

YOUR CITY OF MELBOURNE MAGAZINE

MELBOURNE

SUMMER 2025



MELBURNIAN OF THE YEAR

REBECCA SCOTT OAM,
STREAT CO-FOUNDER

NEW LORD MAYOR AND COUNCILLORS

MEET THE TEAM ELECTED
TO LEAD THE CITY

LOCAL STARTUP SECTORS THRIVE

EXPLORE LIFE SCIENCES,
GAMING AND EDTECH



CITY OF MELBOURNE

MELBOURNE.VIC.GOV.AU



Lord Mayor Nick Reece and his family

It is an absolute honour and a privilege to be elected your 105th Lord Mayor of Melbourne. To all the residents and businesses that voted in the recent election, THANK YOU!

Melbourne is the best and fairest city in the world and I can't wait to work with the new Councillor group to make it even better.

I commit to working hard alongside you every day to make our neighbourhoods greener, our streets cleaner, and our city safer and more prosperous.

I believe that Melbourne's best days are ahead of us.

My Council will make it a priority to deliver enhanced community services and quality affordable housing. We want to make it easier to do business in Melbourne, by supporting our traders and hospitality industry.

This edition of *Melbourne Magazine* really speaks to these priorities and the amazing work that Council and our community are already doing in these areas.

Find out more about our incredible Melburnian of the Year, Rebecca Scott OAM. Rebecca founded the immensely successful STREAT social enterprise, which has helped more than 2000 young people experiencing disadvantage through its cafes, bakeries and catering companies, alongside outreach programs and short courses.

Turn to page five for an update on our landmark Make Room supportive housing project. This unique initiative opens soon and will provide supported accommodation for more than 50 people experiencing homelessness.

We also showcase a fascinating startup industry snapshot, and share the latest details about how we're improving local streetscapes.

I'm so proud that, in this issue, we're also announcing the City of Melbourne's new Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan. This significantly strengthens the City's reconciliation commitments, so we can deliver positive outcomes for Traditional Owners and the broader Aboriginal community, enriching the whole city.

I look forward to meeting as many of you as I can in the coming weeks. I can't be all things to all people, but I will be a Lord Mayor for everyone. Please reach out to me if I can help you.

Again, thank you so much for the opportunity of a lifetime.

Enjoy this edition of *Melbourne Magazine*.

Nick Reece
Lord Mayor

The City of Melbourne respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land we govern, the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung and Bunurong / Boon Wurrung peoples of the Kulin Nation and pays respect to their Elders past and present. We acknowledge and honour the unbroken spiritual, cultural and political connection they have maintained to this unique place for more than 2000 generations. We accept the invitation in the Uluru Statement from the Heart and are committed to walking together to build a better future.

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Councillor Andrew Rowse, Councillor Rafael Camillo, Councillor Dr Olivia Ball, Councillor Davydd Griffiths, Councillor Owen Guest, Deputy Lord Mayor Roshena Campbell, Lord Mayor Nick Reece, Councillor Mark Scott, Councillor Gladys Liu, and Councillor Kevin Louey. Absent: Councillor Philip Le Liu

Meet our new Council

Melbourne City Council is the local government body responsible for the municipality of Melbourne. The Council consists of a Lord Mayor, a Deputy Lord Mayor, and nine councillors.

More than 90,000 residents and business owners recently voted in our local government elections to appoint the following team to lead the City of Melbourne for the next four years.

The group will work on a new Council Plan, setting our vision for the future of Melbourne.

Nearly 72 per cent of eligible people cast their vote, which is the highest participation rate in at least 20 years. We thank you for sharing your vote to help shape the future of our city.

Turn to page 18 to find the dates and times of the upcoming Council and Future Melbourne Committee meetings.

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Postal address for all councillors

City of Melbourne

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To find more ways to contact the City of Melbourne, including phone numbers, social media and interpreter services, turn to page 19.



FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT
melbourne.vic.gov.au/about-council

CITY FLASHBACK

This photograph of city workers installing a planter was taken around 1930. It's one of more than 13,000 eclectic pieces preserved in our City Collection. Browse more images and artefacts at citycollection.melbourne.vic.gov.au or search for 'Art and Heritage Collection' at whatson.melbourne.vic.gov.au to book a tour.



HELPING OUT GUIDE

Our updated Helping Out Guide is out now - it's a comprehensive guide to free and low-cost housing, health and wellbeing support services from more than 90 organisations across Melbourne. You can pick up a free copy of the guide from community facilities across the city, like our libraries, Melbourne Town Hall and cohealth venues. Or download a copy from melbourne.vic.gov.au/helping-out-guide

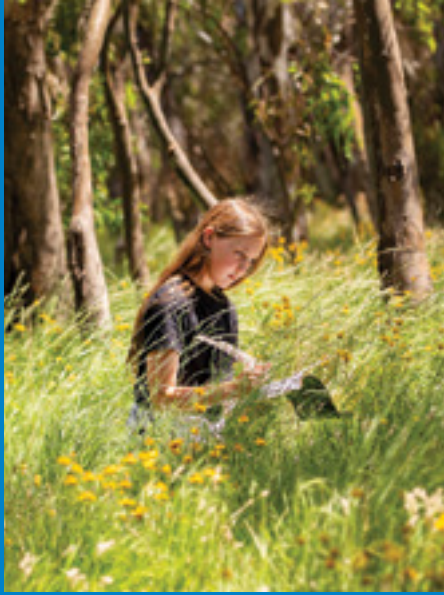
PARKS AND GARDENS

Enjoy re-leaf from the daily grind in one of our city's many parks and gardens.

