



Annual Report 2024

MANNINGHAM | MONASH | WHITEHORSE

| Annual Report 2024

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we all work and live. We recognise their continuing connection to land, water, and community, and pay respects to Elders past, present, and emerging. We acknowledge that sovereignty was never ceded.

This always was, and always will be, Aboriginal Land.



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Overview

The Gateway Local Learning & Employment Network (Gateway LLEN) is an independent incorporated organisation that services contracts and funding that allow us to better support young people in our community.

In 2024, Gateway LLEN held the following contracts:



School to Work Program

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Work with local employers, industry partners and schools to improve students' access to work-based learning opportunities.



On Track Connect

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Provide referral support to local young people who are out of school and not engaged in education or employment.

120

Members

45+

Providers

150+

Businesses

Gateway LLEN has approximately 120 members in the local government areas of Manningham, Monash & Whitehorse and has strong relationships with over 45 school and education providers and more than 150 local businesses.

Chair & EO Report

We are pleased to present the Gateway LLEN 2024 Annual Report, highlighting the outstanding achievements and initiatives delivered throughout the year.

In 2024, Gateway LLEN entered the fourth year of our School to Work Common Funding Agreement with the Department of Education (DE). This pivotal stage allowed us to strike a meaningful balance between locally responsive program delivery and alignment with the strategic objectives set by our funding body.

This approach has enabled Gateway LLEN to continue playing a central role in connecting young people with real-world pathways, while also delivering innovative, place-based solutions to emerging challenges.

Throughout the year, our work has remained focused on four key priority areas:

1. Engagement with schools and local industry
2. Scaling and leveraging successful programs across the state
3. Collaboration with other School to Work providers
4. Progress towards agreed performance targets

Equitable education contributes to poverty reduction, social inclusion, and economic prosperity by increasing productivity. It fosters gender equality through women's empowerment and promotes widespread social development. It assures that every student, regardless of background has a chance to excel (Latif, 2024). This quote captures the ethos of the LLEN, having been established in 2001 on the recommendation of the Ministerial Review of Post Compulsory Education and Training Pathways (the Kirby Review). LLENS were designed to improve education and transition outcomes for young people by fostering partnerships between schools, training providers, employers, and community organisations, and this remains the core of our work in 2024.

A wide range of industry partnerships has ensured real-time industry access for young people in the region. Partnerships with key stakeholders such as Victoria Police, RSPCA, Café Education, Hawthorn Football Club, the Victorian Tunnelling Centre and Endota Spa have paved the way for exciting new projects with Eastern Health and Suburban Rail Loop. Gateway LLEN's strategic implementation model has gained recognition as innovative best practice, that caters equally to industry, schools and young people.

Building on the strong foundation, the SWL team delivered exceptional results in 2024 - achieving 161% of the annual placement target. Gateway LLEN also expanded its program delivery to 138 Victorian secondary schools and facilitated approximately 23,000 industry placement hours. These outcomes reflect the team's dedication, hard work, and commitment to excellence. We proudly acknowledge and congratulate the Gateway LLEN staff for fostering a high-performance culture that makes such success possible.

We wish to extend our gratitude to the 2024 Gateway LLEN Committee of Management (CoM) for their unwavering support and expertise throughout the year. Your guidance has been instrumental in shaping the direction of our work. We would also like to express deep appreciation to the dedicated staff of Gateway LLEN. Your professionalism and commitment are the backbone of the organisation and the work that we do. Together, the CoM and staff form the pillars of our organisation, and we take this opportunity to acknowledge and celebrate your contributions.

Finally, sincere thanks to our school and industry partners. Your ongoing support for the young people in our region is invaluable. We look forward to many more years of collaboration and shared success.

We invite you to explore the report and celebrate the collective impact of our work in empowering students, strengthening partnerships, and building a future-ready workforce.



Angela Hoare-Lippmann
CHAIR, GATEWAY LLEN COMMITTEE



Bronwen Henry
EXECUTIVE OFFICER, GATEWAY LLEN



Strategic Plan 2024



Our Vision:

Every young person is empowered to reach their full potential in education, training, and employment.

Strategic Direction



Local

We design and deliver innovative strategic interventions that connect vulnerable young people in Manningham, Monash, and Whitehorse with education, training, and employment opportunities.



Learning

We advocate for equitable, engaging learning opportunities that help every young person succeed in their educational and career journey.



