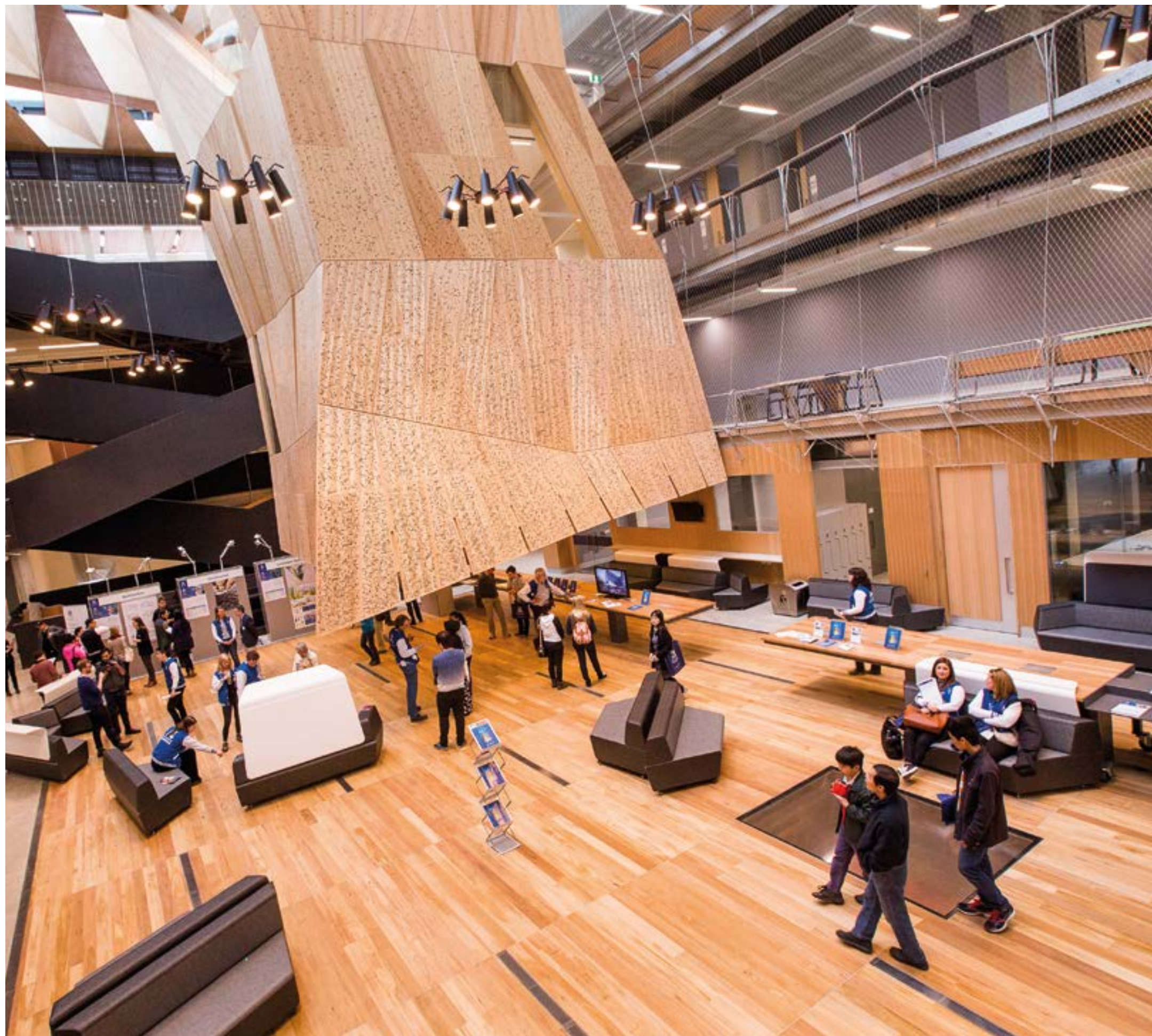




The impact of your giving





CONTENTS

FROM THE VICE-CHANCELLOR	04
Your support enables transformation	
2022 IN REVIEW	05
Thank you for your generosity	
MEDICAL RESEARCH	06
Building global resilience: The motivation behind Australia's largest medical gift	
LEADERSHIP	08
Empowering future Indigenous leaders	
CONSERVATION	10
Bringing back to life an enigmatic marsupial	
SCHOLARSHIPS	12
Opening the doors for future generations	
LEADERSHIP	14
Wattle Fellows: Growing leaders in sustainability	
GLOBAL HEALTH	16
A microbiologist's legacy: Safeguarding antibiotics to protect children	
SCHOLARSHIPS	18
Setting up students to thrive in their career	
AWARD	19
Donor generosity supports Tyallah to blaze a trail	
VOLUNTEERING	20
Uplifting young alumni through mentoring	
SCHOLARSHIPS	22
Enabling greater Indigenous representation in law	
LIFELONG GENEROSITY	24
Celebrating Baillieu Myer's legacy of giving	
SCHOLARSHIPS	26
Supporting a career change to teaching	
GIVING MOTIVATIONS	28
Building up the next generation: Continuing a family legacy	
FROM THE VICE-PRESIDENT (ADVANCEMENT)	30
Your generosity is far-reaching	
THANK YOU	31
Giving power to possibility	

Left: Hansen Yunken Suspended Studios,
Melbourne School of Design.

Your support enables transformation



This report is being compiled just as our campuses are being reinvigorated with the return of many thousands of students eager to begin the new academic year. This is all the more heartening after the difficult few years experienced by many since 2020.

Just as I welcome today's new and returning students, with their energy and optimism, so I am extremely grateful for the continuing commitment and the great dedication of our generous community of supporters.

Last year, over 2700 donors contributed funds and nearly 3000 alumni engaged with their alma mater to volunteer and provide mentorship to our students.

As this report illustrates, these generous gifts have provided essential support for our students and made scholarships possible across all study disciplines, allowing more students to

focus on success in their studies and future careers, irrespective of their financial circumstances. I hope you will enjoy reading some of their stories.

The University is one of the world's great research institutions, and this year our research ambitions have been greatly enhanced by the establishment of the Cumming Global Centre for Pandemic Therapeutics. Created with an extraordinary \$250 million donation from international businessman and philanthropist, Mr Geoff Cumming, the Centre will aim to provide greater resilience for societies around the world in dealing with future pandemics. This is the largest philanthropic donation to Australian medical research and one of the largest gifts in Australia's history.

As always, this report is a welcome opportunity for me to say thank you to all of you who contribute in vital ways to our endeavours as a University. It is also a succinct way to highlight some of the great things your generosity is making possible.

My warm thanks to everyone in our donor and alumni community.

PROFESSOR DUNCAN MASKELL
Vice-Chancellor

Thank you for your generosity

TOTAL GIVEN

\$347,880,032

TOTAL NUMBER OF GIFTS:

3337

TOTAL NUMBER OF DONORS:

2706

DONORS WHO ARE ALSO ALUMNI:

66%

TOTAL GIVEN THROUGH GIFTS IN WILLS:

\$20.7M

ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT

TOTAL ALUMNI ENGAGED:

17,004

EVENT PARTICIPATION:

13,525

GIVING:

2243

VOLUNTEERING:

2777

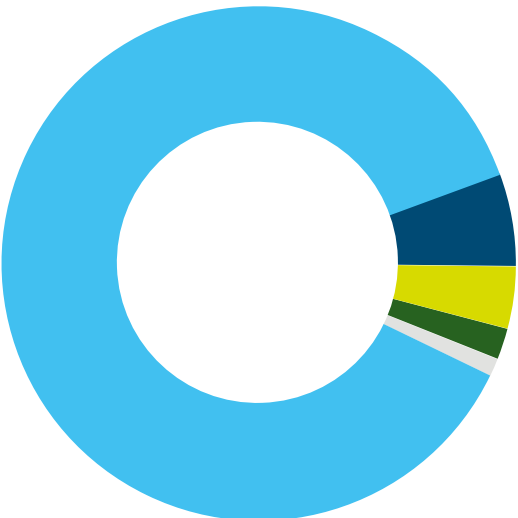
ALUMNI MENTORS:

2103

WHO CONNECTED WITH
MORE THAN 2700 MENTEES

HOW YOU HAVE MADE A DIFFERENCE

Thanks to you, we have been able to progress a wide range of initiatives that benefit our students, researchers and the wider community.



RESEARCH & DISCOVERY: \$288.7M

Gifts that drive innovation and tackle humanity's biggest questions through the creation of academic positions, research programs and institutes.

MULTI-PURPOSE GIFTS AND UNRESTRICTED FUNDS: \$18.4M

Donations used to support the University's highest priorities, and those with broad-reaching impact across disciplines.

STUDENT SUPPORT: \$13.1M

Developing the leaders of tomorrow, through scholarships, awards, financial aid grants, and projects supporting Indigenous student education.

