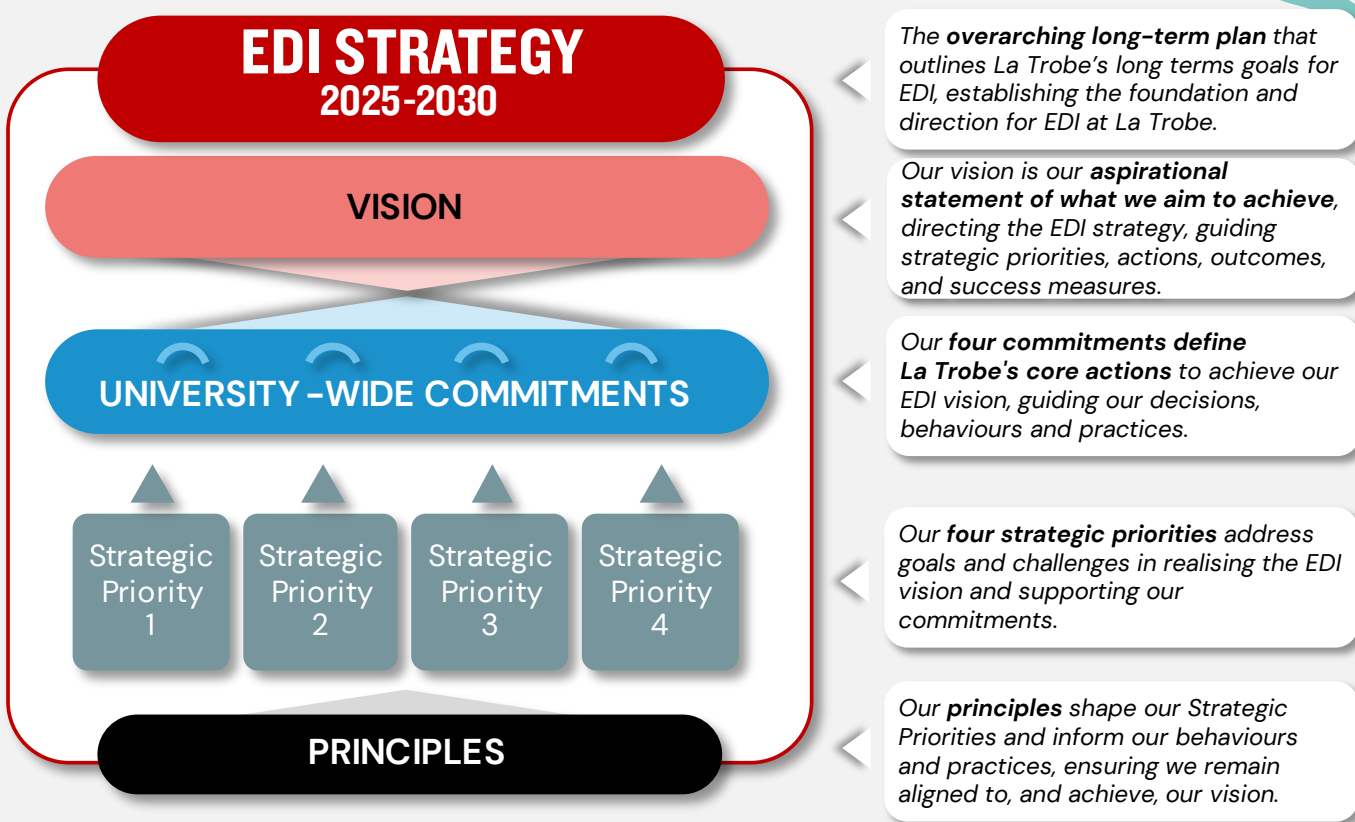
EDI is seamlessly embedded into policies, strategies, and frameworks, ensuring meaningful change and enabling every individual to contribute to our collective success and shared vision.



# UNDERSTANDING

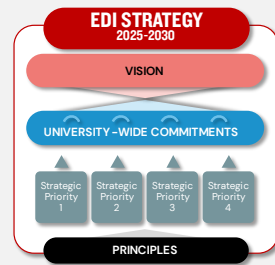
## LA TROBE'S EDI STRATEGY COMPONENTS

Our *EDI Strategy* outlines our vision, four University-wide commitments, four strategic priorities and five principles to enable us to progress EDI at La Trobe.