Employment

We build connections between schools, businesses and industry to better identify local skills shortages and to support increased opportunities for young people to make informed career choices.



Network

We foster community connections through collaborative efforts in service coordination and local renewal initiatives.



Key Initiatives 2024

Reimagining Work Experience

Disability Pathways Work
Experience Partnership

Victoria Police simulated
recruitment

VIC VICE - Virtual Industry
Career Experience

Speed X

RSPCA Industry Immersions

Reimagining Work Experience

Beyond supporting the transition from secondary school to future pathways, immersive career experiences are vital for students.

They bring relevance to classroom learning, guide informed decision-making, and foster a sense of purpose and optimism about the opportunities education can unlock.



The Challenge

To deliver innovative, industry-informed career immersion experiences that provide meaningful alternatives to the traditional work experience model.



Reimagining Work Experience



The Result

Gateway LLEN, in collaboration with local industry and training organisations, delivered a week-long, industry based program of 'Reimagining Work Experience'. Each experience was aligned to DE priority areas of increasing access to quality work experience opportunities, and was additionally developed to address recommendations 32 and 33 of the Firth review.

First piloted in 2022 and further developed in 2023, Reimagining Work Experience offers students valuable insights into sector-specific careers and first-hand exposure to the workplace. The program focuses on priority industries and areas of interest identified by local schools, enabling meaningful engagement with key sectors.

Each experience is collaboratively designed with industry partners and typically includes a site tour, a career-focused presentation, and two hands-on, industry-relevant activities.

Key industry partners include:

- Victoria Police
- RSPCA
- Café Education
- Hawthorn Football Club
- Victorian Tunnelling Centre
- Endota Spa / Endota Wellness College
- Surveying Taskforce Victoria
- Port Authority Melbourne

In 2024, 181 year 10 students from 10 local secondary schools participated in the enhanced Reimagining Work Experience program.

An overwhelming 97% of participants said they would recommend the event series to other students, with the same percentage strongly agreeing that the activities aligned with their personal interests.

Disability Pathways Work Experience Partnership

In 2024, Gateway LLEN partnered with Cultivating Community at the Brickworks site in Burwood to deliver a tailored work experience pilot program for young people with a disability and/or additional needs. The initiative addresses a long-standing gap in access to meaningful, practical work experience - particularly in outdoor and environmental settings, which many young people with a disability express a strong interest in. For students and schools alike, securing these kinds of placements can be challenging due to limited opportunities and a lack of tailored support.



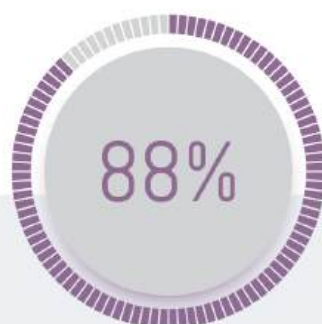
The Challenge

- Increase collaboration between Cultivating Community and local specialist schools
- Expand student awareness of career pathways/employability skills across sectors
- Explore new Cultivating Community ventures as work experience opportunities
- Support the development of students as ambassadors, volunteers, and potential employees.



The Result

6 senior students from Heatherwood School participated in Accredited Work Experience for 1 day a week across six weeks.



88% of survey respondents indicated specific interest in careers and pathways



65% of survey respondents indicated specific interest in expos and industry events



80% identified students in Years 11- 12 (General) as a priority cohort

Victoria Police simulated recruitment



The Challenge

In a new partnership activity, Victoria Police invited Gateway LLEN to nominate 15–20 VCE and VCE VM students to attend an exclusive, tailored career information session and open day designed specifically for school and university leavers.



The Result

The event booked out, with 7 students from Gateway LLEN schools attending the day.



88% of survey respondents indicated specific interest in careers and pathways



65% of survey respondents indicated specific interest in expos and industry events



80% identified students in Years 11-12 (General)



VIC VICE - Virtual Industry Career Experience

VIC VICE is an innovative virtual reality platform that helps secondary students explore careers by immersing them in real-world workplaces through interactive, multi-sensory experiences.



The Challenge

Designed to target year 7 – 10 students, VIC VICE is a modern solution to growing workforce shortages and a widening skills gap. It aims to do this by unlocking and exposing students to new career opportunities through game-like simulations as well as a panoramic, 360 virtual experience. It was developed as a more accessible option to traditional work experience.



