



ATN25 National Symposium Curriculum Innovation

Case Studies



















Industry-Engaged Curricula

Partnerships and collaboration between industry and tertiary education are critical, to better understand skills needs across sectors, and to create diverse and accessible pathways to meet current and emerging skills needs for a thriving economy.

Recommendations within the Universities Accord Final Report speak to the key role of partnerships across sectors in improving the speed and focus on meeting high impact skills needs. 'How' recommendations include innovative ways of bringing together industry, vocational and higher education.

This booklet shares current examples of industry-engaged curricula across the ATN Universities group – one from each ATN university. These case studies showcase partnership models with industry and vocational and higher education. Each case study speaks to its:

PURPOSE The 'why' at the core of the initiative, program, or new educational model

ENABLERS What it took to get it up and running

SIZE & SCALE | The numbers of students, partners, experts, and community groups

IMPACT The qualitative and quantitative indicators

PARTNERSHIP How the collaboration with partners works, and what factors make it effective

We hope that the case studies presented in this booklet help to prompt discussions across the tertiary sector about partnership models currently in practice and the opportunities to engage more effectively across sectors for even more impact.



Case Studies

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Goldfields University Department of Rural Health

KALGOORLIE | CURTIN UNIVERSITY

PURPOSE The Goldfields University Department of Rural Health (GUDRH) was launched in November 2023, and contributes to addressing the acute shortage of nursing and allied health professionals in the Goldfields region. It provides enriching clinical placements and rewarding rural experiences to encourage health science graduates to work rurally or remotely, preferably in the Goldfields region.

The GURDH also works with the education sector to promote health science degrees as a career option to high school students; supports capacity and capability development of clinical supervisors within local health and social care services and undertakes rurally relevant research, contributing to the generation of local knowledge.

In the future GURDH will develop opportunities to deliver a suite of health science degrees from the Kalgoorlie campus, enhancing access to tertiary education for people in the Goldfields. Another long-term goal is to establish satellite learning sites in Esperance and the Northern Goldfields.

ENABLERS The GURDH was established and operates through successful grant funding from the Department of Health and Aged Care. Critical to its operations are: staff with complimentary skill sets and local connections; agility across the team to changing demands; appropriate office space and IT; and student accommodation that delivers on all fronts – close to shops, work environments, appropriately furnished, WiFi and with welcome packs; free return travel; an Advisory Council that brings additional local knowledge and skills; and a connected team committed to navigating a challenging and changing health and cultural landscape.

SIZE & SCALE In its first year of operation, the GURDH is contracted to provide clinical placements for 60 nursing and allied health care students. In its first semester, the GUDRH facilitated 27 placements (23 nursing,4 allied health). On average these placements were 2.5 weeks in length.

For 2024 onwards, the length of placements has increased to a minimum of four weeks. Placements are with key partners Western Australia Country Health Service and private health providers. Nursing students also get to experience a day out with the Royal Flying Doctor Service, Western Operations. The GHURD are actively reaching further into community and primary health providers, including Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations (ACCHOs) to ensure students have the opportunity to experience a variety of rural health and social care settings.



Student placements initially focused on health science students enrolled at Curtin University, but GHURD are now registering student placements from universities across Western Australia and interstate.

The Department is at a stage of its evolution where it has a clearer understanding of the academic and professional skills and capabilities needed to support its ongoing evolution and build on its early successes. Currently, GHURD staff include one full-time academic, 3 full-time professional staff and one part-time professional staff member. In 2024, the GHURD intend to appoint 6 new positions, of which 2 will be academic with further academic positions planned for 2025.

IMPACT Formal monitoring and evaluation: An ethics application has been successfully submitted to formally establish a Continuous Quality Improvement [CQI] monitoring framework which will use feedback from students and other key stakeholders to constantly advance the quality and efficacy of the programme and its associated support systems.

Early indicators of success: While we are at an early stage in our establishment, 3 students (2 nursing and 1 allied health) requested to return to the GUDRH for a second placement in 2024. In addition, one of the nursing students from 2023 is on the Graduate entry programme with WACHs in Kalgoorlie.