# EDI STRATEGY 2025-2030



## AT A GLANCE

*Transforming La Trobe through Equity, Diversity and Inclusion to drive growth and **REAL IMPACT**.*

### VISION



OUR VISION FOR LA TROBE IS FOR EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION TO TRANSFORM THE EXPERIENCES OF OUR STAFF, STUDENTS, ALUMNI, AND PARTNERS, DRIVING EXCELLENCE IN LEARNING, TEACHING, RESEARCH, AND INSTITUTIONAL PERFORMANCE.

### UNIVERSITY-WIDE COMMITMENTS



WE CULTIVATE A COLLABORATIVE COMMUNITY

WE CREATE A DIVERSE CAMPUS CULTURE

WE PRIORITISE SOCIAL JUSTICE

WE COMMIT TO EDI AS A CORE PRIORITY

### STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



1

STRENGTHEN EDI KNOWLEDGE & PRACTICES

2

CREATE INCLUSIVE CAMPUSES & CULTURE

3

EMPOWER DIVERSE COMMUNITY GROWTH

4

ADVANCE EDI THROUGH ACCOUNTABILITY & LEADERSHIP

### OUTCOMES



- ▶ Consistently understood and applied understanding of EDI
- ▶ Inclusive curriculum
- ▶ Alumni and partners engaged in on EDI

- ▶ Inclusive and welcoming campuses
- ▶ Strengthened community impact
- ▶ A culture of inclusion and success

- ▶ Equitable access and representation
- ▶ Equitable systems and opportunities
- ▶ Recognising community contribution

- ▶ Embedded EDI commitment in La Trobe strategies
- ▶ Transparent reporting and continuous improvement
- ▶ Leaders equipped with EDI skills