LEARNING SPACES AND CAMPUS DEVELOPMENT: \$6.1M

Funding for the creation of first-class educational environments where students and researchers can excel.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: \$4.1M

Support for initiatives that enrich our cultural and social life, such as museums and collections and public lecture programs.

Note: These figures include gifts to University funds in 2022 and do not include gifts to affiliated colleges and institutions.

Building global resilience: The motivation behind Australia's largest medical gift

Mr Geoff Cumming's gift established the new Cumming Global Centre for Pandemic Therapeutics. Here, he shares his motivations for giving to medical research and improving humanity.

Mr Geoff Cumming is the inaugural major donor whose gift of \$250 million will establish the new Cumming Global Centre for Pandemic Therapeutics within the Peter Doherty Institute for Infection and Immunity (the Doherty Institute) – a joint venture between the University of Melbourne and the Royal Melbourne Hospital.

Born into a medical family in Canada, Geoff pursued a career in business and economics and has been a director of over 30 companies in Canada, New Zealand and several other countries. He has supported many international charitable organisations involved with public health, sanitation, the environment, global over-population and other critical world issues. Today, Geoff lives in Melbourne.

His gift to the Doherty Institute is the largest philanthropic donation ever made to Australian medical research. It will enable rapid design and development of treatments for pathogens of pandemic potential and advance the science behind antiviral therapeutics, transforming the management of future pandemics and saving lives.

How did your philanthropy journey start and what areas are you most passionate about?

My father, who was a doctor, and my mother, who sat on the admissions committee of a medical school and who is now over 100 years old, have had a big influence on me. They instilled in me an interest in medicine and also a strong sense of social responsibility.

When I was a young boy, I was mesmerised by the American and Russian space programs. I was impressed by their long-term orientation, incredible technology and audacious objectives, and by the way technological breakthroughs could transform the future for the better.

While I have supported public health, sanitation, the environment, global over-population and other critical global issues, I had been looking for something big and transformative that combines medicine and technology.

What issues keep you awake at night and how could these be impacted by philanthropy?

I like to think a lot about society and about the big picture issues. It's not just about medicine, and it's not just about health, it's about how to create more resiliency in society.

We need to increase the resiliency of the global community against the next pandemic. I like to think of societal cohesion like ice on a pond; pandemics and other crises put stress on the ice, and if the ice is too thin it may crack or break. By developing more tools to manage these crises we are strengthening the ice. That's where I feel this gift could make an enduring global contribution today and in the decades ahead.

How did you arrive at the decision to give so generously to establish the Centre?

All of us want to live in a safe and healthy world. We want our families, our jobs and our communities to be safe and properly functioning. Pandemics threaten all of this, as the world has witnessed during the Spanish flu a century ago, during the AIDS crisis over the past forty years, during SARs, MERs, Ebola and especially during COVID-19.

This pandemic has had a profound impact on society. There have been millions of fatalities, and many people are going to be impacted by mental health and long COVID issues; and there's also the economic cost of perhaps US\$30 trillion in lost output.

The world needs additional protection beyond vaccines.

We need a second shield to protect the world when the next pandemic hits, whether in a year, a decade or a century. We need to increase the resiliency of the global community. This Centre will develop new technologies to treat future pathogens of pandemic potential. That is the fundamental mission of the new Cumming Global Centre for Pandemic Therapeutics.

What made you choose Australia, and in particular, Melbourne when considering the location for the Centre?

I had three goals for this gift: I wanted to make a gift to humanity, I wanted the gift to be in technology that will advance science and transform the future, and I wanted to leverage off Australia's outstanding response to COVID-19.

I am very pleased to locate this Centre at the University of Melbourne and at the Doherty Institute. We are delighted to work with the Victorian Government, with the Commonwealth, with globally leading philanthropic organisations and with other donors and partners. This Centre is here in Melbourne due to the sustained investment in medical research by the Victorian Government, by the breadth of the medical research ecosystem here, by the collegiality of all the players involved and, in part, because of the relatively successful response by Australia to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Our family have met many Doherty Institute staff and we have seen and felt the terrific culture. You want to bottle it; you do not want to lose it. And we just need to carry that culture and dedication across to this new Centre and replicate it there.

What impact do you hope the Centre will make globally over the next 10, 20, 30 years?

This Centre will bring together top scientists and brilliant young researchers from across Australia and around the world. It

From left to right: Mr Geoff Cumming and his wife Anna Cumming, Vice-Chancellor Professor Duncan Maskell, Director of the Doherty Institute Professor Sharon Lewin AO and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) Professor James McCluskey AO.

will be a top-tier global medical research centre. It will work in collaboration with other leading medical research centres in Australia, New Zealand, America, the United Kingdom and around the world.

I think we should have a really long timeframe, maybe 40, 50, 60 years. 10 years out, there should be some real indication that we've got meaningful success of some type – not full success, but meaningful success. We would've added to the stock of human knowledge, a new platform and a new pathway.

'Blue sky' or discovery science is the hardest science. It's important to create the sense that there's no such thing as failure per se. It is impossible to predict which areas of inquiry will lead to the next breakthrough, and we want an environment where people can take risks knowing that many avenues will lead to dead ends but that a few may lead to truly novel discoveries. We have high aspirations for our people and our results, but we recognise this will be a winding path forward and upwards.

We've really got to get people to feel there are no limits. We've got to allow people sufficient scope to really take risks and try brand new things, and then look at it down the road. And hopefully we will have accomplished that. Our family hopes this new Centre will create meaningful advances in this area of global science and help make the world a safe place in the face of the next pandemic.

Empowering future Indigenous leaders

I-LEAP is providing crucial support to Indigenous students. For Nick Harvey-Doyle, it means being able to help bring Indigenous perspectives to mainstream media.

Growing up as a queer, neurodiverse Aboriginal person in a small rural town in NSW, Nick Harvey-Doyle never expected to one day be studying a Master of Arts on a Fulbright Scholarship at New York University. But that is exactly where he is today, and he couldn't be happier.

"I was the first person in my family to finish high school and obtain a tertiary education," he said. "Through support from my network and my own tenacity and resilience, I am now studying in New York City and get to do things that teenage me would have never thought possible."

After completing his law degree and working as a consultant in Indigenous affairs for three years, Nick's love of storytelling and desire to bring diversity to the Australian media landscape trumped his plans for a legal career and set him on a more creative path.

"Skilled storytellers are a key foundation in sustaining an engaging, contemporary and representative media industry, and I am passionate about diverse storytelling and the incorporation of disparate lived experiences into Australian media, which is shaping the next phase of my career and professional goals."

Taking the leap

Thanks to the Indigenous Leadership, Excellence and Achievement Program (I-LEAP), Nick was able to refocus his legal career plans and complete the Graduate Certificate in Journalism (Advanced) at the University of Melbourne.

"The financial support allowed me to take a step back from my career, focus on my studies, and help carve out the trajectory of my future career, studies and ambitions," he said. "I have never been someone who has had the privilege of studying without working to support myself and the difference in being able to apply myself fully to my study without the demands of work was incredibly freeing."

I-LEAP provides pathways and opportunities for Indigenous students who show the potential to excel and provide leadership



within their own community, as well as in society more broadly. It supports initiatives that span high school, university, graduation and beyond.

Since its establishment in 2015, the program has supported 66 Indigenous students to take crucial next steps into employment and life beyond university. Beneficiaries have included Rhodes scholars, and several students have received numerous other scholarships.

Exploring Indigenous stories

Having the time and space to explore his interests through his journalism course gave Nick opportunities he says he would have missed out on if he had stayed in a legal career.

"I am a true believer that reality is often more interesting than fiction and I explored several compelling stories when completing my program," he said.

"I wrote an article on the impacts of freeing the Aboriginal flag from its copyright restrictions. I interviewed mental health professionals on the increase of ADHD diagnoses during the

pandemic and the importance of accurate and robust treatment of the disorder. I created an audio story about incorporating Indigenous knowledge of Country and custom into modern place-making."

He was able to do this because of the support he received through I-LEAP, most importantly through his mentors.

"Rural, Indigenous and socioeconomically disadvantaged students are severely under-represented at Australian universities. There are many complex factors that contribute to this, but the absence of mentors is often a key feature, so having programs that can offer mentorship and financial support are integral in achieving positive outcomes.

"This also isn't siloed – those who are mentored often become mentors themselves, which is why these initiatives will always remain important," he said.

Opening doors to the future

For Nick, switching to an arts focus was a decision that set him up for his next step, which was to undertake a Master of Arts in Media, Culture and Communication at New York University,

Thanks to generous donors, Nick Harvey-Doyle received support in completing his Graduate Certificate in Journalism (Advanced) through the I-LEAP program.

supported by a Fulbright Scholarship and a scholarship from the American Australian Association.