We have 480 hectares of green space to explore, including bushland, wetlands, suburban reserves and heritage gardens with majestic avenues of trees.

These soothing sanctuaries for rest and relaxation are a world away from the hustle and bustle of the busy city. Take time out to relax and recharge in the lush green spaces on your doorstep.

Learn more at melbourne.vic.gov.au/parks-and-gardens



ERROL STREET OPEN SPACE

We're proposing an expansion of the green median on Errol Street in North Melbourne, adding more trees and garden beds and enhancing the street appeal and liveability. Have your say by 27 January. Learn more at participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/errol-street-open-space



SELF-CARE IN SUMMER

Cool off this summer with access to top-notch pools at our popular recreation centres in the CBD, Carlton and North Melbourne. Then take a walk in our shady parks and gardens, or browse our Active Melbourne directory to find more ways to make the most of the sunshine, such as team sports, tennis, tai chi, golf, skating, swordcraft and everything in between. Learn more at melbourne.vic.gov.au/activemelbourne



MELBOURNE NEWS, YOUR WAY

Read the latest city-shaping news and celebrate community champions online at news.melbourne.vic.gov.au and subscribe to receive updates direct to your inbox. You can also subscribe using this QR code. This print magazine can be found at local libraries, community hubs and cafes. If you'd like to receive a copy in the post, please email melbournemag@melbourne.vic.gov.au

We'd love to hear your feedback about *Melbourne Magazine*. To share your thoughts with us, write to melbournemag@melbourne.vic.gov.au

MAKE ROOM: LANDMARK SUPPORTIVE HOUSING OPENING SOON



An artist's impression of new Make Room studio accommodation

Homelessness is something that people experience - it is not who they are.

Being without secure and affordable accommodation can devastate a person's life, whether it lasts a very short time, several months or years.

The City of Melbourne is committed to addressing homelessness, so we're delivering a flagship supportive-housing project known as Make Room.

This major project has been made possible through partnerships with Victorian Government, registered community housing provider Unison Housing, cohealth, and key philanthropic and corporate donors.

Opening Make Room will be a landmark day for the City of Melbourne, and a

testament to the tireless work of many people who have turned an idea into a reality that will change and save lives.

About Make Room

Located on Little Bourke Street, Make Room contains 50 studio apartments with wraparound support to help people on their pathway out of homelessness.

Make Room was co-designed by people with lived experience of homelessness, to ensure the housing and services meet the diverse needs of residents. The construction was delivered by builder Harris HMC and Reshape Development.

When Make Room opens, Unison Housing will take ownership of the building to deliver its day-to-day operations. On-site wraparound social and health support services will be delivered by cohealth.

Key features of the Make Room building include:

- 50 studio apartments
- mental health, housing and legal services for Make Room residents
- allied health services for Make Room residents, like dentistry, podiatry and women's health specialists
- 24/7 front-desk security
- the Phoenix Floor – as a safe and affirming space for women who have experienced family violence
- a focus on cultural safety
- First Nations artwork
- a rooftop garden.

Tenants will soon begin gradually moving into Make Room, and they will call it home for up to 12 months – or until they can secure access to appropriate, long-term, secure housing.

The total project cost for Make Room is \$24.9 million, with \$16.1 million raised thanks to the Victorian Government, Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation, The Ian Potter Foundation, Gandel Foundation, Portland House Foundation, and Helen Macpherson Smith Trust.



Homelessness can happen to anyone, at any time in their lives



FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT
melbourne.vic.gov.au/makeroom



Rebecca Scott OAM chats at STREAT's East Melbourne cafe

Street smart Melburnian of the Year puts people and planet first

How does a “scrappy country kid” go on to be Melburnian of the Year? It’s a long and winding road for social entrepreneur Rebecca Scott OAM.

While travelling in Vietnam, science communicator Rebecca Scott found a stone in her shoe. The type of stone that compels you to change your life and strive to make life better for those around you.

“In a fairly stark way, I saw the issue of youth homelessness in Vietnam, and you know how once you’ve seen something you can’t unsee it?” Rebecca said.

“Youth homelessness became a thing I couldn’t unsee.”

“I came to think of it as the stone in my shoe. I couldn’t keep walking along with that stone in my shoe, even after I returned home to Canberra and went back to my job at the CSIRO.”

“I’m a really unexpected social entrepreneur. My training was in science as a plant biologist and then a science communicator. I stumbled into being a social innovator.”

“It felt like such a foundational thing that every human needs: a safe, affordable, loving home. It’s so critical to a life of wellbeing: it’s so much more than a home.”

In her downtime, Rebecca researched the complex youth homelessness sector and eventually found a missing piece of the puzzle: training, education and a sense of belonging.

“You can’t afford a house to live in if you don’t have a job,” Rebecca said.

“It made me and my partner Kate think we needed to build a holistic solution to homelessness that included training and employment pathways.”

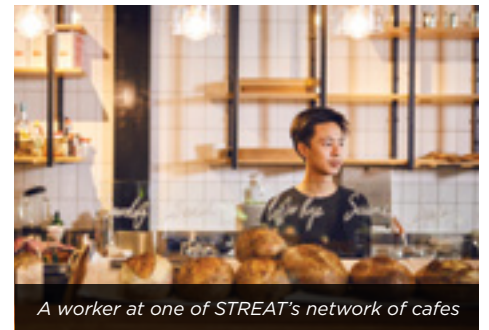
So they took a leap, quit their Canberra jobs and moved to Melbourne in 2009 to set up hospitality enterprise STREAT.