### PRINCIPLES



FOSTER SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

DRIVE MEANINGFUL CHANGE

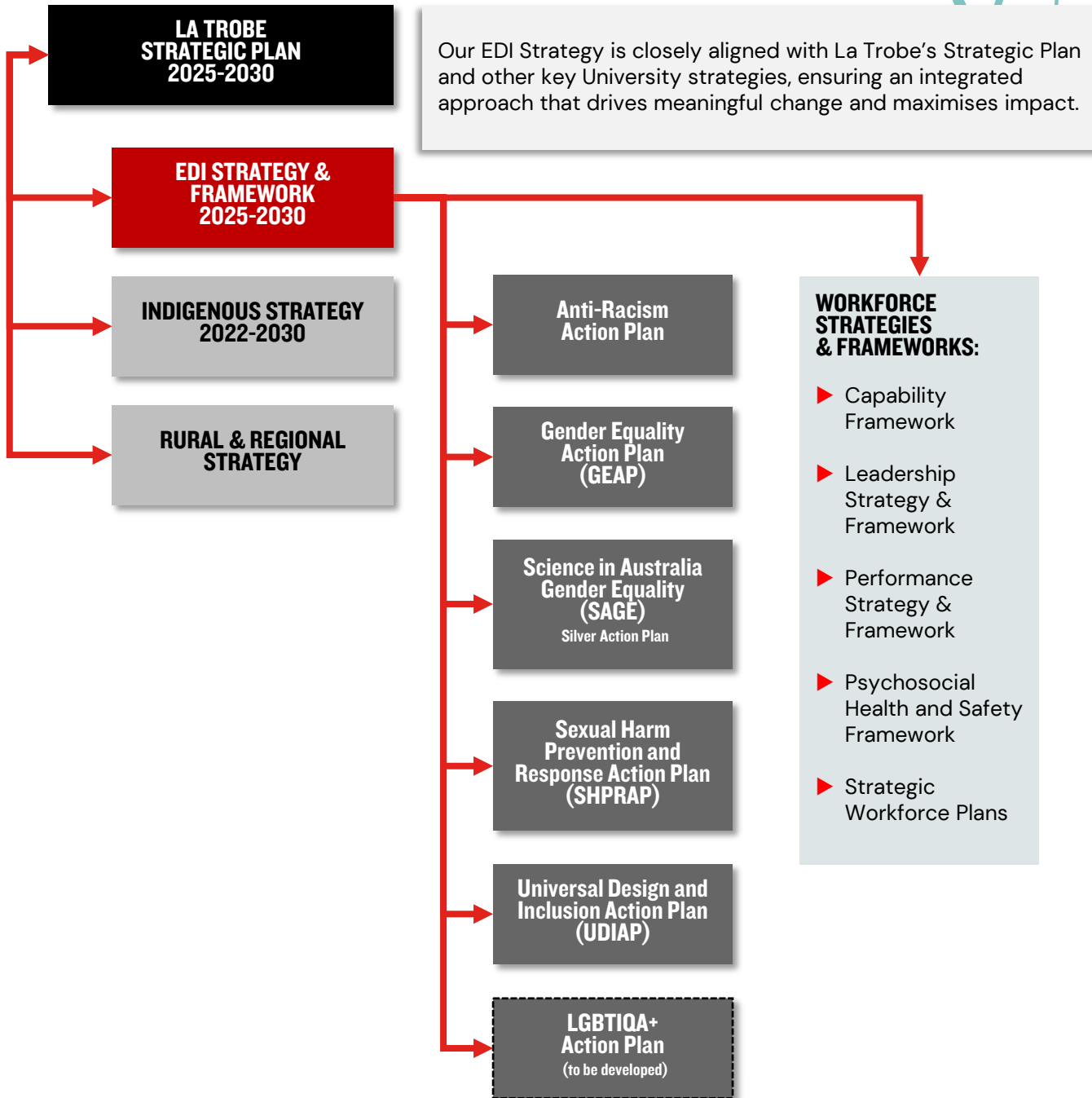
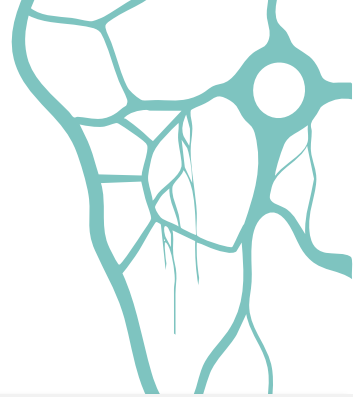
UPHOLD EQUITY & HUMAN RIGHTS

EMBRACE DIVERSE LIVED EXPERIENCES

BUILD LASTING IMPACT

# EDI IN ACTION

## CONNECTING STRATEGY & IMPACT



### FUTURE OF EDI AT LA TROBE

We have made significant progress with EDI particularly over the last three years, driven by the commitment and advocacy of our staff, students and community members. We recognise that meaningful progress takes time and that our journey has not been without its challenges, particularly for staff and students with lived experience. This only strengthens our commitment to listening, learning and continuing improving.

As we move forward and work together to advance EDI, we will empower the voices of those with lived experience to inform our priorities. We will mature our approach by strengthening our data, and adopting an evidenced based, systemic and integrated, whole-of-university approach, to drive greater impact and create meaningful change, ensuring everyone feels valued and empowered at La Trobe to thrive.

## CASE STUDY |

### Responding to racism: The influence of representation and advocacy

In May 2022, Deepa Balakrishnan was appointed Co-Chair of the Cultural and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Working Group. Following her appointment, she was contacted by culturally and linguistically diverse staff from across the university sharing their experiences of racism.

Recognising the need for a structured approach, Deepa proposed engagement of an independent consultancy called Mind Tribes to the EDI Committee to create safe spaces for dialogue. Supported by the Vice Chancellor and the EDI Committee, the listening circles provided by Mind Tribes allowed staff to share their experiences anonymously. The insights gathered were instrumental in shaping discussions with the Senior Executive Group (SEG), highlighting the urgent need for actionable steps to combat racism.

The establishment of the Anti-Racism Taskforce marked a significant stride in the University's commitment to fostering an inclusive workplace. The Taskforce, consisting of members with lived experiences of racism, was tasked with developing an anti-racism action plan. Through these efforts, the University aims to build a culture of mutual respect and support, ensuring all employees feel valued and empowered to contribute to the University's mission.