88% of survey respondents indicated specific interest in careers and pathways



88% of survey respondents indicated preference for onsite (school-based activities)



88% indicated middle years as the student cohort who would benefit from school-industry opportunities and activities

VIC VICE - Virtual Industry Career Experience



The Result

In partnership with the state-wide VicLLEN network, VIC VICE brings to schools across Victoria:

- 360 virtual workplace environments with interactive touchpoints where students can engage in activities that are part of a typical workday
- Engaging video content featuring real people working in different industries & immersive 'hands-on' experiences that simulate workplace activities
- Gateway LLEN is currently working with a Youth Advisory Committee (YAC) to gain insights into how students will utilise the virtual reality platform and gather their ideas for future development.

Ideas and feedback collected during Gateway LLEN-facilitated Youth Advisory Committees (YAC) have been successfully used to roll out the program to secondary schools across the region, and develop a 'train the trainer' model for local secondary school staff.



Speed X

Designed for Years 11 and 12 students, Speed X offers opportunities to engage with local employers, explore various occupations, and develop practical skills such as interview techniques.



The Challenge

The partnership theme was derived from school consultation where:



88% of survey respondents indicated specific interest in careers and pathways



65% of survey respondents indicated specific interest in expos and industry events



53% of survey respondents indicated specific interest in mentors/industry professionals



Speed X



The Result



Manningham

This ongoing industry immersion and SWL program, delivered in partnership with Manningham Council, is tailored for Years 11 and 12 students. It provides valuable opportunities to engage with local employers, explore career pathways, and build essential skills such as interview preparation.

In 2024, the event was run on-site at Manningham Council function rooms and hosted over 160 students and 61 local employers.

Monash and Whitehorse

In 2024, Gateway LLEN continued to expand industry partnerships to run Speed X in the Monash and Whitehorse LGAs.

Partnering with the Novotel Glen Waverley, the event was delivered on-site at the Novotel with 161 students in attendance.



RSPCA Industry Integration

Through its continued partnership with the RSPCA, Gateway LLEN provides senior secondary students aspiring to work in the animal care sector with the chance to participate in an immersive, hands-on experience at the RSPCA.



The Challenge

As a prominent animal welfare organisation, the RSPCA does not currently offer individual Work Experience (WE) or Structured Workplace Learning (SWL) placements. With placements at other animal-related agencies in high demand, many secondary students face challenges in securing relevant industry experience. Feedback from stakeholder consultations revealed that:



82% of survey respondents identified workplace/industry visits as the type of school-industry engagement opportunities they sought



76% of survey respondents identified VET as the student cohort that would benefit from industry activities



88% of responding schools indicated a desire for activities with a focus on careers/ pathways

The Gateway LLEN and RSPCA partnership was established to give secondary students access to specialised career insights and meaningful, hands-on learning experiences within the animal care industry.

RSPCA Industry Integration



The Result

As Victoria's leading animal welfare organisation, the RSPCA employs a diverse team of skilled professionals dedicated to animal care and advocacy. Through the partnership, students gain practical industry skills, insight into careers in animal welfare and have the opportunity to engage directly with experienced staff working in the field.

88%

Feedback from participating students identified that 88% of attendees strongly agreed that the experience included things that personally interested them.

100%

100% of attendees strongly agreed that they would recommend this event to other students.





SWL

Structured Workplace Learning

SWL

SWL Insights 2024

Structured Workplace Learning

Gateway LLEN is funded to facilitate Structured Workplace Learning (SWL) placements for students in the Manningham, Monash, and Whitehorse LGAs who are completing Vocational Education and Training (VET) programs, including School Based Apprenticeships and Traineeships (SBATs), as part of their senior secondary studies.

Structured Workplace Learning (SWL) provides students with hands-on workplace experience, helping them build practical skills and gain a clear understanding of employer expectations. These placements are a valuable stepping stone toward future employment opportunities.

Students who undertake placement benefit in the following ways:



Gain industry experience in a workplace setting



Learn important skills related to their study



Receive on-the-job training to support VET programs



Develop connections with employers

Structured Workplace Learning

As per the 2023/24 (Gateway LLEN) regional school consultation, the priority areas for student placement and industry engagement were:



Building & Construction



Employability and Work Related Skills



Sports & Recreation



Hospitality



Early Childhood



SWL Insights 2024



Gateway LLEN achieved 158% of its 2024 KPI target, facilitating and supporting 544 young people in their Structured Workplace Learning (SWL) or Work Experience (WE) journey.

