

# Media Release

**The Hon Martin Pakula MP**

Minister for Industry Support and Recovery

Minister for Trade

Minister for Business Precincts

Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events

Minister for Racing



Thursday, 10 December 2020

## RECOVERY PLAN TAKES INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION TO THE WORLD

The Andrews Labor Government is backing international education, Victoria's largest export sector, with an action plan of scholarships, research partnerships and new study hubs to be created in Asia, Latin America and India.

Devised after consultation with the sector and Victoria's International Education Advisory Council, the \$33.4 million *International Education Short-Term Recovery Plan* will build on our strengths – being home to Australia's best student city and boasting globally-renowned education institutions – to stand out in a competitive market.

International education was the state's single largest export sector in 2019, worth \$13.7 billion and supporting around 79,000 Victorian jobs.

More than 250,000 international students travelled here to study last year but the current number of international students in Victoria sits at 120,000 due to the impact of the coronavirus pandemic.

The Government continues to work with the Federal Government and the sector to welcome international students to Victoria in 2021. The new immediate action plan, funded in the *Victorian Budget 2020/21*, will drive demand from prospective students while continuing to support students that stayed in Victoria.

Initiatives include a Pathway to Victoria scholarship program and international research partnerships to encourage prospective students to make Victoria their first choice.

The Study Melbourne Student Centre's online presence will also be bolstered, ensuring potential students and students enrolled in regional Victoria have access to the resources and support they need to thrive.

The Victorian Global Education Network will be expanded into the emerging high-growth markets of Vietnam, Brazil and Africa, and five new international Study Melbourne Hubs will sit alongside the Government's Trade and Investment Network, creating a pathway for students to study in Victoria and securing a greater share of overseas students studying online.

These hubs will showcase Victoria's global leadership in digital training and education innovation by connecting edtech companies, education providers, educators, researchers and investors to grow Victoria's education services sector. TAFEs will also be supported to meet growing global demand for online professional short courses.

The Labor Government responded quickly to the impacts of the pandemic on the sector, providing support including the \$350 million Victorian Higher Education State Investment Fund, \$110 million in payroll tax deferrals and a \$260.8 million TAFE funding package.

International students in Victoria were supported through the \$45 million International Student Emergency Relief Fund, the \$50 million Emergency Hardship Support Payment program and a suite of free support programs.

The *International Education Short-Term Recovery Plan* is available at [studymelbourne.vic.gov.au](http://studymelbourne.vic.gov.au).

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Trade Martin Pakula

*"International students are an important part of our vibrant community and this plan will ensure they have the support and resources they need not only to study in Victoria, but to thrive."*

*"We will go to the world and tell our story, which is compelling, to attract the next generation of students and create the foundations for a sustained recovery."*

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