Stakeholder engagement: The Department also considers it has a role in facilitating greater connections between the various Schools within the Faculty of Health Sciences at the Bentley campus and potential clinical placement providers in Kalgoorlie. In 2023 a very successful sundowner for allied health fieldwork directors, was attended by over 30 local health practitioners, educators, and stakeholders.

Sharing learnings with the sector: The Department has presented a paper on its early development period and its future focus at the National Rural Health Conference 2024 in Wellington, Aotearoa New Zealand.

What students are saying:

"A rural placement can be quite daunting to put your hand up for, but I would recommend Kalgoorlie to all nursing students.....I felt supported and safe throughout the whole process." **Student, GUDRH**

"I had a group of friends who were up. I think it was towards the end of last year and they had such a fabulous experience. I know X they loved, you know, they were looked after so well by you and really enjoyed the experience." **Student, GUDRH**

"The students really appreciated ... the information that they were given beforehand was very well received and appreciated." Student representative on the Advisory Council



PARTNERSHIP The essence underpinning the Department's successful and effective collaboration with a range of other players is a mutually shared goal. The GUDRH works to meet local needs by improving the number of health and social care professionals choosing to work and live in the region, So, whether you are a health care provider looking for more staff, or an industry whose workforce needs assurance there is a reliable health service in the area, or if you work in education and want clear pathways into health careers for your students, the goal is the same, meaning there is a co-dependency to the success of the GUDRH.

'Relational is everything." Dr Fiona Doolan-Noble, Director of Goldfields University Department of Rural Health (GUDRL)

The Department itself, receives support from its membership to the Australian Rural Health Education Network [ARHEN]. The Director of the Department is also a Director of the ARHEN Board and there are specific network subgroups that other members of the Department belong to allowing for the sharing and cross-pollination of ideas.





The Stepping Stones Embedded Career Education Program

DEAKIN UNIVERSITY

PURPOSE The *Stepping Stones Embedded Career Education Program* enhances student employability through supporting their pathway through relevant paid employment while they are studying.

Student employability and employment outcomes are key strategic priorities for the University, driven by industry and student needs both for success within the current and future workforce.

Career-development learning and assessment is embedded in core units (subjects) in each year of generalist undergraduate degrees. These embedded components support students to leverage the skills, capabilities and experience they have achieved in their current paid employment to successfully progress into further roles – stepping stones along a pathway to meet the key selection criteria of their ideal graduate role.

To ensure that the curriculum is always up-to-date and relevant, the latest industry and employer data, career development resources and recruitment tools are provided by the DeakinTALENT careers service and employer partners. This close collaboration with industry, recruitment consultants and career coaches ensures that the curriculum aligns with current industry trends, standards and practices.

ENABLERS Investment: Deakin has a whole-of-institution approach to graduate employability as part of its strategic plan, and has invested heavily in the University's career service, DeakinTALENT.

Skills, capability, and experience: The Stepping Stones program has its own team of 3.5 EFT academic staff and each team member has relevant practice background.

Championship: The Pro Vice-Chancellor Graduate Employment is a strong advocate for the program throughout Deakin, and it receives significant support from the broader University leadership.

Internal relationships: The team works closely with course development and teaching teams, consisting of both academic and professional staff.



SIZE & SCALE

The program is embedded in around 20 courses and more than 50 units across all Faculties. Each year, almost one-third of the student population engages with career education in the curriculum.

Through a co-design process, the team provides a customised curriculum contextualised to each discipline. In 2023, over 90 academic and professional staff were involved in capability building to become familiar with the content and assessment tasks. In many courses, sessional staff teaching careers seminars are practitioners using their industry and workplace experiences.

As a general measure of the program's success, the IMPACT Graduate Outcomes Survey data from the Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching suite of governmentendorsed surveys for higher education (GOS, QILT) demonstrates strong improvement in employment outcomes over the five years to 2022, with Deakin consistently above Victorian and national averages.