Since welcoming its first class of trainees, STREAT has now supported more than 5210 young people and offered 351,753 hours of training, support and work experience.

“I’m a really unexpected social entrepreneur. My training was in science as a plant biologist and then a science communicator. I stumbled into being a social innovator.” Rebecca said.

And yet it feels like she was somehow destined to lead a life of purpose.

Buoyed by her enthusiasm, generosity and curiosity, STREAT has expanded to run 12



A worker at one of STREAT's network of cafes

cafes, a coffee roastery, an artisan bakery, and a catering and events business.

The whole thing is engineered to support young people who might otherwise fall through the gaps.

How a sense of belonging can transform a life

Twice a year, a class of young people assembles at STREAT through referrals from the prison system, detox facilities, homelessness and mental health services. Many have been in out-of-home care from a very young age.

“I love watching a new class start,” Rebecca said.

“They’ve come to the program because they’ve got lots of barriers, and we’ll walk alongside them for the next year to give them a bunch of skills and confidence, and most importantly a sense of belonging.”

As the team begins to address those barriers – such as drug and alcohol addiction or homelessness – the person underneath begins to shine.

“Something magical happens when a young person starts to see that those hopes and dreams might be possible,” Rebecca said.

“You see this incredible transformation, and a peer support network grows around a young person who might have been quite isolated before.

“One of the things that comes up again and again when talking to the young people at STREAT and graduates is the sense of belonging,” Rebecca said.

“It’s such a core thing as a human. We’re social animals. We’re so hard-wired to be in a community of people, to be included and recognised and loved for who we are.”

In a broader sense, this philosophy has led Rebecca to a life of purpose.

“The first thing we need in a community is to feel safe, but there’s this gaping chasm between feeling safe and feeling like we belong,” she said.

“Each of us as citizens have a role in making our neighbourhoods feel friendly and inviting.

“Belonging comes from lots of micro actions. I feel so strongly about our collective role of making people feel welcome.”

Creating more than hospo heroes

Nearly 15 years after the first graduate class at STREAT, many participants have flourished in varied careers, using hospitality as a stepping stone to follow their passions.



Training program participants

“We’re not here to create ‘hospo heroes’! We’re teaching you a bunch of transferrable life and employability skills. It just happens to be that hospo is a good industry to get those skills,” Rebecca said.

Some graduates have gone to TAFE and become electricians or childcare workers.

Another is completing a PhD in English literature, after coming to STREAT from a period of rough sleeping in Melbourne’s CBD.

In the future, all businesses will be social enterprises

A collaborator at heart, Rebecca is always looking for ways to connect with other social innovators and inspire the next generation of citizens into living a purposeful life.

When STREAT was off to a flying start, she turned her mind to building an ecosystem to support nascent social enterprises.

“I spend a lot of my time these days trying to help aspiring changemakers find their tribe and navigate their way around the city,” Rebecca said.

“Right at the very beginning when we arrived in Melbourne, it took so much work to find other social innovators. There wasn’t a ‘front door’ you could go in and find everyone.”

The Purpose Precinct at Queen Victoria Market is the new front door for a sector that has more than 3000 social enterprises across Victoria.

It’s a collaboration between STREAT, Good Cycles, and other businesses that put the planet and people before profit.

Here, you’ll find shops, a cafe, a workshop space and the new Moving Feast Kitchen, which brings together social enterprise farms and kitchens, caterers and hospitality providers.

“We’re all working together as this little ecosystem, thinking about food systems,” Rebecca said.

“The Moving Feast Kitchen is designed not only to rescue lots of unsold produce from the market, but also create new products in the kitchen.”



STREAT at Queen Victoria Market

One of the shops at the Purpose Precinct is a pop-up shop for kids’ social enterprises. It stocks products from innovative kids across Victoria: everything from dog toys to wooden chopping blocks and clothing, upcycled toys and other creations.

“It’s just so wondrous what comes out of all those little brains,” Rebecca said.

“I hope that in the future, every business is a social business.

“If we’re learning to do that as little kids, that’s how we ensure that happens. That way, social enterprises go from being niche businesses to mainstream businesses.”

Young Melburnian of the Year

Alex Dekker is a dedicated social entrepreneur and community leader, best known as the founder of Alex Makes Meals, a not-for-profit established in 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

What began as a small initiative has grown into a large-scale charity that provides over 3000 nutritious meals a week to people and families across Melbourne.

Through a network of more than 40 charity partners, Alex Makes Meals has cooked and distributed over 600,000 meals, addressing food insecurity for those who need it most.



Alex Dekker

About the Melbourne Awards

The Melbourne Awards are our highest accolades, celebrating the inspirational Melburnians dedicated to making this city a world leader. The awards program is now in its 22nd year.

Alongside Melburnian of the Year and Young Melburnian of the Year, we also named eight category winners.

These remarkable individuals and groups are committed to make our city inclusive, creative and forward-thinking.

MEET THE WINNERS AT
melbourne.vic.gov.au/melbourne-awards



SUPPORTING RECONCILIATION ACROSS MELBOURNE

Community members gather for a smoking ceremony

Reconciliation is essential to our community, and it benefits everyone.

Reconciliation is about promoting an understanding of the history between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians, ensuring everyone has the same chances and choices in life, and developing better relationships that allow us to move forward together.

The City of Melbourne has worked with the community to create a new Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan. This is our sixth Reconciliation Action Plan.

We are proud of the work we've done over time to deliver outcomes for Traditional Owners and the broader Aboriginal community, and to provide opportunities for our organisation and community to engage.