## CASE STUDY | Call me by my name: Addressing naming in Student Systems

In early 2022, Finn\*, working at ASK La Trobe, identified a significant issue within the University's CRM system that affected trans and gender-diverse, and culturally diverse students. The system sends emails directly to students with an uneditable header automatically using the students' legal first names, leading to instances of deadnaming or misnaming – the act of referring to someone by their legal name instead of their chosen name.

Finn took the issue to the University's LGBTIQ+ Working Group, where it was confirmed that other staff and students had faced similar challenges. Finn then collaborated with the Deputy Director of Student Success to address the issue of deadnaming in the system, leading to a successful update in October 2022 that allowed the system to use students' chosen names. Following this, staff advocacy efforts continued, resulting in a 2024 discovery project to investigate updating staff-facing systems to improve inclusiveness, with the University committing to these updates in 2025.

\*Not real name



## HEARING OUR COMMUNITY:

# KEY CONSULTATION INSIGHTS

### INTRODUCTION

Our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy and Framework was developed through a comprehensive process, incorporating research into leading practices across higher education, the public sector and other industries. While we recognise existing challenges with collecting intersectional demographic data, particularly workforce data, we are committed to strengthening our data approach. To ensure a robust understanding of diverse experiences, we drew insights from existing experience surveys and a dedicated consultation process, engaging a wide range of staff and student voices across La Trobe.

We utilised knowledge and expertise from across the University to develop the strategy. This approach ensures alignment with best practices for creating effective, enterprise-level strategies. The goal is to establish a practical and sustainable organisational framework that supports La Trobe's long-term success and growth.

### CONSULTATION APPROACH

From June to September 2024, a comprehensive consultation engaged staff and students across La Trobe. This included scoping conversations, an online questionnaire, and 31 facilitated consultation sessions across all campuses. In total, 238 attendees and 181 questionnaire responses were received.

A project reference group was established with representatives from across the University to provide regular input, advice and feedback on the consultation approach and strategy development. Members included academic and professional staff, people with lived experience, people in student-facing roles, functional area representatives and members of our EDI Advisory Groups. The EDI Committee provided overall strategic oversight and governance and was consulted during the development process.

### INSIGHTS FROM CONSULTATION

Insights gathered through the consultations highlighted the key themes below:



#### CARE AND SUPPORT

Participants expressed that care and support are strong within La Trobe but are experienced inconsistently across different areas of the university. There is a clear need for more systemic application and enhanced support mechanisms to ensure a more positive experience for all.



#### CAPABILITY UPLIFT

Participants indicated the need and desire for EDI training and resources to build an informed and inclusive workforce and culture at La Trobe.



#### TRANSPARENCY AND LEADERSHIP

People raised concerns regarding a lack of transparency and visible leadership in EDI decision-making. A desire for clear communication and accountability was expressed.



#### WELLBEING AND SUPPORT

Respondents reported positive experiences of wellbeing and support, however, a need for more consistent and ongoing assistance was sought with an emphasis on fostering connections and support networks.



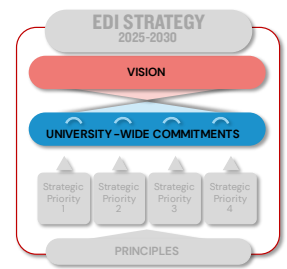
#### PLACE AND PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

People spoke of a desire for a tailored approach to meet the unique needs of each campus, while also addressing the need for improved accessibility, safety and inclusivity for all community members.



#### DIVERSE REPRESENTATION

Participants, particularly from diverse backgrounds, spoke of disparities in recruitment, retention, and career and education pathways and progression. People agreed there was a need for improved intersectional data collection and targeted initiatives to promote inclusivity and equitable opportunities.



# OUR VISION

*Transforming La Trobe through Equity, Diversity and Inclusion to drive growth and **REAL IMPACT**.*



**OUR VISION FOR LA TROBE IS FOR EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION (EDI) TO TRANSFORM THE EXPERIENCES OF OUR STAFF, STUDENTS, ALUMNI, AND PARTNERS, DRIVING EXCELLENCE IN LEARNING, TEACHING, RESEARCH, AND INSTITUTIONAL PERFORMANCE.**



## OUR COMMITMENTS

Our vision is underpinned by **four University commitments**. These commitments define La Trobe's core actions to achieve our EDI vision, guiding our decisions, behaviours and practices to create an inclusive, diverse, and equitable environment for all.

