



ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23





HAPPY 21ST CRLLEN!

As we celebrate our 21st year of helping young people on their 'school to work journey', Central Ranges LLEN is in the strongest position it has ever been to lead change, broker partnerships, solve challenges that exist for young people and deliver programs that help students find their best job and live their best life.

OUR MISSION:

Helping young people on their school to work journey so they can find their best job and live their best life.



OUR MESSAGE

Research shows that young people, particularly those from marginalised backgrounds, do not receive adequate exposure to the world of work before having to make crucial decisions about their future. This results in low aspiration, disengagement, limited knowledge about available options and costly misstarts, such as withdrawals from VET.

Fifty percent of students who go onto further education do not complete it. Eighty percent of young people struggle to find or keep jobs. These are daunting facts, but we are proud to report that in partnership with schools and industry, CRLLEN has assisted hundreds of students to acquire the skills and knowledge they need to become work ready.

In celebrating our 21st birthday, the Board was able to reflect on CRLLEN's strengths and organisational capabilities. We have really 'grown-up' and understand how we can do our part to address the challenges in our region and effectively deliver the most impact to our young people.

- We have a strong ability to collaborate with government, community organisations, education and training providers, schools, local businesses and industry to secure funding, facilitate projects and create opportunities to help young people on their school to work journey.
- We have highly invested, talented and ethical personnel who collectively function as a high performing team, delivering significant impact across our region.
- Our team knows how to work with young people in a trauma-informed, empathetic and relatable manner.

We would like to thank our industry partners, education providers, sponsors and of course the Department of Education for supporting CRLLEN's work to help young people on their school to work journey. At only 21, we have many years ahead to effect significant change for young people as we recover together from the Covid-19 pandemic.

Sue Marstaeller OAM
Chair

Lena Way
Acting CEO

WORK PLACEMENTS

Despite many businesses facing the challenge of post-COVID workforce shortages, Central Ranges LLEN managed to facilitate 131 structured workplace learning (SWL) placements across the Mitchell, Murrindindi and Macedon Ranges Shires. This speaks to our strong relationships with employers and their commitment to providing young people with the work experience they need to succeed in their chosen career.

Central Ranges LLEN also facilitated several successful group work placements:

Build it: Over the course of five weeks, 10 building and construction students were guided by a master builder in how to craft wooden picnic tables and bench seats, learning valuable practical skills related to their course. The students' work is now proudly installed at Kings Park, Seymour.

Puckapunyal Environmental Design

Thinking Challenge: In partnership with Ventia and as part of the Seymour Puckapunyal Youth Partnership, eight students from Seymour and surrounds undertook an intensive one-week design thinking challenge to recommend ways Ventia can become a more environmentally-friendly organisation. Facilitated by CRLLEN trainer, Silvia Tozer, the students capped off a successful week with a knockout presentation to senior Ventia staff and members of the Australian Defence Force. Two students from this program were awarded a \$500 educational scholarship to help fund their future career aspirations.





PROJECT READY | CERTIFICATE II IN ACTIVE VOLUNTEERING:

To date, over 1,200 students have graduated from Project Ready with positive outcomes, clearer career pathways, job readiness, community connections, more self-confidence, improved mental health – and of course – a formal qualification along with two VCE credits. These students have collectively completed 20,000 hours of volunteering, representing the largest contingent of student volunteerism delivered by one organisation in Victoria!

Beyond the immediate benefits to the individual, Project Ready also helps to deliver on critical social issues such as youth unemployment and underemployment, mental health, bullying and substance use.

In 2022, Project Ready continued to expand across the state with 267 students in 34 schools developing vital work readiness skills while completing Certificate II in Active Volunteering.

Project Ready - Volunteerism That Changes Lives

In 2022, Central Ranges LLEN received a Victorian Government *Emerging Stronger* grant to support and grow the two types of volunteering that happen in Project Ready – students volunteering in their communities as part of the program, and adults volunteering their time and skills to mentor students.