It's now time for the next steps.

Our vision for reconciliation is to work alongside First Nations, enabling true self-determination and ensuring Aboriginal peoples have the freedom to live well according to their own values and beliefs.

Our new Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan speaks to respect, relationships, good governance and opportunities. We have also committed to a process of truth-telling to enable learning, healing and change.

Our new Caring for Country Framework will help us apply First Nations knowledge and practices across our work and our city, and our new Aboriginal City Framework will help us embrace Aboriginal peoples, culture, knowledge and heritage as a core element of Melbourne's identity.

Our progress towards delivering this vision will be monitored and reported annually to the community.

The Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan is based on the following five pillars.

Pillar 1: Truth-telling

Truth-telling creates opportunities for Aboriginal people to share their history and experiences, including those of injustice and wrongdoing.

Some of our work in this space includes holding public truth-telling conversations, delivering National Sorry Day activities and progressing a project to build a permanent marker for the Stolen Generations.

The Stolen Generations Marker will feature a significant artwork that reflects the resilience of the Stolen Generations and their families, acknowledging the injustices and inviting us to move along the path to reconciliation together.

Our ever-evolving Mapping Aboriginal Melbourne project also contributed to truth-telling, by marking places of significance on an interactive map.

Pillar 2: Relationships

Building strong, inclusive relationships between the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal community is at the heart of reconciliation.

Each year during National Reconciliation Week we bring people together for an oration. The 2024 oration was given by co-chairs of the First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria Reuben Berg and Ngarra Murray.

We also provide funding and grants to support First Nations people delivering great business and community projects.



Photo: Tiffany Garvie

A meeting of the First Nations Committee



The City of Melbourne supports Aboriginal businesses through our memberships to Supply Nation and Kinaway, and through our Sustainable Procurement Framework that guides how our staff choose suppliers. We will also be creating opportunities for and raising the profile of Aboriginal businesses within the municipality.

We engage Aboriginal artists and designers to shape our community spaces, and we will deliver the next edition of the epic YIRRAMBOI Festival in 2025, with the aim to make this an annual festival.

Pillar 5: Governance

Good governance helps ensure the City of Melbourne includes First Nations voices in decision-making, and that we take accountability.

We have established a First Nations Committee to elevate diverse voices from the Aboriginal community and ensure they have a say in decisions and priorities.

Our partnerships with Traditional Owner groups, including the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation and the Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation, are also critical.

We have systems in place to report on and measure reconciliation achievements, and we will continue to build a robust outcomes framework with key performance indicators.



FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT
[melbourne.vic.gov.au/
reconciliation-action-plan](https://melbourne.vic.gov.au/reconciliation-action-plan)

We are working with Traditional Owner groups to establish formal partnerships that enable self-determination. And we also have dedicated community engagement protocols to guide our work.

Pillar 3: Respect

Deepening people's understanding of and respect for Aboriginal culture and identity is integral to building meaningful and lasting relationships between communities.

We deliver cultural awareness training and tours to our staff members, we embed cultural protocols in our daily business and events, and we celebrate NAIDOC across the city.

Aboriginal culture is strongly embedded in the design of the new narm ngarrgu Library and Family Services, and we aspire to carry this approach forward into more civic spaces.

Cultural safety is also front and centre of our Make Room project – a project providing supportive housing to people experiencing homelessness.

Pillar 4: Opportunities

Providing cultural, social and economic development opportunities for Aboriginal people supports equitable recruitment, supplier diversity and business growth.



Photo: Stills by Dan

'Futures, Past' by Sherene Stewart with Sage Wright and Emily Wells

YIRRAMBOI RETURNS FROM 1 TO 11 MAY

YIRRAMBOI Festival celebrates the interconnectedness and diversity of First Nations creatives, locally, nationally and internationally.

Expect to see emerging, mid-career and established First Nations creatives taking back space to crack open the heart of Melbourne, revealing the hum of Country beneath.

Keep an eye out for the launch of the packed program, which will once again invite audiences to immerse themselves in First Nations stories, truths and resilience.

In the local languages of the Boonwurrung and Woi-wurrung peoples, YIRRAMBOI means 'tomorrow'.

For more information, visit melbourne.vic.gov.au/yirramboi-festival



Photo: Blue Tree Studios

Day of Mourning



Photo: Jacinta Keefe

NAIDOC Rally

WHAT'S ON IN MAGNETIC MELBOURNE



Event dates and details may change.
Check online for updates at
whatson.melbourne.vic.gov.au

3 TO 23 DECEMBER

CHRISTMAS AT MARVEL STADIUM

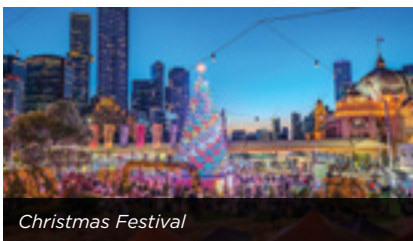
Head to Marvel Stadium to take a ride in the sky with Santa at Melbourne's only Christmas-themed 360° cinema dome. Explore the free live site to find a giant nine-metre Christmas tree alongside 18 AFL club-themed trees and DIY Santa photography with your club colours. Then feast on tasty burgers, salads and lobster rolls. Find all this and more at Stadium Square (Gates 2 & 3), from 10am to 6pm.