"I want to understand the barriers to achieving meaningful and sustained representation in mainstream media," he explained. "Ideally, I will bring this knowledge back to Australia to work with large media organisations on improving diversity both on and off screen, with a key focus on First Nations representation. I strongly believe that genuine representation within mainstream media is a key step in Australia's reconciliation journey.

"My interests are vast and wide and fundamentally human in nature, and I love being able to tell stories that not only resonate with people, but also open doors to new ways of thinking, seeing and doing.

"Every ounce of support I've received along the way has led me to where I am, so I just want to say, 'thank you for playing a part in my journey.'"

Bringing back to life an enigmatic marsupial

A generous gift from the Wilson Family Trust helped establish the TIGRR Lab, supercharging research in the field of marsupial conservation and the de-extinction of the thylacine.

Few men on Earth know as much about the thylacine as Professor Andrew Pask. He is so enthralled by the long-lost marsupial, also known as the Tasmanian tiger, that he's leading the effort for its de-extinction.

Through a potent cocktail of ingenuity, audacity and genetic engineering, he is creating a gene-by-gene instruction manual on how to do exactly that, in a laboratory at the University of Melbourne.

It is work that places him in the vanguard of a small but dedicated club of bioscientists working diligently in different parts of the world to bring back from oblivion extinct species that include the woolly mammoth and the dodo. Remarkably, it is no longer a question of whether such a feat will be achieved, but when – and by whom.

Professor Pask's work happens in the University's TIGRR (Thylacine Integrated Genomic Restoration Research) Lab where a team of 40 professionals – specialists in the fields of morphology, developmental biology, evolution, stem cell biology, genetics, genomics, bioinformatics and conservation – are working to bring back the apex predator (one residing at the top of the food chain).

It's heady stuff. What was once considered science fiction is now science fact.

And to think, this endeavour all started as a sort of side hustle for Professor Pask, who found himself beguiled by the thylacine, the last of which is believed to have died in a Hobart Zoo in the 1930s.

"I couldn't get government funding for a research project because, 20 years ago, such a project was seen as pie in the sky," he recalled. But he persevered, finding a little bit of money here and there, and gleaned from other research projects.

From folklore to reality

Professor Pask managed to extract DNA from a baby thylacine – a pup taken from its mother's pouch after she was killed in Tasmania in 1909 – which had been stored in the Melbourne



Professor Andrew Pask examining a preserved thylacine skull in the Tieggs Museum, the University's zoology collection located at the Parkville campus.

Museum. Importantly, it had been preserved in alcohol, which maintained its DNA integrity.

"We put the DNA into a mouse to see if it could work again and it did," he recalled. "It was then just a matter of scale and money to bring back the thylacine."

Touched by the researcher's passion and disturbed by the way the thylacine had been hunted to extinction, the Wilson Family Trust gifted Professor Pask's research \$5 million over 10 years.

This gift started the TIGRR Lab and encouraged Colossal Biosciences, an American-based biotech company, to invest another \$14 million to expand the Lab.

"We came across Professor Pask's incredible work, believe it or not, via some YouTube clips," said Russell Wilson. "We realise that we are on the verge of a great breakthrough in science through improvements in technology and its application to the genome."

The donation from the Wilson family and access to ground-breaking technology at the Dallas-based biotech company was transformative, notes Professor Pask.

"Having that level of investment meant that, for the first time, we could tell the world that we were working to bring back the thylacine," he explained. "I will be forever grateful to Russell and his family."

Past destruction, future promise

Long before the efforts to bring it back from the dead, the thylacine was part of Australian wildlife folklore. It was hunted to extinction on mainland Australia around 3000 years ago, but a population survived in Tasmania. Ultimately, they too were wiped out by hunters who believed, mistakenly, that the tigers were sheep killers.

However, the thylacine was critical to the environment because, as an apex predator, it helped control the spread of disease throughout the animal kingdom, and it also supported stabilisation of ecosystems.

Indeed, the loss of animals like the thylacine may represent humankind's most destructive influence on nature. The emergence of the Tasmanian devil facial tumour is a good example of trophic downgrading – in which ecosystems break down following the loss of top-level predators such as the thylacine.

The thylacine's extinction gave birth to the legend. Although

the last known one died in 1936, there have been 900 reported 'sightings' of the marsupial since.

Indeed, Professor Pask's laboratory was for a long time regularly sent Ziplock bags filled with poo that members of the public were convinced were the faeces of thylacines.

"It was always dog poo. There are a lot of wild dogs in Tasmania and even I couldn't tell one from a thylacine at 10 metres. But it's a bit like the Loch Ness monster. The sightings keep the memory of the thylacine alive."

Professor Pask's energies are sharply fixed on the future rather than the past, on creating a new chapter in the thylacine's story. The DNA recovered from the pup stored at the Melbourne Museum provided the team with the material needed to attempt to sequence the entire genome blueprint of the extinct animal.

"It's an enormous job to sequence through that genome and put the pieces of the puzzle back together," Professor Pask explained. "It's very challenging to rebuild these extinct genomes."

The research journey has been exciting and exacting. Professor Pask and his team have now established that the fat-tailed dunnart, a mouse-like marsupial, is key to resurrecting the thylacine. It is ideal for breeding in captivity and will make a good surrogate.

The team is now filling in some of the gaps in the thylacine genome and has started to edit the dunnart genome to create the thylacine. "We have made about 10 edits and there are hundreds of thousands still to edit," he explained.

"The technology to do this is getting better. It could take us 10 years to do all the necessary edits but if the tools improve – and they are likely to – that timeline will be cut drastically."

Ecosystems more broadly stand to benefit

Genomes are rich sources of information, offering all kinds of insights into a marsupial's past. They have discovered, for example, that the thylacine was becoming inbred towards the end of its existence. By engineering the genome, Professor Pask's team will be able to create a healthier population.

Finding a home for them will not be a problem since their entire ecological niche still exists in Tasmania, as does the food chain it needs to survive.

One of the most exciting aspects to the current research is its promise for animal conservation.

"Every tool we are drawing on to bring back the thylacine is an important tool for animal conservation," explained Professor Pask. "We need these tools to reverse the mistakes we have made over time. Australia's record is abysmal – we hold the record for the most mammal extinctions."

Being able to edit the DNA of marsupials will make it possible for scientists to engineer in features such as better immune health for some restricted populations.

"We can, for example, think about engineering a resistance to devil facial tumours for our Tasmanian devils, or try to engineer in cane toad toxin resistance for quolls."

When he emigrated from the UK as a 10-year-old, Professor Pask was captivated by Australia's magical animal kingdom. 38 years later, that magic endures.

"I care about what I do," he said. "I always say, I'm the luckiest scientist alive. Working on the Tasmanian tiger and helping marsupials – I can't think of anyone as fortunate as me."

Opening the doors for future generations

Thanks to the generous support of our donor community, Melbourne Access Scholarships are enabling students who experience disadvantaged circumstances to embrace all that the University of Melbourne has to offer.

When Camblar received an offer to study at the University of Melbourne, the resident of Castlemaine in regional Victoria was faced with a tough decision. He could accept the offer, but he could only afford to stay in his hometown, travelling a lengthy distance for class.

“It would have been a really big commute,” said Camblar. “I planned to fit all my studies into a couple of days, so I’d probably have met a whole lot less people.”

Thanks to our donor community’s generous support, the Melbourne Access Scholarship has enabled Camblar to live on campus at a residential college. The support has meant he has thrown himself into campus life, and the first year of a Bachelor of Commerce degree.

“I’ve made so many good friends who I’ll hopefully be friends with for life, and I feel like I’ve grown a lot as a person.”

Melbourne Access Scholarship recipients are awarded between \$5000-\$10,000 each year for the duration of their undergraduate degree. The scholarships support students who have experienced disadvantaged circumstances in embracing all that the University has to offer.

With the help of donors, we are enabling students to get involved in campus life and extra-curricular activities, undertake course-related internships, consider studying abroad and take advantage of leadership opportunities that will prepare them for the competitive job market after graduation.

Students based in rural and regional Australia are using the funds for transport to and from campus, enabling them to attend lectures, tutorials, pracs, lab classes and group work sessions in person. The generosity of our donors also supports students to buy and maintain textbooks, specialised equipment and technology.



From left to right:
Melbourne Access
Scholarship recipients
Fadi, Camblar and Melissa.



Recognising academic potential

The scholarships are available for students who enter the University through the Access Melbourne special entry scheme. Each year, we reserve a quarter of our Commonwealth Supported Places (CSPs) in undergraduate courses for Access Melbourne students.

Access Melbourne recognises that our applicants’ ATARs do not always reflect their true or potential abilities, often due to circumstances beyond their control. The special entry scheme ensures that we have an equitable domestic admissions process, so we can offer places to the best and brightest students regardless of their circumstances.

As part of the application process, applicants tell the University about ongoing circumstances that impacted their academic performance in high school. Categories include disadvantaged financial backgrounds, living with a disability or growing up in a non-English speaking environment.