1

### **WE CULTIVATE A COLLABORATIVE CULTURE**

where staff, students, alumni, and partners collaborate with mutual respect, shared accountability, and a commitment to continuous learning. This collaborative culture empowers, supports, and equips everyone to thrive, contribute meaningfully and succeed.

2

### **WE CREATE A DIVERSE CAMPUS CULTURE**

that celebrates diversity in thought, experience, and identity, where inclusive participation is the norm, and equitable access to opportunities is assured. By ensuring equitable outcomes for all members of our community, we advance individual and collective performance, wellbeing, and institutional success.

3

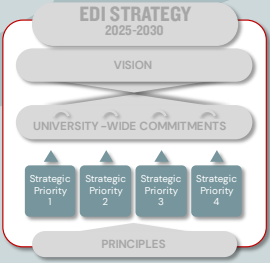
### **WE PRIORITISE SOCIAL JUSTICE**

which is deeply embedded in the cultural fabric of La Trobe and reflected in our Cultural Qualities. This commitment drives lasting societal impact through research excellence, innovative teaching and strategic partnerships. By fostering systemic change, we deliver measurable benefits to the communities we serve, reflecting our commitment to social responsibility, equity and innovation.

4

### **WE COMMIT TO EDI AS A CORE PRIORITY**

to drive sustainable institutional growth, foster innovation, and ensure we remain at the forefront of academic excellence, delivering real and lasting impact.



# OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Our four strategic priorities guide our actions to build EDI knowledge and practices, foster inclusive campus environments, empower our diverse community, and ensure effective leadership and accountability. These priorities are designed to drive meaningful and lasting change, embedding EDI into everything we do to achieve our vision of progress, growth, innovation, and real impact at La Trobe.

## ▶ PRIORITY 1 STRENGTHEN EDI KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICES

We will build the understanding and confidence of our community by integrating EDI principles into work, learning, behaviours, and daily practices for staff, students, alumni, and partners, while fostering an environment of shared accountability to ensure ongoing growth and engagement.

## ▶ PRIORITY 2 CREATE INCLUSIVE CAMPUSES AND CULTURE

We will create welcoming learning, working and campus environments, both physical and online by integrating locally tailored strategies that reflect the needs of each campus and digital space, fostering a unified La Trobe identity whilst positively impacting the broader communities.

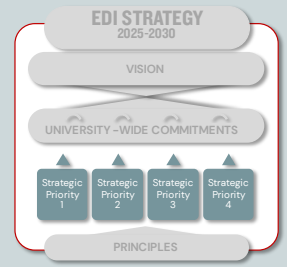
## ▶ PRIORITY 3 EMPOWER DIVERSE COMMUNITY GROWTH

We will harness the strengths of our diverse community where all people are supported and empowered to thrive, creating opportunities for everyone to grow and succeed.

## ▶ PRIORITY 4 ADVANCE EDI THROUGH ACCOUNTABILITY AND LEADERSHIP

We will demonstrate effective leadership and institutional commitment to EDI by integrating these responsibilities at all levels of leadership, establishing clear accountability structures, and fostering a dedication to proactive involvement that drives measurable progress, continuous improvement, and meaningful change.

# **PRIORITY 1** **STRENGTHEN EDI** **KNOWLEDGE** **AND PRACTICES**



## **Purpose:**

We will build the understanding and confidence of our community by integrating EDI principles into work, learning, behaviours, and daily practices for staff, students, alumni, and partners, while fostering an environment of shared accountability to ensure ongoing growth and engagement.



## **Outcomes:**

**1. Consistently understood and applied understanding of EDI:** Staff and students develop a consistent understanding of EDI principles through training, resources, and reflection, fostering an environment of curiosity, continuous learning, and confident application in their work and study.