UNTIL 25 DECEMBER

CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL

The city is set to light up with dazzling decorations, joyful events and family-friendly fun. Visit the giant Christmas tree at Fed Square, marvel at the spectacular Christmas River Show in Southbank, enjoy a festive thrill ride at the Christmas Carnival at Alexandra Gardens, and more.

whatson.melbourne.vic.gov.au/christmas



Christmas Festival

31 DECEMBER

NEW YEAR'S EVE

Celebrate New Year's Eve in the city, with glittering rooftop fireworks and laser displays that will light up the night sky. Book into one of the many venues or events or visit one of the official Celebration Zones that exclusively offer early-evening 9pm fireworks, as well as the midnight moment.
melbourne.vic.gov.au/nye



FROM 19 JANUARY

Midsumma Festival

6 TO 26 JANUARY

AUSTRALIAN OPEN

Take your seat for thrilling singles, doubles, wheelchair, juniors, legends and exhibition tennis matches. Head to Melbourne Park to catch all the action or soak up the atmosphere from Fed Square and Birrarung Marr.

14 TO 24 JANUARY

SIGNAL SUMMER

Young people aged 12 to 25 are invited to enjoy two weeks of art, creativity and inspiration, working alongside professional artists to develop skills and create new work. Workshops will include street art, installation, weaving and sound art. On the final day, there'll be a celebration to share the works created.



Signal Summer

16 JANUARY TO 27 APRIL

RAIN AT ARTPLAY

Experience an intimate and interactive installation with your little one. Find your reflection in puddles, arrange fuzzy felt pieces and dive into a moment of rest as you are immersed in the generosity of rain. Open Thursday to Sunday, 10am to 4pm. No bookings required.

18 TO 19 JANUARY

BACKYARD AT ARTPLAY

Children and families will be gently guided by the artists, theme and materials to inspire child-led creativity. You could make a nature mandala, build sculptures with recycled and natural materials, or dream up your own mini landscape or cubby. It's all about free play. Drop in any time between 10am to 12pm. Don't forget your hat and sunscreen.

19 JANUARY TO 9 FEBRUARY

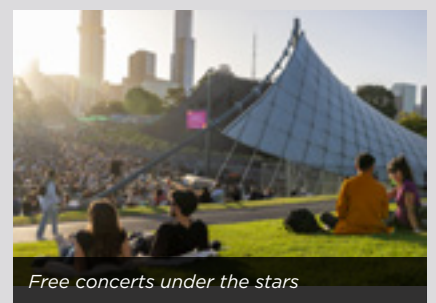
MIDSUMMA FESTIVAL

Celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Pride March, enjoy live performance and community spirit at the Midsumma Carnival and dive into a packed program of events. Take your pick from theatre, live music, visual arts, cabaret, film and public forums that reflect on three decades of progress, unity, and resilience within the LGBTQIA+ community.

FEBRUARY

CONCERTS UNDER THE STARS

Pack a picnic and bring your friends and family along for a free, relaxed evening under the stars with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra. These beloved concerts are held at the Sidney Myer Music Bowl. Keep an eye out for the announcement of the full program.



Free concerts under the stars



22 TO 23 FEBRUARY

Antipodes Festival



31 DECEMBER

New Year's Eve



Backyard at Artplay

1 TO 28 FEBRUARY

NATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY FESTIVAL

Be part of the largest and longest-running sustainability-themed event in Australia. The festival aims to inspire and provide solutions to sustainability and climate challenges, now and into the future. Hear critical insights from local and international thought leaders, and engage the whole family in community events.



National Sustainability Festival

1 TO 14 FEBRUARY

CHINESE LUNAR NEW YEAR FESTIVAL

Welcome the Year of the Snake with a vibrant showcase of live performance and delicious food in Melbourne's historic Chinatown. The main event will take place on 2 February with the Millennium Dragon Parade, lion and dragon dances, and lighting displays. The Chinese Lunar New Year Festival is among many festivities taking place across the city as diverse Asian communities come together to celebrate Lunar New Year.

20 FEBRUARY TO 10 MARCH

SHADOWS IN TWIN CITIES

Children from Jeonju, Korea and Melbourne will connect and converse without words through large-scale video installations, delicate Hanji paper shadows and the city landscape. This Asia TOPA experience will be spread out across Fed Square and ArtPlay, which is located at Birrarung Marr. melbourne.vic.gov.au/artplay



Shadows in Twin Cities

22 TO 23 FEBRUARY

ANTIPODES FESTIVAL

Head to Lonsdale Street for this epic event, renowned as the world's largest celebration of Greek culture outside of Greece. A testament to Melbourne's large and vibrant Greek community, this event brings together artists, community groups and businesses through more than 90 market stalls and on three stages in the city's Greek Quarter.



Chinese Lunar New Year Festival

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT whatson.melbourne.vic.gov.au

COMMUNITY CORNER

EAST MELBOURNE BARBECUE AND PICNIC

Get in the festive spirit at a Community Christmas Barbecue at East Melbourne Library on Saturday 7 December from 10.30am. Then join an annual residents' community picnic in the gardens of Bishops Court on Sunday 15 December. BYO picnic hamper and blanket.

CARLTON CARLTON COMMUNITY GROCER

Come to the base of the Carlton housing estate to buy affordable fresh produce. Every Friday from 8am to 12pm.

KENSINGTON FRESH FOOD MARKET

Come to Bellair Street Reserve (Skinny Park) to connect with local people and enjoy affordable, locally-grown food - for free or by donation. On the first Saturday of each month from 10am to midday.

SOUTHBANK A VERY MERRY FRIENDMAS

Southbank3006's inclusive annual festive celebration is back - bigger, brighter and better. Enjoy a wide range family and pet-friendly fun with many new surprise attractions at Boyd Park on Saturday 14 December from 11am to 3pm.