Placements

Local

343 SWL/WE

External

201 SWL/WE

Schools

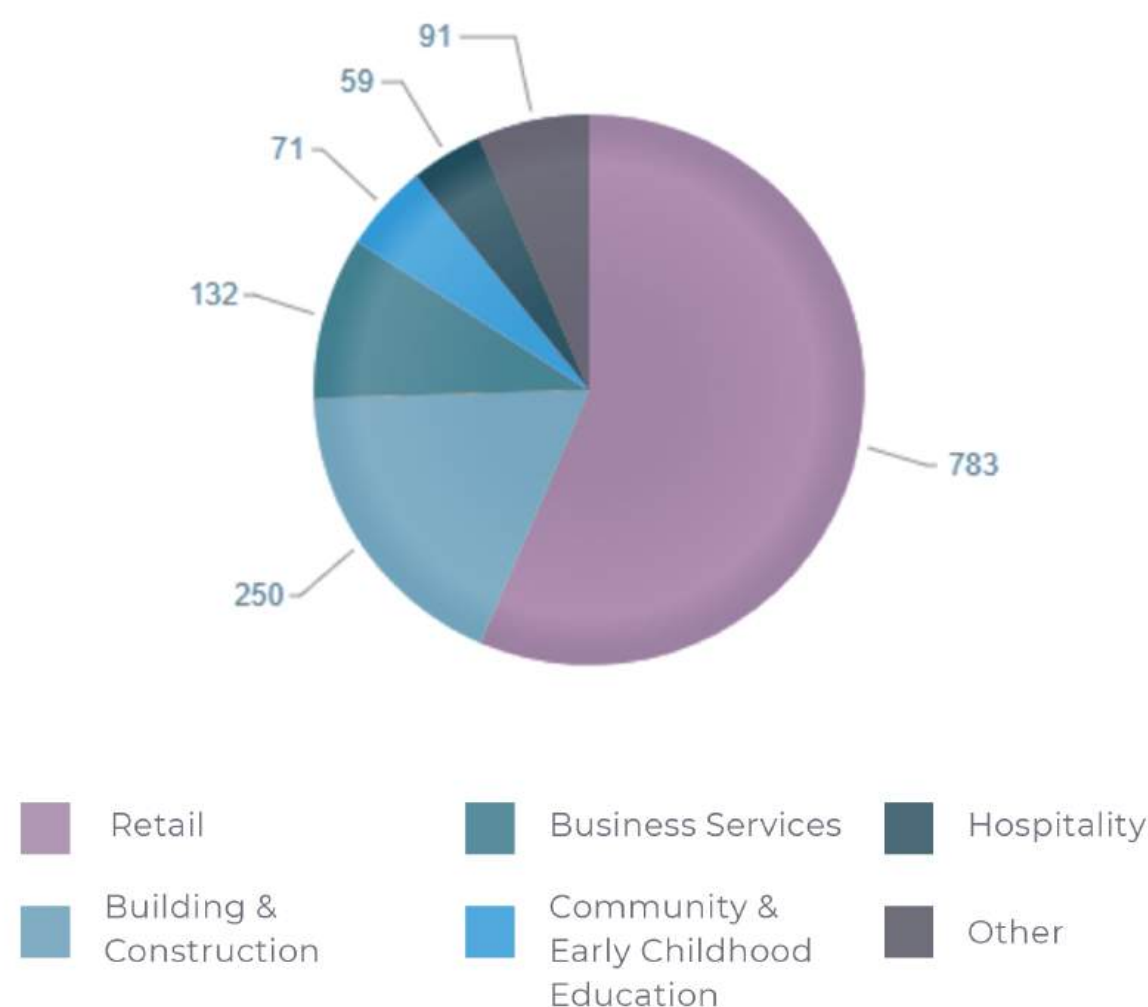
126 (Local and out of region combined)

SWL Placement Hours

21,000 approx.