Overall employment as reported in the GOS for all of Deakin (undergraduate level) in 2022 was 90.8% which corresponds to first in Victoria and a high for the 2016-2022 timeseries.

Full-time employment for the same cohort was 79.7% in 2022 (annual increase of 12ppts) and the highest of the 2016-2022 timeseries.

Graduates consistently mentioned the units with embedded career education in external and internal surveys.



placement to successfully achieve this job offer." Third year Bachelor of Biomedical Science student

"I have returned to tertiary study after almost 30 years [in the workforce]. In my current Criminology Unit, we were assigned a task with Deakin Talent. During this assessment I was able to examine roles I had not previously considered and identify a relevant Stepping Stone role to help me achieve my ultimate career pathway... I really enjoyed the process and have learnt a lot about myself, what's out there and where I want to be. I think this process is a clever and valuable resource for students of all ages and stages of learning." First year Bachelor of Criminology student

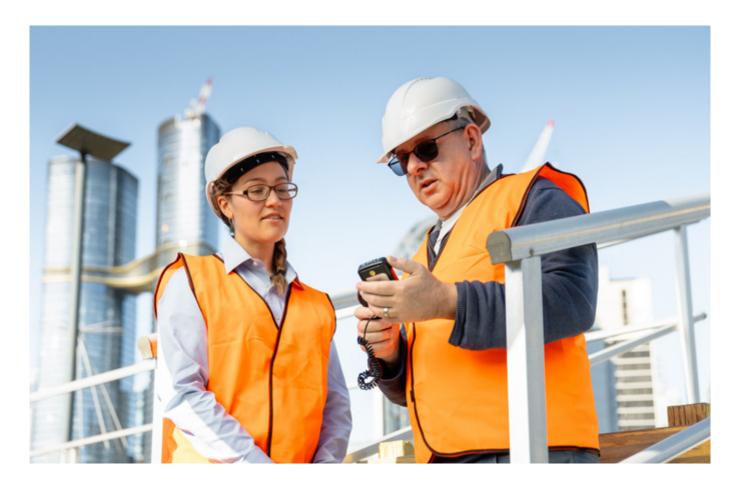
PARTNERSHIP

The Stepping Stones curriculum is guided by the DeakinTALENT Advisory Board, which comprises over 20 employers from diverse sectors and industries. The Board co-created and endorsed curriculum resources such as resume guides, templates, and video interview checklists to support students in self-reviewing before assessment.

The Employer Services and Engagement team in DeakinTALENT provides trimesterly updates, comprising industry and recruitment trends and opportunities, and tips for incorporating into the curriculum and sharing with students during interactions. By bringing the classroom to the careers service, the team has in-depth knowledge of our student cohort to inform their strategic relationship-building activities.

The team promotes events to almost 20,000 students in the curriculum. These include Employer Month featuring 45 graduate employers, and the industry-specific workshop series "Applying for Roles in....". In 2024, Step Up to Stepping Stones, a HEPPPfunded project, will work with employer partners to promote accessible and inclusive recruitment practices, aiming to increase the number of accessible Stepping Stone roles and graduate employment opportunities.





Earning and Learning: Engineering Skills Innovation

RMIT UNIVERSITY

PURPOSE

In mid-2023, RMIT University (RMIT) was asked by a group of Victorian employers to meet challenges around defined skills shortages in the Victorian economy.

Their concerns included a sense that graduate engineers lacked applied and 'systems' engineering capability which are forecast to become starker as future manufacturing becomes more complex and interdependent.

They also expressed a clear appetite to expand and diversify the workforce by engaging working age learners, as well as traditional school leavers, to meet the growing engineering skills need.

ENABLERS

Investment: Support from the Victorian Government, and partnership with BAE Systems Australia (BAE) and a group of Victorian manufacturing employers, were key enablers for this initiative.

Co-Designed Model: RMIT has co-designed a work-based learning program where learners would be employees earning an income from day one.

Learners will undertake an Advanced Diploma and Bachelor of Engineering (Hons) sequenced over five-years while simultaneously working within the sector. Their learning will be aligned to their job to maximise skills formation, building solid discipline expertise in Mechanical Engineering as well as increased Systems Engineering knowledge and skills.