SOUTH YARRA WEEKLY LAST POST SERVICE

Head to the northern forecourt of the Shrine of Remembrance to remember those who have served and sacrificed. Every Sunday at 4.45pm.



SHAPING LOCAL STREETS

An artist's impression of the future Franklin Street in West Melbourne

A beloved laneway repaved with iconic bluestone, a historic bridge restored by expert stonemasons, and a theatre forecourt upgraded to enhance your night out.

These are just a few of the projects the City of Melbourne is delivering to restore and improve local streetscapes for future generations.

We've upgraded 86,000 sqm of footpaths and roads across the municipality in the past year. This involved replacing run-down asphalt, upgrading footpaths with new bluestone, and improving kerbs, tree plots and crossings.

This year, we're getting on with making our streets safer, greener and more accessible.

Read on to discover more about local streetscape improvements happening across the city.



Take a stroll down a refreshed Hardware Lane

Hardware Lane

Visitors to Melbourne flock to this vibrant laneway, which is stacked with restaurants, bars and shops.

To keep it thriving, we've refreshed the streetscape with a new bluestone surface, jacaranda trees and safety barriers. We've also made Hardware Lane more accessible for people with disability.

Little Lonsdale Street

Wider footpaths, new trees, raised pedestrian crossings, speed humps and more safety features are being installed to make this popular 'little' street safer and leafier.

Like a lot of our projects, this work is being delivered in stages. We are currently completing the final stage between Queen and Elizabeth streets.

Franklin Street

Imagine Franklin Street transformed into a leafy precinct that connects the new State Library Station to Queen Victoria Market.

With 1800 sqm of garden beds and rain gardens and a target of 40 per cent tree canopy cover, the new Franklin Street will provide a cooler environment with more places to relax.

The transformation will create better connections between the CBD and Queen Victoria Market, and new pedestrian

crossings, lighting and reduced traffic flow will mean a safer street for all users.

Along with the future Market Square and Queen's Corner Building, the transformation of Franklin Street will continue the City of Melbourne's investment in the Queen Victoria Market Precinct.



An artist's impression of Franklin Street



We've installed wider footpaths and safer bike lanes in the Exhibition Street theatre precinct



A refreshed pedestrian crossing on Little Lonsdale Street

GETTING AROUND THE CITY

Visit melbourne.vic.gov.au/getting-around-city for the latest information about major works happening across our city and neighbourhoods, including timely updates about construction, major events, road closures and other disruptions.



FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT
melbourne.vic.gov.au/city-projects

Exhibition Street theatre precinct

See a show at the Comedy Theatre or Her Majesty's Theatre with more room to move thanks to streetscape upgrades between Little Lonsdale and Bourke streets.

We've been busy installing wider bluestone footpaths, a safer bike lane, new street furniture and more drop-off bays for cars and buses. New shady trees and plants are also in the works.

Princes Bridge

Large-scale vintage postcards and historic images of Princes Bridge adorn the site as the iconic Melbourne landmark undergoes its biggest restoration upgrade yet.

Expert stonemasons continue to restore and conserve the arches of this iconic gateway to the city, built in 1888. They've been busy replacing, cleaning and resetting the bridge's bluestone blocks.

We've also fixed up weathered bluestone in the pedestrian zone, and repaired and repainted heritage ironwork like crests, lampposts and balustrades.



Princes Bridge during restoration





STARTUP SECTORS THRIVE IN THE CITY OF MELBOURNE

The Melbourne Biomedical Precinct in Parkville

Groundbreaking cancer treatments, free-roaming virtual reality gaming and global exchange programs for young entrepreneurs – Melbourne startups produce amazing innovations.

We spoke to some of the movers and shakers behind Melbourne’s booming life sciences, gaming and edtech sectors. These people are passionate about their jobs and working out of the best city in the world.

To read our full interviews with each of these businesses, search for ‘startups’ at news.melbourne.vic.gov.au

Life sciences sector

Melbourne is the life sciences capital of Australia, with more than 70 per cent of the nation’s leading biotech and medtech companies based here. The Melbourne Biomedical Precinct in Parkville is a key area of activity.

Local research institutions attract about \$500 million in medical research funding per year, paving the way for breakthrough innovations.

At the Bionics Institute in East Melbourne, an expert team works to solve some of the world’s most challenging medical conditions – including Alzheimer’s disease, chronic pain and Parkinson’s – with technology.

“The thing that sets us apart from other medical research institutes is that we have a laser focus on translating our research

concepts as quickly as possible into medical devices that will benefit patients,” said Chief Operating Officer Karen Campitelli.

“Many of the medical devices under development at the Bionics Institute provide drug-free alternatives to current treatments and more accurate diagnostic tools, which could lead to huge savings in health costs.”

Gaming sector

Expansive world-building games. Atmospheric mystery games. Games where you shoot zombies in a free-roaming virtual reality experience. Top creatives are making all these and more in Melbourne.

Melbourne is Australia’s game-development capital and home to 170 of Australia’s 200 digital games studios. We also host premier global gaming events for fans and creators.

Scott Vandonkelaar started Zero Latency VR – a Melbourne-made company offering immersive, free-roam virtual reality experiences – more than 10 years ago.

The team’s District Docklands player site is now just one of numerous locations in 27 countries.

“So many cities don’t have the ecosystem we have in Melbourne. I can’t imagine what it would have been like going through that early-startup phase anywhere else,” Scott said.

