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From the Executive Director, Linda Vaughan

Welcome to the September and October edition of the Global Learning and Engagement (GL&E) newsletter.

This year, we celebrate 30 years of the International Student Program (ISP), which began in 1995 with just a handful of Japanese students in a few Victorian government schools. Today, it's the largest government school-sector international education program in Australia. 30th anniversary celebrations have already taken place in Vietnam and Cambodia, bringing together alumni, schools and educators to share memories and achievements. The celebrations continue in November with events planned in China and Japan, as we continue to honour 3 decades of learning, connection, and meaningful international engagement.

Victoria's commitment to strengthening these global connections is also reflected in its renewed engagement with China. Education is at the heart of [Victoria's China Strategy: For a New Golden Era](#), recognised as a key driver of cultural and economic exchange. During her recent visit to China, Premier Jacinta Allan reinforced Victoria's commitment to international education and partnerships. In Nanjing, she joined more than 140 Victorian students and teachers alongside their Jiangsu counterparts at the 'Splendid Jiangsu: Jiangsu-Victoria Sister School Welcome Event' celebrating the long-standing ties between the two regions. Since the Victoria-Jiangsu sister-state partnership began in 1979, over 100 Victorian and Jiangsu schools have established sister-school partnerships, with more than 10,000 students and teachers participating in exchange programs and learning activities. The renewed China Strategy build on this strong foundation with education as the key focus for future collaboration. Recent initiatives include a new Memorandum of Understanding with China's Ministry of Education and the re-launch of the Hamer Scholarship program for tertiary students in regional areas. Such initiatives reflect Victoria's ongoing commitment to fostering strong educational connections in an increasingly connected world.



Student lead change at the Student Voice Forum

Earlier in September, the Student Voice Forum brought together 100 Victorian and international students, along with their teachers from 11 schools across Victoria, for a day of sharing, connection, and inspiration.

The event gave students the opportunity to present on the activities they led during Terms 2 and 3 as well as plan for sustainable change in Term 4 and into the new school year. This year's theme of global change saw students explore global challenges and address some of today's most pressing themes, including diversity, respect and inclusion, environmental sustainability, social justice, and mental health. Student-led activities ranged from cultural fashion parades and school garden projects to fundraising initiatives and multicultural events, all promoting sustainability, reconciliation, global awareness, and inclusion.

As proactive leaders and global citizens, students engaged in meaningful conversations and thoughtful debates. The forum was a great success, continuing to provide a powerful platform for students to share their ideas, challenge perspectives, and inspire positive change towards a more inclusive world.

Global Youth Forum 2025 in review

The 2025 Global Youth Forum wrapped up in September, with 400 students from 8 countries across the Asia Pacific and 10 Victorian schools.

While the program was delivered primarily in a virtual format, it included an interactive face-to-face component for Victorian students, held at the University of Melbourne.

The day began with a keynote from Kano Ravalji of Third Culture, who inspired students to embrace their culture and identity as a superpower. This was followed by a dynamic panel led by AUS4ASEAN Young Leaders, who shared insights and challenges from their leadership journeys across the region. Students also designed T-shirts inspired by their United Nations Sustainable Development Goal projects, voted for a winner, and enjoyed a campus tour.

Congratulations to all students who participated in the program this year!



Celebrating diversity, strengthening community: Connecting Schools with Indian Communities program

This edition showcases how Victorian schools are fostering cultural connection and inclusion through the Connecting Schools with Indian Communities (CSIC) program. At Keysborough Secondary College, teacher Aruna Malhotra has led a series of initiatives that celebrate diversity and strengthen community ties. From a whole-school Yoga Day promoting wellbeing to Chai and Chat sessions supporting families and an annual Diwali celebration that brings the community together, these initiatives have created lasting opportunities for connection and learning. Partnering with local organisations and businesses, Aruna and her team are helping make cultural understanding a vibrant part of school life. To read more about Aruna's work, see her [CSIC case study](#).

Women Leading Globally Engaged Schools program kicks off

The Women Leading Globally Engaged Schools program, Part 2 of the 3 components of the [Women Leading with Global Vision](#), commenced last week with 23 women school leaders attending the first workshop.

The workshop focused on developing intercultural leadership and strategies for leading globally engaged schools. Participants heard from an insightful panel of women leaders from the Victorian Academy of Teaching and Leadership (the Academy) and the International Education and Partnerships Division, and were inspired by a keynote presentation by Dr Kulari Lokuge Dona, Director at Knox Innovation Opportunity and Sustainability Centre.

Developed in partnership with the Academy, this professional learning program supports system-wide leadership that is inclusive, globally informed and aligned with the department's equity and excellence ambitions.

Throughout the program, participants will use the [Global Learning and Engagement Framework](#) to reflect on their school's approaches to global learning and engagement across 6 dimensions. Guided by the improvement cycle, they will also undertake a school-based Inquiry Focus to embed intercultural capability and global citizenship into their school communities.

