

Media Release

The Hon Gayle Tierney MP
Minister for Skills and TAFE
Minister for Regional Development



Friday, 25 October 2024

CELEBRATING AND SUPPORTING VICTORIAN LEARN LOCAL AWARDS

The Allan Labor Government is recognising the outstanding achievements in the adult and community education sector by honouring learners, trainers, and community training providers at the 2024 Victorian Learn Local Awards.

Minister for Skills and TAFE Gayle Tierney today congratulated the winners at the Learn Local Awards Gala – acknowledging the life-changing impact that adult and community education can have on the lives of Victorians and announcing two new grant programs to further support Learn Local providers.

The Learner and Program Sustainability Grants, worth \$6.6 million over three years, and the Technology and Digital Grant Program, worth \$500,000, available from next year, will help Learn Local providers across the state to embrace new technologies, and ensure adult learners get the skills they need to succeed.

This year's recipients acknowledged at the Learn Local Awards Gala were chosen from an impressive list of nominations – highlighting the important role Learn Local providers play in helping adult learners get new skills, pursue further education pathways, and secure jobs.

Across Victoria, more than 200 Learn Local providers offer people tailored support in courses ranging from numeracy and literacy to digital skills and employability – helping over 30,000 Victorians each year overcome barriers to getting into training and finding jobs.

The Learn Local Leadership Award recognised Banksia Gardens Community Services CEO, Gina Dougall, for growing a small Learn Local into one of Victoria's largest adult training and employment providers, developing meaningful partnerships like Bendigo Kangan Institute to support more vulnerable people into work.

Paw Say Paw was honored with the Ro Allen Award. After arriving in Australia from a Thai refugee camp in 2022, she enrolled in English classes at the Centre for Participation, took courses in sewing and micro-business, and has now launched her own sewing business while securing a scholarship to Federation University for further study.

This year's Trainer Award went to Sonia Nayar, an English teacher with over 20 years of experience, who was recognised for her work helping learners from diverse backgrounds gain not just language skills but also employability training, digital literacy, and real-world industry insights.

To find out more about this year's winners, visit: vic.gov.au/2024-learn-local-award-winners.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Skills and TAFE Gayle Tierney

“Learn Local providers are changing lives by giving Victorians the foundational skills they need to participate in our society and our economy – they are tailored to people's own needs and they can change the course of someone's future.”

“We're proud to recognise exceptional people and trainers in the sector through the Learn Local Awards – and we congratulate all the winners and finalists.”

Quotes attributable to ACFE Board Chairperson Dr Teresa De Fazio OAM

“Learn Locals are embedded in their local community, and they are unique in their responsiveness and flexibility. They provide training that is tailored to their learners and to local community, industry and employer needs.”

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“Congratulations to the winners and nominees in this year’s awards – to be selected as a finalist is a remarkable achievement of which you deserve to feel very proud, and we’re grateful for your commitment and dedication.”