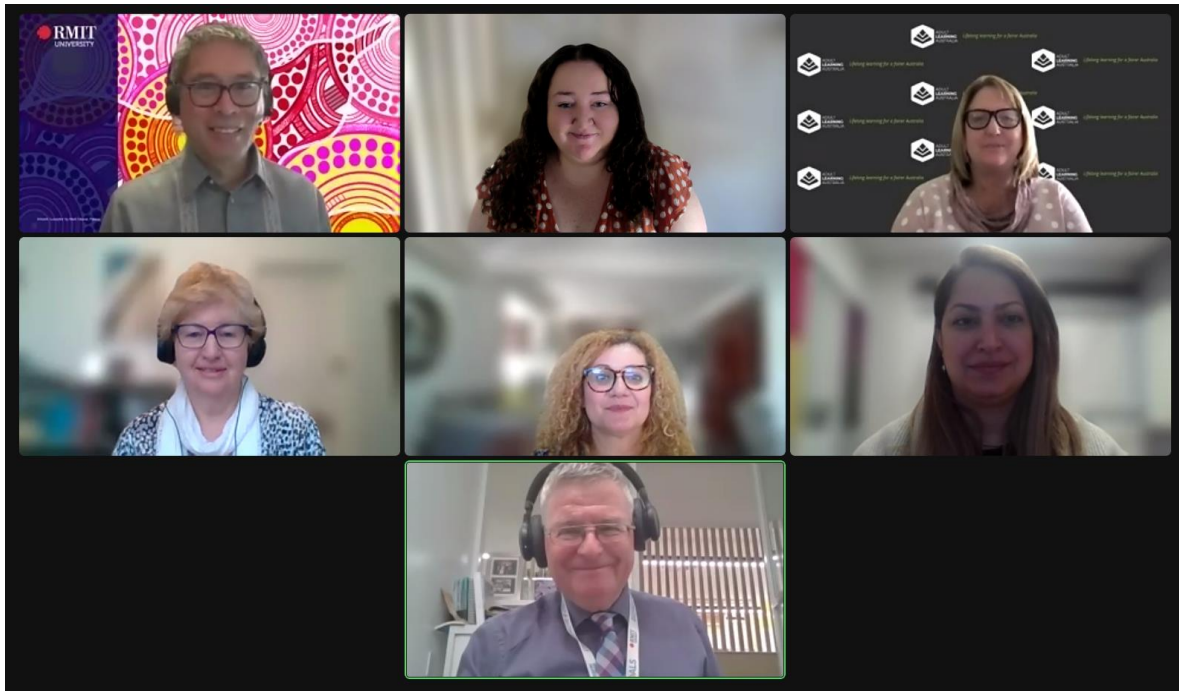


Inclusion and innovation in Flexible Learning in and for the Workplace: Stories from Australian Learning Cities

Summary of an ALCN/ALA/RMIT Australian Learning Cities and Regions Webinar for the Global Learning Festival 9 November 2022

This Webinar offered a wealth of resources and knowledge about inclusion and flexible learning in the workplace internationally, and nationally, and shone a light on innovative learning ecosystems of two LGA's (local government areas) – the City of Hume and the City of Melton - in Victoria, Australia.



Professor Mike Osborne and Associate Professor Robbie Guevara set the scene by providing an international perspective on achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 4 (UNSDG4) **ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all.**

Mike provided a snapshot about how cities and regional governments across the globe were meeting SDG4 before and during COVID 19. For example, integrating anti-racist and decolonizing curriculum in schools; in depth case studies on Entrepreneurial learning in schools; Reconciliation Action Plan for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders; Community Connector Hubs for meeting the needs of residents during COVID and many more.

Key messages:

- First, it is the proximity to communities and local stakeholders that place local and regional governments (LRGs) in a privileged role to contribute to education objectives.
- Second, with regard to the governance of the educational systems, there is a need to develop multilevel partnership for inclusive quality education (refer to Mikes presentation for more information).

Robbie noted that **partnering** is an essential approach to having an **impact** on the SDGs. Among other messages from the UN Transforming Education Summit 2022 the world of work is undergoing **fundamental change** and **education holds the key to ensuring that workers are prepared for this**

future. Education systems must **embrace the concept of life-long learning, with more flexible pathways and financial policy incentives to allow people to re-engage with education systems several times throughout their lives.**

Practical Examples from Australia:

The highlight of the Webinar was the two practical examples provided by Ms Maria Dimitriou presenting on the Hume Multiversity project and Ms Mina Barghijahromi on creating career pathways to the construction industry in Melton for diverse communities. These projects highlighted the role of local government as a connector of the partnerships needed to achieve outcomes which might not otherwise be achieved by the formal education system alone. The testimonials/quotes from residents/learners are vital to show the importance of such projects on people's lives. Once you have a robust model of a learning ecosystem you can attract further partners and significant funding.

Implications for Australia:

Professor Bruce Wilson said we can keep on talking about turbulent and changing times, but we need to do something different. He had three key messages:

- building place-based systems matter,
- learning is integral to innovation systems, and
- collaboration is vital. No one can do this by themselves.

Proximity, aggregation, knowledge spill over learning (at the café, social occasions etc) are the ingredients of dynamic ecosystems – mobilising relevant capabilities.

Jenny Macaffer, CEO of Adult Learning Australia, concluded that local stories need to be heard at a national policy level. Local communities can provide opportunities so that people are not left behind and this must be funded. Attention must be given to local community that can deliver on the ground. Learning in workplaces; learning in community, learning pathways. Equity is at heart. It is about lifelong learning for **jobs and life.**

To listen to a recording of the Webinar go to <https://ala.asn.au/inclusion-and-innovation-in-flexible-learning-in-and-for-the-workplace-stories-from-australian-learning-cities/>