A diverse student community

Students are at the heart of the University’s Advancing Melbourne strategy, which places a priority on strengthening opportunities for talented students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

“We know that students are able to perform at their best and achieve consistently high standards when they are supported to fully and freely commit to their studies,” said Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) Professor Gregor Kennedy.

“Melbourne Access Scholarships are vital as they provide students with more opportunities to immerse themselves in all that the University of Melbourne has to offer. This not only benefits the individual, but also the entire cohort, as a diverse and engaged student community helps grow more conscientious, empathetic future leaders.”

Professor Kennedy is grateful to each and every donor who has contributed to the Melbourne Access Scholarships. “The immense impact these scholarships have on our student community is only possible because of your generosity.”

Removing barriers to excellence

The generosity of our donor community has made a profound difference for students Fadi, Camblar and Melissa, who have all been supported to make the most of their time at the University after receiving Melbourne Access Scholarships.

“The Melbourne Access Scholarship has allowed me to pursue tertiary education at the University of Melbourne. From subsidising the cost of materials and textbooks to increasing access to university-related events, I’m grateful to be a recipient.

This scholarship is more than just money, it highlights the importance of access. Just like me, there are many ambitious and hard-working young students who wish to become someone or create something important. However, due to their disadvantaged background, they could lack access and not receive the proper

support to excel in their chosen field. I’m grateful to the donors for opening doors for the next generation and allowing us to use our talents at a fantastic university like the University of Melbourne.”

Fadi, Bachelor of Arts

“The Melbourne Access Scholarship has enabled me to fulfil my long-term goal of attending the University of Melbourne. Being from a country town and disadvantaged family financially, moving to the city was always going to present its difficulties. But my parents always encouraged me and scholarships like this one helped me fulfil this dream.”

Camblar, Bachelor of Commerce

“The Melbourne Access Scholarship relieved me of financial stress, allowing me to quit my job and focus more attention towards my subjects. This has contributed to an improvement in my mental health as I feel more in control of my life and feel like I can balance my personal and academic life better. I definitely noticed an improvement in my grades and ability to stay up-to-date.

Since I live so far away from the University, the scholarship has been really helpful with covering transport costs to help me get to campus classes. I would love to thank you all for the Melbourne Access Scholarship as it has been really helpful in regards to my financial struggles and has allowed me to spend more time enjoying University life.”

Melissa, Bachelor of Biomedicine ■

Wattle Fellows: Growing leaders in sustainability

To create a sustainable future, we must foster a multi-disciplinary approach. That's why the Wattle Fellowship is building global leadership in sustainability.

We all know Australia's iconic wattle as the bright, fragrant flower found across our vast land. What's lesser known about the native plant is its strong pollination abilities – and its crucial role in cultivating a positive ecological environment across Australia year-round.

Much like wattle, we must spread more ideas and sow more seeds to germinate a sustainable future. And the Wattle Fellowship, made possible thanks to generous seed funding from the McCall MacBain Foundation, is doing just that.

Taking inspiration from the plentiful array of Australian flora and fauna that together become a strong ecosystem, the team behind the Wattle Fellowship understand we must tackle sustainability from a diverse perspective too.

"We recognise global sustainability is a complex issue that intersects with every facet of our lives and every sector of the economy," said Wattle Fellowship Director Linh Do. "That's why our program draws students from all across the University of Melbourne – we've selected them regardless of what they're studying."

Growing potential

Designed to fit alongside an undergraduate or postgraduate student's studies, the year-long Wattle Fellowship gives Fellows the funding and support to develop and work on a student-led sustainability project of their own design.

Linh said the program also includes activities such as "retreats, monthly workshops with world-leading experts on all kinds of sustainability, and leadership programs."

In March 2022, the Fellowship's inaugural cohort of 18 students had the opportunity to meet with donor John McCall MacBain.



The relaxed 'fireside chat' featured an inspiring speech from John, where he generously shared insights about his philanthropic work and his investment in scholarship programs around the world.

"The Fellows really enjoyed the chance to hear John's story, and to have a deeper discussion about climate change, social impact and the role of leaders in creating a more sustainable future", said Linh.

The students left feeling inspired by John's words and generosity, ready to take on the final stages of their Fellowship journey.

Diverse and unique Fellows

From the Faculty of Science through to the Faculty of Business and Economics, students from across the University are passionate about building a sustainable future through their chosen disciplines.

Students are chosen based on their commitment to sustainability, leadership potential and vision, motivation and experience, and personal and professional attributes.

One of the inaugural Wattle Fellows Imogen Senior studied politics and criminology as part of her Bachelor of Arts. Her Fellowship project was called *Supporting young people to move from climate anxiety to hope by equipping them to take sustainability-focussed political action*.

Hailing from rural NSW, Imogen believes we need to seek transformative structural change rather than just individual behavioural change. She is looking to gain experience within institutional settings to push for policy change on climate related issues.



From left to right:
John McCall MacBain speaking with the first Wattle Fellowship cohort, inaugural Fellows Imogen Senior and Helen Shen.

"The Wattle Fellowship allowed me to train and empower the people around me by creating my own workshops – providing opportunities for students that I would have loved to have," said Imogen.

"It is such a unique experience to be able to focus on both empowering others and on my own professional development, and to be able to do so with such freedom is incredible."

Another Fellow from the first cohort, Helen Shen, investigated how a sustainable future can be fostered through a different lens – musical performance.

The Master of Music (Research) student's project – *Starting EnviroSound concerts, based on the idea that music creates enhanced perceptions on the value of nature to inspire environmental action* – encouraged others to reflect on their relationship with nature.

"It matters to me that we start seeing ourselves as part of nature," said Helen. "If we become aware of this connection, we can more readily shift our perspectives to the new and creative."

The year that was

In June 2021, the first cohort of Wattle Fellows embarked on a three-day intensive leadership course to kick off the year. Together, they brainstormed for their sustainability project and undertook a personal skills audit and leadership deep dive.



Six evening workshops over the course of the year gave the Fellows valuable tools for their future careers in sustainability leadership – covering theories and mechanisms of change, project ideation, project development and implementation, and much more.

Fellows also had access to 1:1 mentoring with staff to discuss experience, learning, and action project progress. The activity was exceedingly well received among the Fellows as they gave it a 5/5 rating.

The Fellows wrapped up their program by participating in a showcase in May 2022. Attendees had the opportunity to engage with hands-on demonstrations of the Fellows' sustainability focused action projects.

The cohort have now transitioned into the Wattle Fellowship alumni program where they can stay connected and receive support into the future.

Blossoming into a bright future

With the generous support of the McCall MacBain Foundation, Linh has planned an inspiring program for the current cohort of Fellows. To help them succeed in their aspirations, they are learning skills in values-led decision-making, social impact measuring, public speaking, and so much more.

"Designing a program for such a diverse group of students is both a complex challenge but also a really exciting opportunity," said Linh.

"We want to equip our students not just with the knowledge they might need, but with the skills, networks and community support to embed sustainability skills and practices into their lives and professional careers today and into the future."

A microbiologist's legacy: Safeguarding antibiotics to protect children

A gift from the late Dr Doris Mary Graham, alum and former senior lecturer at the University, is funding research that will improve the health of children globally.

“Obtaining funding for research is always a challenge,” said Dr Stephanie Neville, a Research Fellow in bacteriology at the University of Melbourne’s Department of Microbiology and Immunology.

The late Dr Doris Mary Graham was also very aware of this challenge. A former senior lecturer in the Department, she chose to establish a legacy of support through a gift in her Will to enable important research projects such as Dr Neville’s.

Dr Graham was a keen traveller, ornithologist, and beloved sister to her three siblings. But she also had a lifelong career as a passionate microbiologist.

Starting her journey at the University of Melbourne, Dr Graham completed a Bachelor of Science in 1952. After completing a PhD and further research in London, she was recruited back to the University as a senior lecturer in the late 1960s.

One of Dr Graham’s career highlights was undertaking field work with Fred Hollows AC in remote Australian Indigenous communities, so it is fitting that this gift in her Will now funds research that will be of particular benefit to Australian Indigenous children.

Global and local impact

Dr Neville’s research team is investigating the bacteria that cause middle ear infections primarily in children. They’re examining how to address the growing problem of antibiotic resistance in these bacteria.

“The incredibly generous gift from Dr Graham has allowed my students and I to greatly expand our research program to include a breadth of clinical isolates from additional species of bacteria,” said Dr Neville. “This has allowed us to better understand middle ear infection complications caused by antibiotic resistance.”

“Middle ear infections are incredibly common in all young children and in many cases can be cleared with a course of antibiotics. However, increased prevalence of antibiotic resistant strains is leading to treatment failure in a greater number of cases.”

Dr Neville said she is passionate about this area of research as the incidence of middle ear infections in children is astoundingly high.

“There are roughly 700 million cases every year globally.