**2. Inclusive curriculum:** EDI principles and inclusive design are embedded into academic programs, ensuring accessibility and enabling students to engage with diverse perspectives and inclusive curriculum and teaching.

**3. Alumni and partners engaged in on EDI:** Alumni and partners contribute to EDI through programs, mentorship, and advocacy, strengthening La Trobe's commitment to inclusivity across its community.



## **Success Indicators:**

**Gathering feedback on capability and assessing training effectiveness:** Training completion rates and qualitative feedback will be assessed to measure the effectiveness, relevance, and real-world application of EDI training, ensuring broad participation and continuous improvement.

**Applying EDI knowledge in practice:** Staff, students, alumni and partners share stories and case studies illustrating how EDI concepts are applied in real-life contexts, such as teaching methods, research, collaboration and community engagement.

**Tracking alumni and partner engagement in EDI:** Measure alumni participation in EDI-focused events and mentorship programs, alongside the growth of external partnerships that actively incorporate and promote EDI principles.

## **CASE STUDY | Embracing cultural safety: The impact of EDI capability**

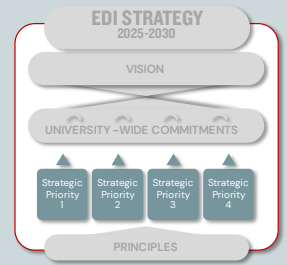
Grace\*, working at Rainbow Health Australia, part of the Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society (ARCSHS), found a uniquely inclusive environment during their employment. Transitioning during their tenure, Grace has experienced a workplace culture at ARCSHS that prioritises respect, inclusivity, and cultural safety. Practices such as sharing and asking for pronouns when meeting a colleague for the first time, ensuring colleagues' identities were consistently respected, and creating a supportive atmosphere made them feel seen and valued. This environment significantly enhanced their motivation and productivity.

The team's approach extends beyond basic policies, incorporating innovative practices rooted in neurophysiology and trauma-informed care. Staff meetings often begin with grounding activities to regulate and calibrate nervous systems, acknowledging the physical and emotional needs of staff. The role of a 'critical friend'—a team member assigned to observe meeting dynamics, ensuring equitable participation and addressing power imbalances—further evidences the organisation's commitment to inclusivity. This culture enabled Grace to thrive professionally, contributing effectively to the organisation's goals while supporting their colleagues' wellbeing.

\*Not real name



## **PRIORITY 2** **CREATE INCLUSIVE** **CAMPUSES AND CULTURE**



### **Purpose:**

We will create welcoming learning, working and campus environments, both physical and online by integrating locally tailored strategies that reflect the needs of each campus and digital space, fostering a unified La Trobe identity whilst positively impacting the broader communities.



### **Outcomes:**

#### **1. Inclusive and welcoming campuses:**

Create a physical campus and virtual experience that enhances survey results, retention rates, and overall satisfaction for staff, students, alumni, and partners, while achieving *Welcoming Universities*<sup>4</sup> accreditation.

#### **2. Strengthened community impact:**

Foster meaningful relationships with local communities, demonstrating positive contributions and mutual growth through impactful partnerships and collaborative initiatives.

#### **3. A culture of inclusion and success:**

A vibrant and inclusive environment that celebrates diversity, enhances learning and teaching outcomes, promotes academic excellence, and encourages strong engagement and participation across campus activities.



### **Success Indicators:**

#### **Measuring satisfaction and diversity:**

Feedback from staff, students, alumni, and partners will be collected to assess satisfaction, safety and belonging with the campus environment and initiatives, alongside monitoring diversity metrics to demonstrate increased representation of underrepresented groups.

#### **Capturing campus climate:**

Personal experiences related to inclusion and belonging will be shared through regular listening sessions, storytelling, and forums with qualitative insights gathered to inform initiatives.

#### **Measuring community partnerships and impact:**

The number, quality, and outcomes of collaborations with local community organisations will be tracked, along with engagement levels and testimonials, to demonstrate positive contributions and mutual support.

<sup>4</sup> Welcoming Universities Accreditation is an initiative designed to recognise universities that demonstrate commitment to fostering an inclusive and welcoming environment for people of refugee backgrounds. It focuses on ensuring universities are accessible and supportive to refugees and those seeking asylum, through policies, practices, and services that promote integration, participation, and equal opportunities.