Further updates on the program and participants' learning journeys will be shared in future editions of the newsletter.



Highlights from the Victorian Young Leaders to China program 2025

The Victorian Young Leaders to China (VYLC) program, highlighted in Victoria's new China Strategy, reflects the strong educational and cultural ties between Victoria and China.

This year's program concluded in August after two dynamic weeks of cultural and language immersion and brought together 153 students from 15 Victorian schools to deepen their understanding of Chinese language and culture and connect with peers in China.

Participants completed over 10 hours of intensive language learning with educators from Beijing Language and Culture University, participated in virtual excursions to the Great Wall of China and Tianjin, and took part in an interactive Culture Quest, hosted by Meg Languages. They also connected with students in Shanghai for language exchanges and collaborated on cultural workshops in Chinese cooking, painting, calligraphy, and Kung Fu. A key highlight was the Amazing Race style activity that took students through Chinatown, Melbourne and the Museum of Chinese Australian History.

To watch a video of this year's program, visit: [VYLC 2025](#).

Applications for the 2026 program will open Term 1, 2026.

Professional Development



Global Learning and Engagement Framework LearnEd module

The Global Learning and Engagement e-learning module is now available on LearnEd to support schools in developing students' intercultural capabilities and global citizenship across the school community. This professional learning opportunity helps schools assess and develop global learning and engagement across 6 dimensions, including:

- vision, mission and school culture;
- organising for global learning;
- curriculum, instruction and assessment;
- relationships and engagement;
- teacher capacity;
- and measuring impact.

The framework also supports schools to reflect on and strengthen their approach to global learning by analysing evidence, identifying priorities, embedding global perspectives in teaching and learning, guiding professional development, and planning opportunities across the school community.

To see how schools can use the framework, watch this video from [Quarters Primary School](#).

To complete the module, visit: [GL&E Framework learning module](#).

Interpreter Scholarship Program 2026

The Victorian Government has offered scholarships since 2003 to support students undertaking a range of translating and interpreting courses at RMIT University. Applications are currently open for the 2026 RMIT Interpreter Scholarship Program, which has already assisted over 1,500 individuals in obtaining NAATI certification. This year, scholarships are on offer to students seeking to undertake the courses in one of the following languages:

- **Diploma:** Assyrian Neo-Aramaic, Burmese, Khmer, Macedonian, Nepali and Samoan.
- **Advanced Diploma:** Greek, Italian, Korean, Punjabi, Russian, Sinhalese, Tamil, Urdu and Vietnamese.
- **Skill Set courses:** Albanian, Amharic, Bangla, Bislama, Chaldean Neo-Aramaic, Chichewa, Chin languages, Dinka, Fiji Hindi, Gujarati, Hakka Chinese, Hmong, Kannada, Kayah (Karenni), Kinyarwanda, Kirundi, Kurdish Kurmanji, Lingala, Malay, Malayalam, Maltese, Mauritian Creole, Nuer, Oromo, Pashto, Rohingya, Somali, Swahili, Tigre, Tigrinya, Tok Pisin, Tongan and Ukrainian.

Applications for scholarship funding are now open until 6 February 2026 or earlier if fully subscribed.

To learn more and apply, visit: [Interpreter scholarships](#), or email: translating.interpreting@rmit.edu.au

For Students



HarvestEd Victoria 2025

Victorian students in Years 7–10 are invited to take part in HarvestEd Victoria 2025, an interactive hybrid program exploring agriculture, sustainable food systems, and innovative solutions to global challenges such as food waste and food security.

Delivered by Asialink in collaboration with Goulburn Murray Landcare Network and funded by the William Buckland Foundation, the program connects students with industry experts and hands-on learning experiences that inspire creative thinking about the future of farming.

Program highlights include:

- Farming Enterprise visit - Shepparton (19 November 2025): A field-based experience with local farming enterprises, developed in partnership with the Goulburn Murray Landcare Network and Asialink Education.
- Face-to-Face conference - Dookie Campus, University of Melbourne (4 December 2025): A full-day event bringing together students from across Victoria to collaborate, share ideas, and present innovative solutions.

Places are limited and will be offered on a first-come, first-served basis.

To register your interest today, visit: [HarvetEd Victoria](#), or contact: asialink-education@unimelb.edu.au



Building belonging toolkit

The Building Belonging toolkit is a comprehensive toolkit for early education resources suited for Foundation and Year 1 students. The resource includes an e-book, song with actions, educator guide, posters and lesson plans. It is focused on encouraging respect for cultural diversity and tackling racial prejudice in early childhood settings.

To view links to the Victorian Curriculum F-10 2.0 and the resource, see: [Building belonging toolkit](#).

Learning Lands resource hub

Cultural Infusion is known for their cultural school programs, delivering to more than 300,000 students every year. Learning Lands, by Cultural Infusion is a virtual project-based learning tool to equip teachers with resources and materials to effectively support students from years K-12 in developing intercultural understanding.

To implement the platform in your classroom, see: [Learning Lands](#).

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