As a result of this grant, CRLLEN was able to:

- provide better resources to community organisations to help students complete their 20 hours of volunteering
- help students better prepare for their volunteer work
- broaden and diversify our adult volunteer base
- strengthen the training and support we provide to our group of adult volunteers.



LODDON CAMPASPE PARTNERSHIP

In 2022, North Central LLEN, Campaspe Cohuna LLEN, Goldfields LLEN and Central Ranges LLEN formed a partnership to deliver job outcomes for youth in the Loddon Campaspe region. Supported by Agnico Eagle Australia and the Australian Government Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, several exciting initiatives have been launched out of this partnership:

Youth Take Over | youthtakeover.org.au

Youth Take Over aims to bridge the disconnect between young people and employers in the Loddon Campaspe region.

A key element of the program is the facilitation of short internships in which a group of 4-10 young people work on a project that leads to a 'take over' of a workplace. Young people are trained by community and industry experts to learn about the industry and develop the skills they need to run their 'Take Over', and get experience they can talk about in their next job application.

Participants leave the program with industry knowledge and contacts plus the skills and confidence they need to launch their career adventure.

My Local Jobs Portal | mylocal.jobs

The mylocal.jobs portal was created after research across the Loddon Campaspe region

showed that local employers were having trouble finding employees. Job seekers, on the other hand, were not aware of local opportunities on offer. The website mylocal.jobs is designed to bridge this gap, connecting local employers with jobseekers.

Job seekers can use the free AirCV tool to create a CV that will alert employers when they are a good fit for a job. It's free to advertise and search for jobs.

JOBSFIRST

In 2022, CRLLEN delivered a program called JobsFirst with support from the Workforce Australia Local Jobs Program (Australian Government Department of Employment and Workplace Relations). Aimed at 15-24-year-olds who were unemployed, CRLLEN designed a work readiness program tailored to the participants' needs and interests, providing them with support and employability skills in order to obtain work.

Working with Job Providers located in Sunbury and Bendigo, JobsFirst taught employability skills through group-based activities, peer support, workplace tours, and connections with local employers.

It was very difficult to corral the target cohort, especially since lockdowns have increased social anxiety. However the program did support several young people one-on-one and connect them with relevant employment and welfare services.

PARTNERS & SPONSORS

Our local partners and sponsors have played a critical role over the past year, ensuring that students and schools can continue to access meaningful opportunities with industry and community organisations.

We'd particularly like to thank the Department of Education, the Local Jobs Program of the Australian Government Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, Nestlé, Ventia, Wallan & Kilmore Community Bank, Gisborne & District Community Bank, GO TAFE, Access Skills Training, the Lower Hume VET Cluster, the Sunbury & Macedon Ranges Careers Network, Victoria Legal Aid, The Pride Cup, the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria, the Daylesford & Macedon Ranges Tourism Association and the Shires of Mitchell, Macedon Ranges and Murrindindi.

EVENTS

In 2022, we delivered 33 events, including Student Training Interviews, Careers Quick Meets, job readiness workshops, community volunteering and excursions. CRLLEN provided many rich and meaningful immersion opportunities which helped to shape the life trajectory of our local young people. For example, after a full-day immersion experience exploring the houseboat industry at Lake Eildon, a student decided to take up a VET course in order to pursue a career in houseboat construction!

One of our major events for the year was **Build Your Future**, an industry exploration event encouraging students to learn more about



career pathways in the civil construction industry. Over 200 students and 30 employers attended the event, generating lots of buzz around the opportunities that exist for young people within Victoria's Big Build road and rail projects.

On a smaller scale, CRLLEN staff were involved in delivering job readiness and financial literacy training to a handful of young people at the Kinglake Library during the 2022 school holidays.

SCHOOL TO WORK SUMMIT

In early 2022, the Victorian LLENs hosted the inaugural School to Work Summit which brought together leaders from education, industry, government and community to discuss the challenge of aligning our education system with future workforce opportunities.

Attended by 570 guests, the School to Work Summit featured 47 speakers who shared a range of ideas on how we can collectively improve the school to work journey for young people. Lena Way presented CRLLEN's flagship program Project Ready, generating great interest from the education sector.