“Melbourne International Games Week was massive for us because suddenly we could go and, in one week, meet so many people and get such a good understanding of the local community, what people are doing and what’s possible.”



Players get set for a session at Zero Latency VR



Photo by Peter Bennetts, courtesy of Plenary Group

Startup support

The City of Melbourne supports entrepreneurs on their journey from concept to commercialisation, locally and on the world stage.

We do this through our Invest Melbourne and Business Concierge teams, partnerships with organisations like Austrade, and through a program of industry networking events.

Have you got a business idea? Get support to start, grow and go global.



FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT melbourne.vic.gov.au/startups-and-innovation



Jeanette Cheah from HEX in Melbourne

Edtech sector

Melbourne is also Australia’s edtech capital, home to one third of the nation’s education and technology providers. Edtech is forecast to grow rapidly – by more than 10 per cent in 2025.

Education technology combines the latest digital tools with innovative education practices to facilitate and enhance learning. It’s a booming industry, not least due to the rise of AI.

HEX (The Hacker Exchange) has helped thousands of students launch startups, get funding or kick-start tech and innovation careers. We’re partnering with HEX to deliver an Entrepreneur Exchange between Melbourne and Ho Chi Minh City in Vietnam.

“My personal passion is helping to evolve leadership so we see a more representative group of people in charge of business, technology and other sectors,” said HEX CEO and Co-founder Jeanette Cheah.

.....
“Multiculturalism, neurodivergence, people of different ages – our differences can bring fresh new perspectives and create amazing impact in the world.”



HEX team members



Team members in the Bionics Institute lab

FOODIE TRAILS MADE MORE ACCESSIBLE

Before joining a walking tour in his hometown of Melbourne, disability advocate Geoffrey Lim felt a familiar apprehension.

“It can be scary as a disabled person in an unfamiliar place. You tend to shut down. You stick to what you know, the places you have memorised,” Geoffrey said.

Geoffrey is no stranger to pushing outside his comfort zone. A seasoned traveller, this deaf-blind Melburnian signs up for walking tours the world over.

As a not-for-profit arts leader, he holds his own in street dance battles with the city’s best poppers and rockers, as he advocates for more diversity in street dance culture.

He’s even won hearts across the nation as a contestant on *So You Think You Can Dance*. Twice.

Sharing lived experience to amplify access

As a member of our Disability Advisory Committee, Geoffrey recently lent his expertise to the City of Melbourne-funded pilot Business Capacity Program: Amplify Access.

Over six months, the Amplify Access program worked with 14 city businesses in the visitor economy sector to reach new customers by improving their accessibility.

One of the businesses was Foodie Trails. Geoffrey joined its Melbourne Foodie Culture walking tour and shared tips to make the visitor experience more accessible.

“It was amazing. It was my favourite city walking experience around the world. It was really easy. The tour guide was amazing and almost all the venues were accessible,” Geoffrey said.

The biggest adjustment he recommended to Foodie Trails was a refresher on road safety.

“We are in high-alert mode when crossing the road, so try to wait until we’re settled and safe on the other side of the road before sharing new information on the tour,” Geoffrey said.

“I also showed them which streets to avoid when they are crowded, how to cut through the city using plazas and arcades, and where to find smooth flooring.”

Geoffrey also suggested website improvements, including a change in the font and text size, and the use of high-contrast between text and background.

Small changes make a big difference

When Melbourne Foodie Culture founder Himanshi Munshaw Luhar joined the pilot program, she suspected her business would need to make big adjustments.

The four-hour Foodie Trails tour leads visitors to iconic destinations and hidden gems across the city, sharing how each wave of migration has changed the culinary, historical and architectural landscape of the city.

“We are a walking tour, and it’s not the first thing people would think of as an experience to do in the City of Melbourne if you have accessibility requirements,” Himanshi said.

“However, most of the changes were really small things that can make an even better experience.”

On Geoffrey’s advice, Himanshi created a new accessibility guide to give potential customers a fuller picture of what to expect on the four-hour tour.

“Amplify Access has been instrumental in giving us the confidence to say ‘yes we can cater effectively to this community,’” Himanshi said.

“Now that we’ve had the lived-experience feedback to say we are on the right track, it gives us the confidence to go out to this cohort and tell them we can give them an experience of Melbourne they might not have considered before.”



FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT
[melbourne.vic.gov.au/
accessibility-melbourne](https://melbourne.vic.gov.au/accessibility-melbourne)



Himanshi Munshaw Luhar and Geoffrey Lim at Big Esso by Mabu Mabu in Fed Square



Wai-Han Turner

Community heroes who make a difference

From preparing nutritious meals for children to caring for our urban forest and supporting new parents, the City of Melbourne offers diverse roles for people who care about their community.

Read on to meet some of the team members who look after important elements of neighbourhood life.

Feeding the future

Wai-Han Turner has been preparing fresh meals for the children at Lady Huntingfield Early Learning Centre for 15 years.

This is more than just a job for Wai-Han – it's a way to contribute to the wellbeing and development of the children.

She believes that introducing children to fresh, appealing, wholesome foods at an early age can set the foundation for healthy eating habits later in life.

"Everything is made on the premises, and we don't just mash everything together," Wai-Han explained.

"This is a time for children to taste, sense, and learn what food is. It's a lifelong experience, and it's very important at this early age for them to actually understand what it's about."

In the treetops

Arborist Miranda Allan spends her days caring for the trees in Melbourne's parks.

"It's such a rewarding job," Miranda said. "When you finish work you can step back and say: 'I fixed that tree. It's going to be happy for years!'"