Sadly, severe disease outcomes are generally over-represented in Indigenous Australian children who have one of the highest disease burdens of middle ear infections in the world.”

An increasingly antibiotic resistant type of bacteria – *Streptococcus pneumoniae* – is responsible for a large proportion of these cases.

“The result of antibiotic treatment failure is that infections are lasting longer, increasing the chances of long-term damage, such as hearing loss, learning difficulties and speech impediments,” explained Dr Neville.

Rescuing crucial antibiotics

As a bacteriologist, Dr Neville wants to develop non-surgical treatment options for middle ear infections. But with the looming issue of antibiotic resistance, this is not a straightforward process.

“It generally takes a minimum of 5-10 years and millions of dollars to generate new antibiotics, most of which are rendered ineffective by antimicrobial resistance,” explained Dr Neville.

“Our research is attempting to rescue our current pool of antibiotics rather than developing new compounds. We aim to do this by breaking antimicrobial resistance in the bacteria that cause middle ear infections.”

Through her team’s work, Dr Neville has shown that the human body uses high concentrations of metal ions, such as zinc, to intoxicate invading bacteria.

“Interestingly, when we therapeutically enhance this metal ion intoxication, we see that many bacterial species become re-sensitised to antibiotics that they were previously resistant to,” said Dr Neville.

Using this knowledge, Dr Neville aims to develop a therapeutic strategy of combining current antibiotics with a metal-shuttling compound that will enhance the body’s natural metal ion intoxication process and improve the existing antibiotics’ efficacy.

Maintaining simple and effective treatments

A simple and non-invasive solution to the growing threat of middle ear infections is critical to the management of vast numbers of children who are affected each year.

As a result of the late Dr Graham’s gift, Dr Neville’s therapy could help many families avoid the devastating effects of treatment failure and give more children the opportunity to reach their full potential without disability or learning difficulties.

“Ultimately, we hope to use this research to develop a treatment regimen where these compounds can be co-administered with antibiotics to patients as standard practice,” said Dr Neville.



Dr Stephanie Neville (left) supervising her team member, PhD candidate Chloe Estoque (right), in their lab at the Doherty Institute.

“This will allow patients who are carrying antibiotic resistant strains to be cured quickly and effectively without the risk of treatment failure.”

Best of all, the treatment would be simple and easy to access, helping more children avoid hospitalisation in the first place.

“Based on our current findings, we anticipate that this treatment will be available in much the same way as current antibiotics. It will require a script from a GP and a course of oral medication,” said Dr Neville.

Building on fundamental research

Ultimately, Dr Neville knows her research is not only helping children with middle ear infections, but also contributing to a much broader and largely unknown complication.

“It’s very easy to take our access to medication for granted. More than that, we have come to expect that when we do need medication, it will work – but the issue of antibiotic resistance is much greater than most people realise,” said Dr Neville.

“We need to make sure that antimicrobial medication will continue to be available and effective; that’s ultimately what this research aims to achieve.”

Dr Neville is grateful for the opportunity to build on the work

of other microbiologists – including that of Professor Christopher McDavitt who she continues to work alongside at the Peter Doherty Institute for Infection and Immunity (the Doherty Institute).

“All of this work has arisen from many years of fundamental bacteriology research, which is vital for continued therapeutic translation,” said Dr Neville.

Dr Graham’s gift in her Will has allowed Dr Neville and her team to efficiently pursue this critical medical research and build collective knowledge around fighting antibiotic resistance.

“I am incredibly grateful to Dr Graham for her passion and dedication to biomedical research and the discipline of microbiology,” said Dr Neville.

“It’s a very noble decision to bequeath a gift to medicine. I hope she would be proud of the research that her generosity has enabled.”

Dr Graham’s bequest builds on the funding Dr Neville received from the Garnett Passe and Rodney Williams Memorial Foundation for her existing project: *Breaking antibiotic resistance in otopathogens*. This project addressed the critical issue of antibiotic resistance in bacteria that cause middle ear infections (otitis media), which are prevalent in Indigenous communities in Australia. Dr Neville is also the Garnett Passe and Rodney Williams Junior Fellow at the Doherty Institute.

Setting up students to thrive in their career

Bachelor of Commerce alum Belinda Tran describes how the First in the Family Scholarship, made possible by generous donors, helped her through her first year of studies.

Since 2010, 391 donors have supported the First in Family Scholarships, awarded to commencing Bachelor of Commerce students who will be the first in their family to attend university.

Here, Belinda Tran shares how the scholarship helped her through her studies.

"I went to Pascoe Vale Girls College, which at the time was determined a disadvantaged school. After graduating high school, I was very nervous about the experience that was waiting for me at the number one university in Australia, especially coming from a family that never went to university before."

The honour of receiving the First in the Family Scholarship is something I am truly grateful for. It provided many amazing opportunities that ensured I thrived during university.

My scholarship funds supported me when I needed a laptop, textbooks and stationery items for studying which I was genuinely thankful for.

Being a recipient of a faculty scholarship exposed me to leadership events, networking opportunities and mentoring, helping to build my confidence and knowledge of the career pathways available to me after graduating with a Bachelor of Commerce. I majored in Accounting and Finance, graduating in December 2021.

I was granted the opportunity to become a Vacationer at PwC in 2020, and from then on, also worked part-time. I am now 12 months in as a full-time Graduate Associate at PwC doing risk and controls assurance work. I am continuously learning and have met many great people along my journey in the professional services world.

Thanks to this scholarship and the opportunities it has given me, I have made life-long friends and learned new skills and knowledge about career pathways that have led me to where I am today.

I would like to thank you and express my appreciation for your encouragement and kindness in supporting people like me with this opportunity. I am truly grateful for those who contribute to the First in the Family Scholarship program." ■



Bachelor of Commerce alum Belinda Tran was supported through her degree by a First in the Family Scholarship.

Donor generosity supports Tyallah to blaze a trail

The Paul and Donna Dainty VCA Award supported Yorta Yorta and Chinese woman Tyallah Bullock to transition from the Bachelor of Fine Arts (Theatre) to professional acting.

Receiving the Paul and Donna Dainty VCA Award has supported Tyallah Bullock in making the leap from third-year student in the Bachelor of Fine Arts (Theatre) to professional actor, enabling her to sign with one of Australia's top talent agencies after navigating the uncertainty of the past few years.

"Receiving this award gave me joy and comfort in a time when I felt quite lost and anxious," said Tyallah, a proud Yorta Yorta and Chinese woman.

"It's incredibly motivating and encouraging to receive recognition such as this, and it makes the effort even more worthwhile."

A showbusiness stalwart gives back

The Paul and Donna Dainty VCA Awards are made possible by the generosity of entertainment veteran Paul Dainty AO and his wife Donna. Paul's first job out of school was as a runner at Shepperton Studios in the UK, where he worked for directors including Stanley Kubrick.

Over 40 years later, Paul is now the President and CEO of TEG Dainty, one of the world's largest live entertainment companies.

The Dainty Awards provide support for high-achieving students completing their third year of study. One award is given to a member of each cohort in the Bachelor of Fine Arts specialising in Theatre, Music Theatre, Dance, and Film and Television. The four recipients each receive a single payment of up to \$2500.

Paul and Donna also generously give back to the University's creative community through support for the First Step Theatre Grant, a creative development grant for recent Bachelor of Fine Arts (Theatre) alumni.

Growing up with severe anxiety, Tyallah found comfort in



Tyallah Bullock performing the lead role in *Tales from the Vienna Woods* in June 2022 as part of her Bachelor of Fine Arts.

drama class. After donning a wig and making her peers laugh in an improvisation class in grade six, she fell in love with acting.

"Everyone's love and support and unity for me to just keep making them laugh really comforted me," she said. "As I went to leave, the teacher, Miss Daisy, came up to me and said, 'you should do this as a career'. And that's where it sparked."

A passion for the power of storytelling

Tyallah's experiences acting in musicals and film inspired her to apply to study a Bachelor of Fine Arts (Theatre). After two years disrupted by COVID-19, she has been thankful to be able to embrace all that the course offers in her third year.

"The third year was incredible. A highlight has been my company, which is full of people of grit and grace. They're just strong performers dedicated to their craft."

Tyallah is passionate about the role storytelling plays in the lives of Indigenous people.

"It's important to keep remembering that this is their land, and they must fight to even participate in things such as acting and the arts. Many aren't even aware they can make a career out of it.

"Acting and telling stories – it's literally in our blood. That's why it's so important to support Indigenous students."

The award has supported her as she transitions from student to professional actor. She has been able to purchase vital recording equipment to film auditions, and travel to Sydney to meet with industry insiders. By the end of last year, she had signed with Shanahan Management, one of Australia's top talent agencies.

"I couldn't be more grateful for this opportunity and blessing," Tyallah said. "It feels so special, especially after all that we've worked and fought for, and why we tell stories."