Learners will graduate with a globally and professionally recognised (Washington Accord) Engineering qualification together with applied workplace experience, making them productive colleagues earlier.

The model leveraged learnings from analogous international programs that industry partners have seen direct outcomes from.



SIZE & SCALE The program is in its initial design completion phase in collaboration with employers (industry partners). The next steps are to finalise the co-design of the experience and onboard a pilot cohort for the program.

RMIT's goal is to achieve an annual intake of 30 students, working with engaged Victorian employers in the sector.

IMPACT RMIT's goal is to create an initial 150 jobs in the Victorian economy over 5 years (annual intake of 30 students), with a focus on more diverse learners including career-changers and women seeking to enter engineering professions.

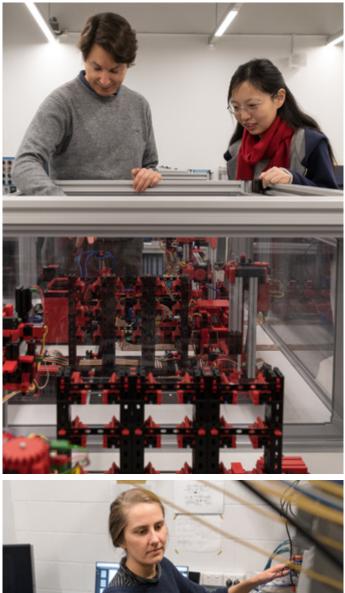
Similar RMIT initiatives, such as the Skills in Practice, Higher Apprenticeships in Social Services, have significantly improved retention and success rates. For example, completion rates amongst RMIT Social Services Higher Apprenticeship cohorts stand at 81% compared to individual traineeship completion rates for community and personal services which sit lower at approximately 60%.

The success of UK Degree-Apprenticeship models also suggest significantly improved employee productivity. BAE Systems indicate that >30% of learners in their UK apprentice programs are female and 27% come from disadvantaged backgrounds, providing a significant opportunity to diversify the workforce.

PARTNERSHIP Attempting to solve program design challenges whilst managing funding, policy and regulation limitations (particularly across the vocational and higher education divide that this program seeks to span) posed some challenges.

A coalition approach: Part of the partnership success has been to design tripartite collaboration models that include government, industry, and institutions and employee representation. A shared and unambiguous understanding of the problems to be solved, and agreeing on a portable recognised outcome for learners, established a firm foundation and collective shared purpose across the partnership.

This coalition approach takes effort with contributions from all parties providing a sustainable basis to develop highquality and contemporary learning opportunities for school leavers and working-age professionals.









Out(fit) THE UNIVERSITY OF NEWCASTLE

PURPOSE Formed in 2015 to improve equity, diversity and inclusion outcomes for women in the built environment, Out(fit) provides students with the opportunity to develop their design and construction skills in a safe, inclusive and educational space and to receive academic credit.

Out(fit) coordinates community engagement events, workshops and projects that benefit local communities and create engagement opportunities for women in the construction industry. Out(fit) empowers its volunteers to help communities in need, while developing their confidence, sense of belonging, and industry-relevant skills.

ENABLERS Out(fit) engages in hands-on design services and build projects in communities that would not ordinarily benefit from this professional assistance. It receives significant in-kind support from industry professionals, and some direct funding from the University of Newcastle.

Out(fit)'s volunteers, from certified builders to visual artists, offer their time and services to work on projects in the form of working bees. Out(fit) has established links to many local architecture firms and other businesses, which also provide in-kind donations of materials and services.

To date, Out(fit) and the University of Newcastle have raised funds on an as-needed basis for specific projects and are now working towards strategic funds and partnerships to support a longer term, sustainable operation.