Miranda originally wanted to be a zoologist but found another passion in arboriculture, enjoying the hands-on work and contributing to Melbourne's green spaces, such as Royal Park, with her crew from Citywide Tree Care.

"Working around the zoo is really, really fun," Miranda said. "Sometimes if you're up close to the zoo fence and up really high, you can see into the animal enclosures."



Miranda Allan



Jacqueline Byrne (left) and her maternal and

Midwives on bikes

Look out for our maternal and child health nurses zipping around your neighbourhood by bike to provide free support to families with newborn babies, and children aged up to 6.

The merry band of biking baby experts might remind you of TV's *Call the Midwife* – with a few modern-day twists. Like top-notch e-bikes and bright-blue backpacks to carry baby scales.

"Biking is the easiest way to move around the city – even with road closures and works, it's still faster by bike," said maternal and child health nurse Jacqueline Byrne.

"As a bonus, it's also good for my health, body, mind and soul."



READ THE FULL STORIES AT
news.melbourne.vic.gov.au

YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD PARTNERS

Each of the 10 unique neighbourhoods in the City of Melbourne has a dedicated neighbourhood partner to support the community. This award-winning team of people can help you join the dots across council processes and access grants to support community projects.

As City of Melbourne staff, neighbourhood partners have deep knowledge of the local issues going on in your area. Their focus is to make sure council delivers on the priorities that matter to community members in each unique neighbourhood.



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Neighbourhood
Partner

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Fadi Qunqar

Docklands
Neighbourhood
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Kimberley Pierzchalski

East Melbourne
and South Yarra
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You can reach the partners through our neighbourhood portals – websites that feature local updates, events and grants, to support you to better connect to your community.

For more information, visit participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/neighbourhoods



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IN BRIEF

GETTING AROUND THE CITY

Disruptions can impact how you get from A to B, whether they are due to major construction works or events. To make your journey as easy as possible, we've compiled a list of what's happening across the central city and our neighbourhoods.

melbourne.vic.gov.au/getting-around-city

WHAT GOES IN WHAT BIN?

Get it right on bin night with our handy A to Z guide to recycling and waste disposal. From cardboard and food scraps to chemicals and e-waste, learn how to recycle or dispose of common items using City of Melbourne kerbside bins or collection services, drop-off locations in the city, or through other service providers.

melbourne.vic.gov.au/a-z-guide-recycling-and-waste-disposal

LIBRARY LOCATIONS

Access books, audiobooks, makerspaces, conversation clubs, meeting spaces and much more at our seven permanent libraries across the municipality. Library locations include the CBD, Carlton, Docklands, East Melbourne, North Melbourne, Southbank and narm ngarrgu Library and Family Services in the Queen Victoria Market precinct.

melbourne.vic.gov.au/libraries

CREATIVITY FOR ALL AGES

ArtPlay offers creative programs specifically designed with, for and by children and families. Children (from babies to 13 years) collaborate with artists to express themselves in a playful exchange at Birrarung Marr. Older children and young adults aged 14 to 25 years can come learn and work alongside professional artists at SIGNAL in Northbank (located behind Flinders Street Station). Or catch contemporary performance at Arts House in North Melbourne.

melbourne.vic.gov.au/arts-and-culture

REPORT IT ONLINE

Do you need to let us know about a problem like graffiti, a barking dog or an illegally parked vehicle? Follow the link below to report issues to the right team, find out what is required and how different types of issues may be resolved. If there is any danger to the public or public space, please call us on 03 9658 9658.

melbourne.vic.gov.au/reportanissue

COUNCIL MEETINGS

DECEMBER

FUTURE MELBOURNE COMMITTEE

Tuesday 3 December, 5.30pm
Melbourne Town Hall

COUNCIL

Tuesday 10 December, 5.30pm
Melbourne Town Hall

Find more information and meeting dates for 2025 at melbourne.vic.gov.au/about-council



PEOPLE WE MEET IN MELBOURNE



ROCCO ELICE

Local legend from Pellegrini's

"This was my first job, in the year 1974. It's been like a brother to me since. I even met my wife here. I came in, I asked for espresso. I was talking with Sisto. It was a beautiful espresso, we were talking about jobs and he says to me, 'OK, you can start tomorrow'."

Rocco Elice recently hung up his apron at Pellegrini's Espresso Bar after 50 years. During his five decades of service, his Italian accent hasn't faded and neither has the twinkle in his eye.



RIESA ZAINUDDIN

Busking audition panellist

"I like being able to help buskers perform - to be recognised as really good musicians. Sometimes people start their career as a busker. That's really rewarding for me."

Riesa knows first-hand what it's like to busk in front of a crowd - as a child in Jakarta, she would put down a hat at her local mall and entertain shoppers with ballet. Now she helps audition buskers for the Bourke Street Mall.



MATT COLEMAN

Line dancing instructor

"What I love is that you can just show up at a line dancing class. You can dance on your own - I love that you don't need a partner. You get to dance to great music and get some exercise that's really enjoyable."

Leave your worries at the door and boost your endorphins with a line dancing class for older people and carers, held every Wednesday at Jean McKendry Neighbourhood Centre in North Melbourne.



To learn more about these inspiring local people, search for their names at news.melbourne.vic.gov.au

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ONLY IN THE CITY

ELEVATE YOUR SUMMER

ULTIMATE GUIDE TO OUTDOOR
DINING IN THE CITY

THE TERRACE
Royal Botanic Gardens



SCAN TO SEE
WHAT'S ON



CITY OF MELBOURNE