Uplifting young alumni through mentoring

Ask Alumni is made possible thanks to University of Melbourne alumni who generously give their time, insight and advice. Arts alum Dr Ginny Tong has supported more than 20 students and young alumni in their career goals through the program.

As a young person navigating a career in media and communications, Dr Ginny Tong was no novice in harnessing the benefits of mentoring – she just didn’t realise then that the support she received had a name.

Today, Ginny’s career and volunteering efforts are both centred around amplifying young voices, with the University’s *Ask Alumni* program providing her the platform to empower more young people than ever before.

Ginny’s long-lasting relationship with the University of Melbourne started in 2002 when she enrolled as a student. She completed a Bachelor of Arts (Media and Communications) (Hons) and an arts PhD at the University.

“I particularly love the arts because it stretches across political science, gender, culture, and more. It teaches you the importance of demonstrating empathy, and what you could do to give back to society,” said Ginny.

She also feels being immersed in Australian culture gave her the confidence to express her curiosity throughout her career.

“During my studies, I could knock on any lecturer’s door at any time and say, ‘I’ve got a question’. And when they didn’t have the answer, they were never shy to refer me to other lecturers.

“I’ve learned that asking questions allows us to do our jobs better – and that’s something I was very fortunate to learn thanks to those lecturers being generous in their sharing,” she said.

Even after Ginny completed her studies and moved into her career, the desire to learn and connect with like-minded people remained. It was this longing that led Ginny to connect with her alumni community.



Dr Ginny Tong welcomes guests at the University of Melbourne Malaysia Alumni Association annual dinner.

“I really missed being immersed in an academic setting, and I find intellectual exchange really rewarding – both are gentle reminders that there is still so much I don’t know, and so much more I can learn,” said Ginny.

Reciprocal support

Reflecting on the lecturers who were so generous with their own knowledge, Ginny recognised an opportunity to give back with *Ask Alumni* – a flash mentoring program that facilitates short, one-off conversations to help students and alumni achieve their career goals.

It took Ginny some time to put a name to the support she received during university and see that she could offer support too.

“It was only much later that I came to recognise that the knowledge sharing with those lecturers is called mentoring, and I’m very grateful that I had so many opportunities to experience it first-hand,” said Ginny.

When she first signed up to the program, Ginny felt excited to share what she’d learned but also experienced some self-doubt.

“When I heard about the *Ask Alumni* program, I went in with the mindset that I would be regurgitating things that I’d learned in school,” said Ginny.

“That did make me wonder if anyone would be interested in what I had to say, and if I was in a position to offer any useful advice to what the mentees were looking for.”

Thankfully, it wasn’t long before Ginny’s concerns were quelled, and she gained a new sense of purpose.

“The first experience was so rewarding when the mentee said, ‘wow, I didn’t know about this,’” she said. “I realised it’s not about saying ‘I’m so clever and you need to follow me’ – but it’s more about sharing.”

Not only is Ginny able to offer her experiences to her mentees, but she often takes knowledge away from the conversations too.

“Personally, I find that the learning doesn’t stop. Just because my mentees are younger with less life experience, it doesn’t mean I can’t learn from them,” said Ginny.

“That’s why to me, mentoring is something very, very powerful.”

For Ginny, another advantage of being in the *Ask Alumni* program is that it gives her a platform to focus on one of her passions – empowering women.

“The fact that there is a formalised platform that offers the opportunity to reach out to thousands of women around the world is very exciting for me,” she said.

“The questions could be as simple as ‘how do I ask for a salary increase?’ or ‘how do I make friends?’ but I think people don’t realise how powerful mentoring is.”

Since registering through *Ask Alumni* in 2018, Ginny has supported more than 20 University of Melbourne students and young alumni from different backgrounds and walks of life. Still, she noticed that many people seeking support face similar issues.

“I’ve realised that a lot of our concerns are actually very universal,” said Ginny. “Questions such as ‘what do I do after graduation?’ and ‘is my arts degree valid?’ Those are perhaps the questions that I get asked the most.”

Spotlighting young voices

Beyond her volunteering efforts at the University, Ginny carries her passion for empowering young voices through to her career as well.

Although Ginny started out in the events and communications space, she soon realised that being in a corporate career wasn’t the right fit for her.

And so, in 2018, Ginny and her brother Desmond took a leap of faith and decided to open ZHAN Art | Space in Kuala Lumpur – a space that supports young emerging Malaysian artists who are still finding their footing.

“We took our experiences in communications and marketing and decided we were going to provide a supportive platform for young artists to springboard their talents and do amazing things,” said Ginny.

“I really think that the exposure of studying in Melbourne gave us that first inkling that a fulfilling career in promoting the arts is possible, and that what we offer is something that people look forward to and get excited about.”

Immersing herself in the University’s international alumni community has not only reconnected Ginny with the University and enabled her to pay it forward – it also provided a strong sense of friendship.

“One of the things that I really like about being part of this alumni community is the fact that we have friends globally,” said Ginny. “That to me is what the alumni experience is about – remaining a constant presence for people who still want to keep in touch.

“It’s very exciting to be able to belong to something bigger than yourself.”

Enabling greater Indigenous representation in law

A Melbourne Law School Indigenous Student Scholarship helped Maggie Blanden immerse herself in her law studies, leading to an opportunity in the School's Indigenous Law and Justice Hub.

Growing up in nipaluna (Hobart), Palawa woman Maggie Blanden was all too aware of the injustices Indigenous people face in Australia's legal system. Everywhere she looked, she saw a disproportionate number of Indigenous people cycling through prisons and knew there must be a way she could work within the justice system to better protect them.

"I have grown up in a world where the legal system is structured against my people," she said. "This is illustrated by the mere fact that Indigenous Australians are the most incarcerated peoples in the world."

Maggie's passion led her to her current degree at Melbourne Law School (MLS) as a Juris Doctor (JD) student and remains the driving force behind her decision to become one of the growing number of Indigenous voices in the legal system.

"Our people deserve the best representation they can get," she said.

"We need diversity in the legal system to ensure that all voices are heard and empowered. This is what has motivated me to undertake my law studies. Without this, there is a danger that white lawyers are unable to fully comprehend the needs and experiences of their clients, in ways that Indigenous lawyers can."

Support for Indigenous students critical

Maggie says she is within reach of her goal thanks to the support she has received through the MLS Indigenous Student Scholarship and the Robin Chan Memorial Grant.

There are currently several scholarships on offer for Indigenous students to pursue their studies at MLS, with growing support increasing that number by 50 per cent in the past year.

"With this scholarship, I am able to give my full attention to my JD studies and work towards graduating this year. This allows me to finish earlier than expected and provides me with the opportunity to immerse myself in the work sphere."

Without the support, Maggie couldn't have made it through her JD studies on her own terms, with casual employment and other obstacles hindering her progress and resolve.

"Like many of my peers, it is difficult to balance work and university, and so this scholarship allows me to continue my degree, without concerns of financial strain. Scholarships are a

crucial mechanism that support Indigenous students to complete their degree in their best capacity."

Additionally, Maggie has been afforded the time to take up mentoring opportunities with Indigenous staff members at MLS, which has ultimately helped her stay focused on her goal of becoming a voice for First Nations people in the legal system.

"Indigenous students, unlike their peers, face many intersecting barriers in their study. It is crucial for Indigenous students to be supported and mentored throughout their degree. There is, sadly, an extremely high rate of students who withdraw from their studies, due to various factors that obstruct them from immersing themselves entirely in their studies," said Maggie.

Practical experience the key to learning

In 2023, Maggie landed a coveted position at the Indigenous Law and Justice Hub (ILJH) as a Research Assistant. Formed through MLS to work on issues impacting First Nations peoples, with particular focus on criminal law and Treaty, the ILJH is directed by Dr Eddie Cubillo.

"I agreed to come to MLS because I saw an opportunity to push for change and shape the thinking of future leaders in the profession," Dr Cubillo has said.

"I have seen first-hand the positive impacts of Indigenous decision-making on test cases in the 1990s, and this experience was a long-overdue return of these better practices around foregrounding Indigenous values in our litigation practices."

He added: "Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in law join institutions which long excluded them – and the absence of their voices in building the cultures of these places is felt today."

Maggie's position at the ILJH is within its Law and Advocacy Program. Dr Cubillo said the program is growing in popularity and provides practical work experience under the guidance of mentors.

"The program is an opportunity for students to get involved in the Hub's advocacy work as paid Research Assistants, and to learn alongside our experienced advocates and partner organisations," Dr Cubillo said.



Maggie Blanden received an Indigenous Student Scholarship that's helping her get the most out of her JD studies at Melbourne Law School.

For Maggie, the experience has been life changing and has helped cement the direction she wants her future to take.

"I hope to work in the area of Indigenous sovereignty and self-determination, as well as criminal justice for our people. I am aiming to work on important areas, including Treaty and criminal justice reform, which has been fostered by my work with the ILJH," she said.