GO AG!

Central Ranges LLEN was successful in obtaining a Secondary Schools Agriculture Grant for its inaugural Go Ag! program. This will enable students to access a variety of agricultural experiences across our three Shires, encouraging enrolments into VET agricultural studies and the creation of the next generation of food and fibre professionals.

ECEC IN THE MACEDON RANGES

In response to labour shortages in the early childhood education and care industry, Central Ranges LLEN formed a partnership with the Macedon Ranges Shire Council and several other local organisations to

address challenges in the sector. In 2022 and under the auspice of Access Skills Training, Central Ranges LLEN commenced delivery of the first VET Certificate III in Early Childhood Education & Care course in the Macedon Ranges. Students have benefited from placement opportunities in kindergartens and day care centres, with the first student intake set to graduate at the end of 2023.

BALTS

During terms 1, 2 and 3, Central Ranges LLEN delivered Project Ready as part of a broader education program at the Broadford Alternative Learning and Training School. Students engaged in work experience with the Broadford Historical Society and Broadford Men's Shed and undertook several industry immersion activities.



15

Collaborated with 15 secondary schools across our three shires, including government, catholic, independent, flexible learning, specialist and youth justice settings

185

Secured work placement opportunities with 185 employers across 13 industries.



34

Expanded Project Ready to 34 schools in our region and across Victoria, in partnership with 7 LLENs



131

Facilitated 131 structured workplace learning (SWL) placements for students



CENTRAL RANGES

33

Delivered 33 industry and school engagement events and activities including:

- Careers Quick Meets
- Student Training Interviews
- Guest Speakers
- Work Readiness Sessions
- Industry Tours and Tasters
- Design Thinking Workshops
- Community Volunteering Projects
- One-On-One and Group Mentoring

16

Delivered 16 professional development and training sessions for students and staff in Workplace Health and Safety, White Card, First Aid, Youth Mental Health First Aid, Group Facilitation, Child Safety Standards, Traffic Control and Trauma-Informed Practice



THANK YOU

We'd like to thank the hardworking team at Central Ranges LLEN for all their work in 2022:

- Trent McCarthy** – Chief Executive Officer (until 30 January 2023)
- Lena Way** – Director | Engagement (Acting CEO from 1 February 2023)
- Rod Begbie** – Trainer and VET Support Manager
- Janoel Liddy** – Training and Wellbeing Support Manager
- Cassie Cheffers** – Engagement Officer (until November 2022)
- Melissa McCarthy** – Chief Financial Officer (until June 2022)
- Caitlin Dinning** – Finance & Administration Manager (from July 2022)
- Hope Hamilton** – Facilitator | Project Ready & ECEC
- Silvia Tozer** – Facilitator | Project Ready & BALTS

- Louise McCrae** – Facilitator | Project Ready (from July 2022)
- Rose Green-Jones** – Facilitator | ECEC
- Wendy Hopkins** – Youth Facilitator | Youth Take Over
- Lexi Economou** – Engagement Officer (until November 2022)
- Jeremy Linton** – Engagement & Projects Manager (from 1 March 2023)
- Emma Linton** – Communications Coordinator (CRLLEN & VicLLENs)
- Linda Vathis** – Events Manager (VicLLENs) (until January 2023)





We'd also like to thank our Board for all their work since our last Annual General Meeting:

Sue Marstaeller OAM – Chair

Janet Pearce – Deputy Chair

John Walsh – Treasurer

Faye D'Helin – Secretary

Jacqueline Carter – Secretary
(until September 2022)

Rhonda Cole

Buffy Leadbeater

Jenny Jackson

Brian D'Arcy

Eric Lording

Laura Crozier

Rebecca Stockfeld

Sebastian Antoine – (until September 2022)

Bruce Skewes – (until April 2022)

Finally, thank you to all the members, partners and supporters of Central Ranges LLEN for the difference you're making every day for young people in our region.



CONTACT US

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