### **CASE STUDY | Community connections: Partnership with the Indian Association of Bendigo**

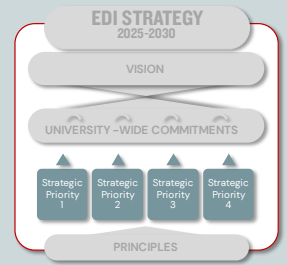
In an effort to promote diversity and celebrate Indian culture and traditions, the University has formed a meaningful partnership with the Indian Association of Bendigo. This collaboration, anchored on shared values of respect, equity, and freedom, aims to create an environment where cultural diversity is celebrated. The partnership has proven to be impactful for Indian students, establishing a support network that connects them with the broader Indian community in Bendigo through cultural events, festivals, and community discussions.

The association also plays a significant role in facilitating interactions with visiting Indian delegates. When representatives from India visit Bendigo, meetings with the Vice Chancellor exemplify the University's commitment to fostering international relationships. These interactions not only strengthen the ties between the local communities but also enhance the University's profile as an institution dedicated to cultural inclusivity and global engagement.





## **PRIORITY 3** **EMPOWER DIVERSE** **COMMUNITY GROWTH**



### **Purpose:**

We will harness the strengths of our diverse community where all people are supported and empowered to thrive, creating opportunities for everyone to grow and succeed.



### **Outcomes:**

#### **1. Equitable access and representation:**

Ensure all staff and students have equitable access to opportunities, resources and career/education pathways, while actively fostering diversity at all levels through inclusive recruitment, retention, and empowerment.

#### **2. Equitable systems and opportunities:**

Systems, processes, and policies will be continually reviewed and refined to ensure all individuals have equal opportunities to thrive academically and professionally.

#### **3. Recognising community contribution:**

The lived experiences and contributions of our community members will be acknowledged and celebrated, including through diversity focused events and days of significance.



### **Success Indicators:**

#### **Measuring inclusivity and engagement:**

Gather feedback through surveys, focus groups, and advisory group discussions to assess belonging, identify barriers, and generate actionable insights that enhance support systems and inclusivity.

#### **Measuring retention and advancement:**

The retention and advancement of all staff and students will be monitored to ensure equitable opportunities for academic and professional success.

#### **Empowered reporting and inclusive experiences:**

Foster a supportive, accessible, transparent, and culturally sensitive reporting culture for both staff and students, ensuring trust and safety. Survey results and reporting data will reflect improved inclusion, safety, and reduced negative incidents, particularly for those with lived experience.

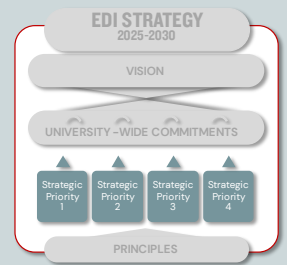
### **CASE STUDY | Supporting career progression: Academic Promotion Peer Support Program (APPS)**

In 2024, Anne-Marie participated in the APPS program – a dedicated mentoring initiative designed to support women, LGBTQIA+ people, multicultural people, and people with disabilities aspiring for academic promotion. Despite her extensive academic experience of over a decade, Anne-Marie found immense value in the guidance offered by her mentor, who generously shared her time and insights, reflecting on her own promotion journey. The program's smaller, more intimate group settings fostered a collegial atmosphere, allowing participants to openly share their challenges and successes, and receive detailed feedback on their application documents.

The mentor's ability to demystify the application process played a significant role in the participants' success. By the end of the program, all members of Anne-Marie's group achieved their promotion goals, underscoring the effectiveness of the APPS program's approach. The meaningful interactions, peer support, and the program's accessible nature were crucial elements that contributed to their achievements, demonstrating the value of mentoring and structured support in career progression.



## **PRIORITY 4** **ADVANCE EDI THROUGH ACCOUNTABILITY AND LEADERSHIP**



### **Purpose:**

We will demonstrate effective leadership and institutional commitment to EDI by integrating these responsibilities at all levels of leadership, establishing clear accountability structures, and fostering a dedication to proactive involvement that drives measurable progress, continuous improvement, and meaningful change.