"I have learned a lot under the leadership and guidance of Dr Cubillo and [Research Fellow] Jaynaya Dwyer. I have thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity the role has provided to get practical

experience in this area. Also, it allows students with passions outside of commercial and settler law to learn alongside their JD degrees."

A highlight of her time working in the Law and Advocacy Program was travelling to New Zealand to attend a conference.

"We were fortunate enough to attend a world-renowned conference, the Constitutional Kōrero, where we witnessed inspirational Indigenous academics and legal experts talk about their experiences of sovereignty, self-determination and Indigenous empowerment.

"I walked away from this trip feeling inspired and empowered to continue with my studies. I am eternally grateful for the support I have received from my scholarship donors." ■

Celebrating Baillieu Myer's legacy of giving

For decades, the remarkable generosity of the late Baillieu Myer AC as a donor to Asialink, dementia research and vital veterinarian services has had a transformational impact.

The decades-spanning generosity of Sidney Baillieu Myer AC had an extraordinary impact on the University of Melbourne. 'Bails', as he was affectionately known to many, had a wide variety of philanthropic interests, supporting everything from diplomacy to dementia research.

Bails' son Rupert Myer AO recalled an important influence behind his father's broad spectrum of philanthropic pursuits over the years.

"In reflecting on our father's philanthropic legacy, [siblings] Sid, Samantha and I were always aware of his collaboration with our mother, Sarah, and her quiet and determined guiding hand," shared Rupert.

"While it was clear from the breadth of his interests that, throughout his life, he maintained an almost childlike curiosity about everything around him as well as a prolific and undiminished imagination, he would so often be drawn to interests and passions that they shared."

Bails passed away in 2022. But his transformational legacy continues, from the vital work of Asialink to the ongoing generosity of the Yulgilbar Foundation, The Myer Foundation – which he co-founded – and the Sidney Myer Fund, which he served as a trustee from 1958–2001.

With each endeavour, Rupert reflected on the countless personal relationships that his father garnered along the way.

"For him, the people that drove the projects and organisations were right at the heart of his engagement. A unifying characteristic for everything that he did was his powerful optimism about the future and the ability that each generation has to make change for the better."

A new approach to engaging with Asia

For over 30 years, Bails was a generous donor to Asialink, where he served as patron for two decades. He did not take a hands-off approach to the role. One of his major philanthropic initiatives



Left: Professor Liz Tudor AM talking with Galiwin'ku children about their dog during a visit to West Arnhem with WALDHeP.

Above: Baillieu Myer AC.

was supporting the Asialink Conversations series at a time when many were concerned that Australia's relations with the region were particularly strained.

Bails was an internationalist and he picked up views on his many travels through the Asian region. Former Asialink CEO Jenny McGregor AM recalls how in 2003, he sensed that Australia was being seen as having turned its back on Southeast Asia.

"ANU Dean, Professor Tony Milner, Asialink Chairman, Carrillo Gantner and I, worked with Bails on strategies to correct that perception," explained Jenny.

"We saw the success of the Australia-US Dialogue but felt that a more challenging task was to build networks and dialogue in Asia, beginning with leaders from our immediate region. Then Prime Minister John Howard understood the need for this project, and it is exactly what Foreign Minister Penny Wong has been advocating recently.

"Bails was a strong advocate of the idea of building understanding of different perspectives at a deeper level – making us all better placed to manage strategic, geopolitical, environmental, cultural and economic challenges. His wartime experiences had heightened his awareness of the importance of peace."

Bails was an ideal ambassador for Australia. The knowledge and networks created by the Asialink Conversations and the subsequent Asialink Commission Report on Australia Asia relations *Our place in the Asian century* continue to inform Asialink activities today.

"The unique thing about Bails was he was always there to listen – as well as to give wise counsel," added Jenny. "He was present for all of Asialink's major events, often with kind and generous acknowledgement of success. He supported risk taking and was constantly alert to opportunities to grow reach and impact. The perfect patron."

Transforming dementia research

Through the Yulgilbar Foundation, Bails was also a generous supporter of the University's research into dementia. In 2014, Bails and his wife Sarah publicly called for donations from other philanthropists to support Alzheimer's research.

The couple announced they would match any donation offered, and also supported post-doctoral excellence awards to top up the salaries of young researchers.

More recently, the Foundation's support for Alzheimer's research has spanned several projects, including the Yulgilbar Alzheimer's Research Program and the Alzheimer's Research Clinicians' Network.

Bails' generosity also supported new breakthroughs in dementia research for Professor Colin Masters AO, Head of the Neuropathology and Neurodegeneration Laboratory at the Florey Institute of Neuroscience and Mental Health.

"My research team and I are thankful and grateful for Baillieu's support for our research, as funding, along with novel ideas and dedication, are vital elements of medical research," Professor Masters said.

"The generous and significant gifts we receive allow us to focus on research to understand, prevent and treat Alzheimer's disease.

"Leveraging the resources at the University of Melbourne, and utilising their artificial intelligence/machine learning approaches, we will be able to identify and clarify the risk and protective factors for Alzheimer's and other related brain disorders."

Bails' generosity has also driven the creation of the Australian Dementia Network, which has built a unique dementia community drawing on the expertise of researchers in 17 universities and research institutions, as well as people with lived experience of dementia.

The network is developing new technologies such as novel brain scans and blood tests to identify people suitable for early treatment trials, which are aimed at slowing disease and preventing dementia.

Making a difference in West Arnhem Land

Thanks to Bails' generosity, the West Arnhem Dog Health Program (WALDHeP) has been making a difference to the communities of West Arnhem since 2004.

The program was established by Professor Liz Tudor AM in 2004 to provide essential veterinary services to the communities of West Arnhem, and is supported by the Yulgilbar Foundation. Each year, a group of Melbourne Veterinary School students, alumni and other veterinarians participate.

"Each day, we set up an outdoor clinic where surgery is conducted, and visit homes to offer parasite control medications, other treatments and surgical desexing to animals where their owners request this," said Professor Tudor.

"An extraordinary number of surgeries were conducted on the latest visit, and many owners were delighted and relieved to know that dog and cat numbers in their households could now be managed."

The results speak for themselves: over the past decade, the average number of dogs per household in the town of Gunbalanya has fallen from 6.1 to 2.1, enabling families to have the number of pets they want.

A people-first approach to philanthropy

Uniting all of Bails' philanthropic endeavours was a recognition of the power of enabling good people to do good work, Jenny said.

"Bails often backed people. His support wasn't limited to funding, either. When I got the job to run Asialink, there was a mountain of stuff I didn't know and people I hadn't met. But Bails was always looking out for me, introducing me to people and inviting me to events.

"I felt that impostor syndrome, big time. But Bails put so much wind in my – and so many other people's – sails."

Supporting a career change to teaching

The Wei Family Education Scholarship is enabling Dionne Lew to transition from a career in strategic communications to teaching, where she can help students reach their full potential.

Transitioning from a career in business development to teaching was one of the most challenging, yet ultimately rewarding, experiences that donor Nina Wei has had in life.

“I didn’t have much support when re-starting my career as a teacher 10 years ago,” she said. “As a mother of two young children, going into pre-service training meant financial stress, as well as physical and mental challenges.”

But the bold move ultimately paid off, and Nina has passionately thrown herself into a second career in education.

“You need to face the lows, consciously train yourself to be resilient, and learn the skills of empathy, before bouncing back to a better, more confident version of yourself,” Nina added. “Then, you can be the role model for the young people under your leadership.”

To reward the courage and risk involved in a career change, and to show appreciation for the devotion to education that mature teaching candidates from diverse backgrounds bring to teaching, Nina generously established the Wei Family Education Scholarship, which provides recipients with up to \$20,000 over two years. Nina wanted specifically to support students who are making a career change to become new teachers who would fuel innovation and reform in the sector, based on their own life experiences and careers.

Inspiring students to fulfil their potential

Fittingly, innovation has driven the career of Dionne Lew, the 2022 recipient of the Wei Family Education Scholarship, who spent 30 years forging an extensive career in strategic communications.

For much of her career, Dionne was at the forefront of change, from transitioning organisations to digital and social media long



before they were a widely accepted form of communication, to starting a consultancy advising on the importance of social media for business.

“I did this as I was passionate about educating leaders about the game-changing impact of new communications – of which they were largely unaware – even though it meant a significant reduction in salary.”

After spending over three years out of the workforce managing an illness, she has returned to study the Master of Teaching, while continuing to manage her illness.

“I am absolutely delighted to receive the Wei Family Education Scholarship,” Dionne said. “The scholarship will enable me to return to study full time as a mature-aged student after an enforced break from the workforce.”

“I wish to become a secondary teacher with a focus on developing the highest potential of students as whole people rather than just academically.”