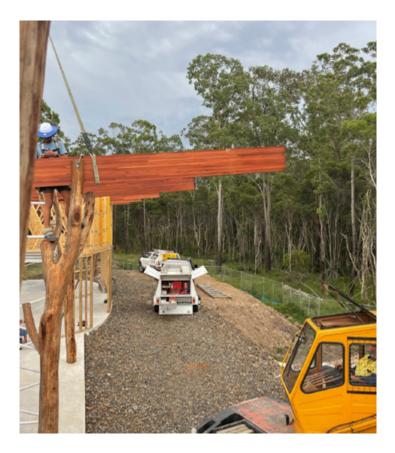


SIZE & SCALE Out(fit) partners with in-need community groups based on the predicted outcomes in the daily lives of women and children, the client's willingness to work with students in a hands-on learning environment, and its ability to raise funds through grants and donor support.

Since launching in 2015, Out(fit) has executed 22 working bees and 54 projects and events, reached 263 volunteers and assisted 19 communities and over 150 students (95 in the past 3 years). Out(fit)'s vision is to grow its capacity to meet its communities' needs.

IMPACT Since its inception, Out(fit), has collaborated with 16 community groups and seven employees from the University of Newcastle, dedicating over 1,000 hours of service to successfully execute 54 projects.

Beyond mere statistical representation lies the immeasurable impact on the lives of numerous disadvantaged women within the community. Out(fit) stands as a beacon of empowerment, enriching the lives of women and children grappling with the repercussions of domestic violence.

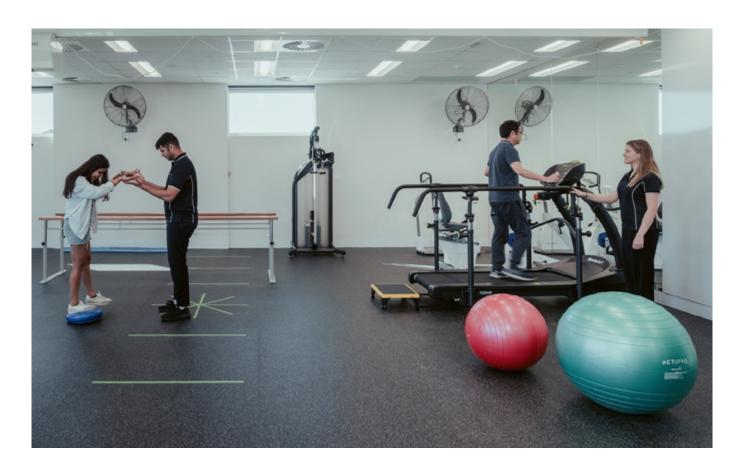


PARTNERSHIP Out(fit) strategically harnesses the diverse skills offered by industry partnerships to drive the success of its initiatives. It prioritises engagement with industry partners from the inception of a new project, fostering strong relationships between Out(fit), its partners, and the community.

Navigating projects with limited budgets, Out(fit) sources funds and advocates for the community's needs, ensuring the delivery of impactful outcomes. Effective communication and engagement serve as pillars in nurturing these relationships and successfully executing projects.

This engagement not only benefits the volunteers but also contributes to producing outstanding graduates for the University of Newcastle, highlighting the mutual value created through collaboration between Out(fit) and its industry partners.





University of South Australia Multidisciplinary Clinics

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

PURPOSE UniSA Health Pty Ltd is a not-for-profit organisation wholly owned by the University of South Australia (UniSA). It is an innovative clinic model uniquely designed to offer comprehensive solutions that cater to the community's multifaceted needs, bridging the gap between health and social services and incorporating legal and tax advice.

At the heart of this initiative are student-led and professional services, working in synergy to provide a holistic support system that is both educational and beneficial to the community.

UniSA Health provides a dynamic educational environment for students to gain hands-on experience, enhance their skills, and learn to navigate real-world challenges under the guidance of experienced professionals.

UniSA Health, as part of the broader university, aligns with UniSA's vision of being Australia's University of Enterprise, known for relevance, equity, and excellence. The university emphasises education and preparation for global learners, undertaking research inspired by global challenges and opportunities and operating through a partnered, end-user-informed culture of teaching and research. The establishment of UniSA Health can be seen as a direct response to these guiding principles, aiming to integrate educational programs with practical community services, thereby enhancing the health and well-being of society while providing students with hands-on, real-world experience in their field of study.