SWL Insights 2024

Industry



2024 has been a highly successful year for the SWL team. We have significantly expanded our engagement across the region, visiting a wider range of schools, including many we have had limited contact with in previous years. Through these visits, we have delivered work-related skills seminars, portal training, and one-on-one student engagement sessions focused on career exploration and the transition from school to work. Feedback from employers participating in the SWL and Work Experience (WE) programs has been overwhelmingly positive. Many have highlighted the strong engagement, initiative, and commitment to on-the-job learning demonstrated by students.

- Jake Barclay, SWL Coordinator



People

Staff

Committee of Management

Staff



Bronwen Henry

EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Bronwen Henry is the Executive Officer with Gateway LLEN. She has twenty years' experience in the community sector including working as a counsellor within secondary schools and program development and facilitation for at-risk youth.

In her role as Executive Officer, Bronwen works with a wide range of individuals and organisations to develop and build sustainable partnerships that provide innovative programs to improve education and successful transitions to further education, training or employment for young people in the Gateway region.



Bianca Spence

PARTNERSHIPS MANAGER

Bianca Spence works as the Partnerships Manager at Gateway LLEN. She joined the Gateway team over eight years ago, having previously worked in the Eastern Metropolitan region in education and training and community sectors.

Bianca also has experience teaching and training in both Australia and abroad. In her role with Gateway, Bianca coordinates and manages transition and engagement programs that improve educational and career opportunities for young people in the region.

Staff



Jake Barclay
SWL COORDINATOR

Jake is a full-time SWL Coordinator with Gateway LLEN, with a background in Psychology Studies and Sport Development. Jake has a passion for community development, and comes with extensive experience in the sports, events, and hospitality industries.

Jake manages and coordinates SWL placements for senior school students. He is responsible for developing and maintaining employer relationships, creating enhanced career opportunities for young people in the region, and statewide portal maintenance. He works with students, schools and local employers across a range of industries to coordinate hands-on workplace experiences.



Daisy Henry
SWL COORDINATOR & CONTENT COORDINATOR

Daisy Henry is one of Gateway LLEN's Structured Workplace Learning (SWL) Coordinator and the Content Coordinator. Daisy has a background in Sociology and International Studies, as well as Master's degrees in Journalism and International Relations, and is passionate about creating experiences for young people.

In her role with Gateway LLEN Daisy is responsible for developing and maintaining employer relationships, creating enhanced career opportunities for young people in the region, working closely with schools, and Statewide portal maintenance. She is also in charge of handling Gateway's marketing, communications and social media accounts.

Staff



Alexandra Gee

SWL COORDINATOR

Alexandra Gee is a part-time Structured Workplace Learning (SWL) Coordinator with Gateway LLEN. Alexandra has a background in Business and Global Studies, as well as extensive experience across the retail and hospitality industries.

In her role with Gateway LLEN, Alexandra facilitates SWL placements for students studying a VET subject. She is responsible for developing and maintaining employer relationships, creating enhanced career opportunities for young people in the region, and Statewide portal maintenance. Ally is currently on an extended period of leave.



James (Jimmy) Horsburgh

SWL COORDINATOR

Jimmy joined Gateway LLEN in a part-time capacity, working alongside Daisy and Ally as a Structured Workplace Learning Coordinator, helping create and coordinate both SWL and Work Experience placements for students.

Currently studying Youth Work at RMIT, Jimmy has a passion for working with young people across diverse educational settings. In his down time, Jimmy loves exploring nature and visiting waterfalls, going on bush walks, and surfing. He works in the Gateway office on Mondays and Fridays.

Staff



Melissa Brown
OFFICE MANAGER

Melissa is the Office Manager at Gateway LLEN. Having been with the team since 2004, she is responsible for reception duties, coordinating and maintaining office procedures, and the organisation of Gateway's Board and Sub-Committee meetings.

She enjoys working with the rest of the team to achieve outcomes for young people in the Gateway region.

Committee of Management

Angela Hoare-Lippmann,
Chair

EDUCATION PROFESSIONAL

Michelle Thompson, Deputy Chair

FAMILY ACCESS NETWORK

Frank Perrone, Treasurer

WHITEHORSE CITY COUNCIL

David Vastbinder

DPV CONSTRUCTION

Rebecca Eames

VIRTUAL SCHOOL VICTORIA

Liam O'Neill

TEMPLESTOWE COLLEGE

Andrew Lawlor

AFL SPORTS READY

Ben Heard

CITY OF MONASH

Jose Abalo (*retired*)

SERVICES AUSTRALIA



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