It’s an approach Dionne embraces in her own life. As well as pursuing her communications career, she wrote a pioneering textbook on the impact of online networks on society and has contributed literary writing to magazines and anthologies. More recently, she has taken up painting.

“Over a lifetime, I have developed valuable skills and experience and want to inspire young people to develop a lifelong love of learning, and to achieve their highest potential as whole people.”

She also sees the Master of Teaching as having a transformative impact on her life outside of the classroom. As a writer and painter, she will use the critical thinking, analytical

and communications skills she learns in the degree to deepen her writing and artistic practice.

It’s all in keeping with her philosophical approach to education, which is to develop all aspects of a person, not just their academic prowess.

“I am passionate about education as a gateway to many of life’s opportunities,” she said. “I am honoured to receive this support.”

Assistance can encourage career switch

Nina, a Melbourne Graduate School of Education alum, made her career change in 2013.

Originally from Beijing, she came to Australia working in business development but, following a divorce, shifted tack to undertake the Master of Teaching (Secondary). She completed the course over three years while working as a teacher as part of the degree’s internship program.

Nina understands that for many, a career change is often out of reach due to loss of income and the costs associated with studying. That fact provided the motivation for establishing her scholarship so as to support people like herself to pursue their dreams.

“I wanted to establish the scholarship to show recognition and support for people who are brave enough to take on those challenges, and it also feels like a late acknowledgement of my own courage,” Nina said.

“More importantly, it is to show my appreciation of people



Left to right: Dionne Lew, inaugural recipient of the Wei Family Education Scholarship, and donor Nina Wei.

who are willing to bring diverse expertise into this craft and enrich its philosophy.”

For Nina, teaching enables her to embrace two key passions: sharing stories and forging authentic connections with people.

“My teaching philosophies are deeply rooted in my personal and cultural context. I could bring my life stories into the classroom, making me an enthusiastic advocate for promoting student resilience and bravery in taking on new challenges.”

Supporting innovation in teaching

Teaching has often traditionally been seen as a conservative profession, where change happens slowly. But Nina said the experience of the last few years of the pandemic have demonstrated that teachers can be quick to innovate, with digital engagement, student-focused learning, cultural sensitivities and mental health awareness all becoming increasingly important.

With the Wei Family Education Scholarship, Nina wants to support those who have the courage and flexibility to bring innovative thinking to teaching. And while a mid-career change can be challenging, she says that for those who are patient, the results are deeply rewarding.

“Attracting people with a broad range of prior experiences, skill sets and cultural perspectives is crucial for moulding the future education landscape.”

Building up the next generation: Continuing a family legacy

Dr Richard Simmie is grateful for his family's perseverance in seeking a better life for future generations. Today, he finds pride and joy in honouring their spirit through giving.

"I look back and see what I got from my education and where it took me, and life is certainly much fuller when you have choices," said Dr Richard Simmie. "As a farmer, my father sacrificed a lot to give his children a good secondary education – and I certainly took advantage of everything that was given to me."

A retired anaesthetist, Richard was the first in his family to attend university, studying a Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery at the University of Melbourne.

While he enjoyed his career, Richard is now relishing exploring the roads less travelled through his giving to the University of Melbourne.

"Originally, I had always wanted to do architecture, but in the end decided to do medicine," he explained. "Now, I'm coming back to those architectural roots."

Building future architects

Establishing the Jock Simmie Prize and the Jock Simmie Architectural History, Urban and Cultural Heritage Research Fund satisfied two of Richard's motives – developing future leaders in architecture and honouring his late grandfather's legacy.

"I would like to see research that could influence the way we preserve our heritage or support a future leader in urban planning," he said.

The Jock Simmie Prize is an annual award for the highest

achieving second-year student enrolled in either an Architecture/Urban Planning or Architecture/Urban and Cultural Heritage double masters.

Richard hopes that his support for these high achieving students will help them see their studies through to completion and, ultimately, help create a better future.

"I keep wondering what our world is going to look like in a century, because we're in a very tumultuous time," he said. "I feel that one way I can help is by giving students a helping hand."

The Jock Simmie Architectural History, Urban and Cultural Heritage Research Fund will support research into architectural history and/or urban and cultural heritage – a cause close to Richard's heart.

"We're not good at preserving our heritage. I've just finished reading a book about old vintage Melbourne, and my heart breaks when I see some of the buildings that we've destroyed."

Revering past generations

Throughout the process of establishing both the prize and the research fund, Richard felt compelled to honour his late grandfather – World War I veteran and master builder Jock Simmie.

"Through my family research, I've realised every now and again, you have somebody who stands out in a generation," said Richard. "Of his generation, he was the one."

Jock and his brother George served at Gallipoli and all

three brothers served on the Western Front before returning to Australia, safe but wounded, between 1917–1919.

"Jock was one of the last to leave Gallipoli. He was then wounded in the Battle of Pozzières," shared Richard, "it's where the idea of a National War Memorial Museum began. My grandfather built both stages of the museum in the 1930s."

Upon the brothers' return, they drew on their carpentry training and business acumen to establish the building company Simmie & Co.

The business helped build Canberra from the ground up, constructing iconic buildings such as Albert Hall, the Institute of Anatomy (now the Film and Sound Archives), and the original National Library.

In Melbourne, Simmie & Co built many churches, monasteries, schools, housing, factories, offices and theatres.

"It was a pioneering building company of World War I veterans – built on courage, risk taking, and the workforce who made it all happen," said Richard.

Reflecting on all that his grandfather overcame to achieve success, Richard is proud to be able to continue his legacy by investing in the future of architectural planning and heritage.

"He was wounded in the line of fire and had a serious limp for the rest of his life. He had a constant reminder of the war," he said.

"I think he's worthy of being remembered as a part of Melbourne and Canberra's early history."



Left: Dr Richard Simmie discusses the work of his late grandfather Jock Simmie with Professor Hannah Lewi from the Melbourne School of Design.

Above: Jock Simmie recovering in the UK from injuries sustained during his service in World War I in November 1916.

Generosity reaps rewards

Beyond architectural planning and heritage, Richard and his husband Dr Andrew McAliece are also passionate about the performing arts.

Through the Dr Richard Simmie and Dr Andrew McAliece Prize, each year the couple support a second-year Bachelor of Fine Arts (Music Theatre) student based on merit and financial need.

"We get to meet the recipient and see them during their development, and it's really encouraging as we enjoy music theatre so much," said Richard.

"It's lovely to get caught up in their enthusiasm."

Spurred by the excitement and gratification Richard feels in supporting the University community, he has extended his giving even further by leaving a gift in his Will.

"Again, I want to help the system that did so much for me, so I thought the best way of leaving a legacy is leaving money in my Will to help our future generations."

For those unsure whether a philanthropic future is for them, Richard has a simple message. "You don't have to be wealthy to be philanthropic," he said. "Every contribution is going to a worthy cause, helping the future of our students."

"Knowing this gives me great pleasure and satisfaction." ■

Your generosity is far-reaching

On behalf of the University of Melbourne, I would like to say thank you for your continued support. Your ongoing generosity has allowed the University to make an extraordinary impact on the world.

It has been truly remarkable to see what can be achieved when we connect you – our visionary donors, alumni and supporters – with our changemaking students and researchers. Thank you for committing to us, engaging with us, and for trusting us.

Together we achieved so much in 2022. You gave \$347.9 million in philanthropic support to all areas of the University community. From investing in scholarships that seed opportunity and grow potential in our future leaders to investing in research that creates a healthier future for our population and planet, every one of the 2706 of you have given to projects which you are passionate about.

You all share a commitment to make a difference to the world around us and a belief in the University of Melbourne as the place where that can best be done. Your dedication and loyalty has had a profound impact on our students, our research, and on the landscape of our society. You have shown us the impact that an engaged, aware, and committed donor and alumni community can have.

It has not just been the generosity of your gifts that has made an impact. You have contributed your time and knowledge as well. Nearly 3000 of you volunteered your time for the University, sharing your expertise and mentoring the next generation.

However, there is still so much to be done and there is still so much to be excited about. We are developing several initiatives that tackle some of humanity's biggest challenges. With your help, we can arrest climate change, develop sustainable energy sources, and prevent the extinction of species. With your support, we can build Indigenous opportunity and unleash the power of Indigenous knowledge. And through your generosity, we can work towards a future with a safe and rapid response to infectious diseases and harness the power of higher education to transform opportunity. Let's continue to work together to build a better world.

NICK BLINCO
Vice-President (Advancement)



Giving power to possibility

Your generosity is helping our students thrive and making an impact across the University community and wider society. The power of our global donor community is redefining what is possible for our students and researchers. Together, you make an outstanding contribution to the work of the University.



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COVER IMAGE: Dr Stephanie Neville in her lab at the Peter Doherty Institute of Infection and Immunity. "The incredibly generous gift from Dr Graham has allowed my students and I to greatly expand our research program."

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