This integrated approach supports the university's mission by extending its educational and research capabilities into direct community engagement, exemplifying its commitment to innovation, excellence, and societal contribution.

ENABLERS In 2012, the UniSA Council approved the establishment of UniSA Health Pty Ltd as a vehicle to increase and stabilise allied health placements at a time when placements were difficult to source. UniSA Health prepared its Constitution and registered with the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC). It is governed by a skills-based Board with UniSA staff and external members.



Partnership and investment: UniSA Health partners with the University under a Services Agreement, whereby the University provides support for student supervision and administration and suitable spaces at four of its six campuses. It also provided funds to fit out the community clinic in the north of Adelaide within a health and wellbeing precinct.

Co-design: Co-design of the placements with the academic teams is a crucial enabler for the success of student-led clinics. A Clinics Strategy Group meets to discuss service provision, supervision, student and client outcomes, work health and safety and clinical governance issues.

SIZE & SCALE UniSA Health runs five clinics across four campuses and one in a community setting. It hosts around 1,000 student placements per annum. Most allied health clinical placements include Physiotherapy, Podiatry, Exercise Physiology, Occupational Therapy, Speech Pathology, Clinical Psychology and Social Work.

General Practitioners and Nurse Practitioners consult at three clinics, and UniSA Health hosts medical students from a neighbouring University as UniSA does not have a medical school.

UniSA Health has facilitated the expansion of student-led legal and tax clinics at the northern Adelaide community-based clinic.

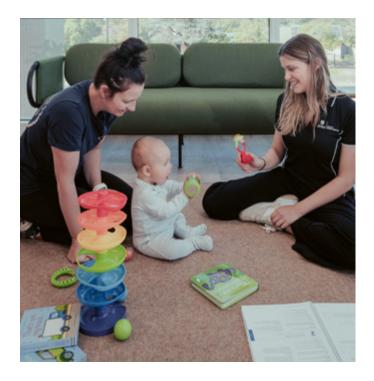
UniSA Health partners with other organisations to provide outreach services and partners with The Salvation Army, Baptist Care, Arthritis SA, The Hospital Research Foundation, and Central Adelaide Local Health Network (CALHN). In addition, the health clinics are a vital part of the Invictus Pathways Program for veterans.

UniSA Health offers students opportunities to undertake real-world projects as part of their coursework. It has supervised projects for students studying Health Service Management, Information Technology, Communications, and Film and Media.

UniSA Health provides approximately 50,000 occasions of service to clients annually across the diverse services offerings. The 1,000 placements and multiple projects delivered through the UniSA Health Clinics have provided a quality university-based clinical and community training opportunity that has enabled expansion of enrolments and quality assurance.

PARTNERSHIP The partnership between UniSA Health and UniSA is symbiotic and crucial for success. UniSA provides the students with placements and associated supervisors in some disciplines, and UniSA Health provides the service model, business processes and risk management to run successful health and professional services clinics.

The external partners who link with UniSA Health are generally looking for an expansion of opportunity to add value to existing services like obesity management, falls and balance, functional rehabilitation, and chronic disease management when their resources are stretched or offering such services is not mainstream for them.



The partnerships are mutually beneficial and provide learners various intersections between health, business, legal and community services. Learners gain valuable disciplinary knowledge and skills but also come to better understand the primary care and service model so crucial to keeping the community well and safe.





Institute of Applied Technology-Digital

UTS | TAFE NSW | MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY | MICROSOFT

PURPOSE Demand for digital skills in New South Wales is far outstripping supply. The State will need to add 85,000 tech workers by 2030, many from outside the ICT sector¹. Already, supply from traditional sources such as universities and vocational education and training (VET) is not keeping pace with demand.

The Institute of Applied Technology-Digital (IAT-D) was established in New South Wales as part of a new model of education known as Institutes of Applied Technology (IAT). In addition to addressing acute skills shortages, IATs enable a unique collaboration between VET, higher education, and industry.