### **Outcomes:**

#### **1. Embedded EDI commitment in La Trobe strategies:**

EDI principles will be consistently integrated into all significant strategies, programs, policies, and decision-making processes, including budget and resource allocation.

#### **2. Transparent reporting and continuous improvement:**

Regular updates on EDI progress will be openly shared, using feedback from staff, students, alumni, and partners to improve policies, programs, and initiatives for ongoing institutional change.

#### **3. Leaders equipped with EDI skills:**

Staff and student leaders will be equipped with the skills, knowledge, and resources to champion EDI within their areas of influence.



### **Success Indicators:**

#### **Executive leadership, accountability, and transparency:**

Ensure visible commitment to EDI through aligned strategies, active executive leadership advocacy and involvement, and transparent progress reporting. Showcase accountability through case studies and regular updates on achievements, challenges, and areas for improvement.

#### **Inclusive and accountable leadership:**

All leaders will actively champion EDI by participating in training with a focus on prevention, response, and survivor-centred approaches, modelling inclusive behaviours, and integrating EDI principles into communications, demonstrating ongoing commitment and measurable growth in EDI leadership.

#### **Increasing satisfaction with EDI leadership:**

Collect and analyse feedback from staff, students, alumni, and partners on the effectiveness of EDI leadership and practices through surveys and engagement activities, with measurable improvements in satisfaction and impact over time.

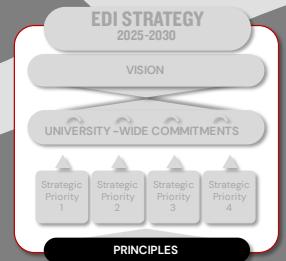
### **CASE STUDY | Inclusive leadership: Melanie Bish's journey**

Melanie (Mel) Bish, Pro Vice Chancellor (Regional), has worked across clinical, education, management and research domains of nursing that have enabled her to develop an inclusivity focused principled approach to work. From providing patient care in remote Indigenous communities to completing rural community health assessments in Borneo; teaching professional nursing subjects in Singapore to being in an international research team with colleagues from Sweden and Hong Kong focused on culture competence in higher degree by research students, Mel believes the diversity in her professional endeavours has enabled her to embrace and value difference, leading to more innovative and cohesive outcomes. In the recent role as Co-Chair of the CALD Working Group, Mel ensured an inclusive environment where colleagues could voice their experiences and discuss how to respond to challenges relating to cultural difference, reflecting her commitment to transformational leadership.

One of Mel's key aspects of leadership has been her willingness to be vulnerable and embrace feedback, striving to create a safe and inclusive environment. By actively identifying and challenging her own biases and prejudices, leading with authenticity and emotional intelligence, Mel demonstrated the importance of valuing diversity and fostering an environment of trust and respect. Her leadership journey exemplifies how embracing EDI principles can drive meaningful change and create a more inclusive community. Mel is now leading the University's work in the space as the Chair of the EDI Committee.



# PRINCIPLES



The Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy is grounded in the following principles, which provide the ethical framework and guiding values that shape our Strategic Priorities and guide our behaviours and practices, ensuring we remain aligned with, and achieve, our vision.



## **FOSTER SHARED RESPONSIBILITY:**

Creating an inclusive university where everyone plays an active role in fostering a culture of respect, safety and inclusion.



## **DRIVE MEANINGFUL CHANGE:**

Prioritising actions that deliver measurable, lasting EDI improvements, focusing on impact over outputs.



## **UPHOLD EQUITY & HUMAN RIGHTS:**

Ensuring fair access to education, resources, and opportunities so all in the La Trobe community feel safe, valued and empowered to succeed.



## **EMBRACE DIVERSE LIVED EXPERIENCES:**

Recognising and responding to the complexity of diverse identities and considering intersectionality, tailoring approaches that create meaningful opportunities for all.



## **BUILD LASTING IMPACT:**

Embedding sustainable EDI practices into policies, programs, and partnerships to drive systemic, long-term change.

**Integrating EDI in Action – the Individual**  
*Applying Our Principles Guide*

The 'Applying Our Principles' Guide is currently available via the intranet.

## CONTACT

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