It is a powerful example of cross-sector collaboration in response to increasing demand for digital skills. It offers microskills and microcredentials that combine industry-relevant content, hands-on learning, and academic rigour.

ENABLERS To address acute skills shortages, the New South Wales Government commissioned a review² which recommended establishing the Institutes of Applied Technology (IAT). The State Government accepted this recommendation, and the IAT-D was funded for a four-year pilot commencing in 2021.

Following a rigorous RFP process to select the right partners to bring the IAT-D model to life, Microsoft, TAFE NSW, Macquarie University, and UTS set about creating an IAT. They rolled up their sleeves and got to work (in the midst of a pandemic).

A significant proportion of IAT-D funding was earmarked for a state-of-the-art building as a teaching space. The internal fit-out was co-designed and includes a new form of cybersecurity education, delivered by immersing students in a Cyber Range Training Centre.

Visualising the impact of attacks delivered by virtual scenarios gives IAT-D learners a practical edge in an otherwise highly theoretical education experience. This is particularly important for learners who have no previous background in cybersecurity — a specific target audience for the IAT-D.



SIZE & SCALE The IAT-D is a collaboration between TAFE NSW, Macquarie University, University of Technology Sydney (UTS), Microsoft and additional industry partners committed to the creation of a skilled pipeline of ICT professionals.

Students are provided with a flexible and personalised learning pathway that allows them to choose the level and mode of study that suits their needs and goals. Depending on their personal needs, students can study online, on-campus, or in a blended format. This enables scale that goes beyond bricks and mortar.

This is an example of IAT-D's strong commitment to creating a more diverse and inclusive digital talent pool, by attracting and supporting students from underrepresented groups, such as women, First Nations people, and people from low socio-economic backgrounds.

They can enrol in individual microcredentials or stack these to deepen their expertise.

IMPACT Over 80,000 learners have enrolled across microskills and microcredentials, and the IAT-D continue to develop the model with new products such as bootcamps and masterclasses, responding to the needs of learners who demand more flexibility than ever before. Learners report a high level of student satisfaction and engagement, with over 80% rating their experience as good or excellent.

PARTNERSHIP The partnership model is based on shared vision, trust, and commitment, and six agreed collaboration principles: co-design, co-delivery, co-innovation, co-location, commercial support and advocacy, and infrastructure and resources. These principles guide decision-making and ways of working together.

The IAT-D has created an education model which integrates industry input, practical experience, and academic excellence. Microsoft and other industry partners are deeply involved in education design and delivery, providing guidance about what to teach as well as practical suggestions on how to teach technical skills, while the education partners bring their own perspectives on what and how to teach, carefully balancing and overseeing the delivery of theory and practice.



Students are offered opportunities to connect with industry and academia, and to apply their learning in real-world contexts through internships, traineeships, projects, mentoring, networking, scholarships, and competitions. The IAT-D also hosts events and workshops, where students can learn from experts, showcase their work, and meet potential employers.

The IAT-D has generated a number of lessons on the benefits and challenges of cross-sector collaboration, including:

- Establishing a strong governance structure, along with specialist tiger teams that give equal voice to education and industry partners.
- Acknowledging upfront that there will be challenges for the partners, particularly in managing the complexity and diversity of the partnership itself, and in navigating different cultures and systems.
- Striking a balance between alignment and autonomy, agreeing on common goals and standards, but also respecting and leveraging the unique strengths and identities of each partner.
- Being open to unforeseen value, which can be created by expanding opportunities and by learning from each other.
- Taking the view that the partnership is a startup with all its inherent strengths and flaws and seeing this as a helpful construct for navigating the journey together toward maturity.

¹ ICT Industry Landscape Report 2023, Department of Education, NSW Government

² Gonski, D and Shergold, P 2021 "In the same sentence, Bringing higher and vocational education together", State of New South Wales, Department of Premier and Cabinet







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ATN Universities respectfully recognises Elders both past and present. We also acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the lands across Australia where we conduct business, their Elders, Ancestors, cultures and heritage.