

ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION PLAN 2020

RMIT University

- 1 **Equity outcomes and strategies:** for improving outcomes for people from a low SES background.

The 2020 Access and Participation Plan was shaped by the eight priorities set out in the (draft) RMIT Student Inclusion Plan. The Student Inclusion Plan is the result of an external evaluation of RMIT's equity strategies and opportunities and is being finalised as part of the 2025 Strategy. It builds on the [Diversity & Inclusion Framework and Action Plans for priority groups](#) and sets out emerging themes where RMIT can achieve a step change in outcomes for low SES students, such as leveraging dual sector strength, diverse partnerships and wrap around services.

- 2 **Key activities:** which will deliver an increase in the access, participation and success of people from a low SES background.

Initiative title, lifecycle stage & alignment to Inclusion Plan	Description
Priority #1. Improve graduate employability and employment outcomes	
Improve graduate employability and employment outcomes Partnership activities (outreach) Other (student success)	Boost career success for low SES students by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • embedding career development learning into RMIT programs • providing extra career supports, including coaching; and work with employers to open up career opportunities through employer inclusion strategies and Work Integrated Learning.
Priority #2. Leverage dual sector strength	
Low SES strategy & projects	Additional strategic projects to boost participation and success for low SES students include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • development of new five-year equity and inclusion plan; • implementation of a financial inclusion plan; • delivery of a low SES Vocational Education (VE) to Higher Education (HE) transition project; and supporting care-leavers to access university/further study.
Priority #3. Make admissions more inclusive	
Access Schemes (Inclusive entry)	Administration of 4 special access schemes which adjust entry requirements for disadvantaged students: RMIT's flagship SNAP entry scheme, the Special Entry Access Scheme (SEAS) and equivalent RMIT Access scheme, and the Regional Bonus Scheme.
Priority #4. Promote inclusive pedagogy and delivery	
Textbook support for low SES students Other (student success)	Trial the provision of electronic / physical text books at no costs for RMIT programs with high concentrations of low SES students.
Priority #4. Promote inclusive pedagogy and delivery / Priority #6 Reinforce inclusive practices & systems	
Supporting students with disabilities Other (student support) Partnerships (outreach)	Targeted support for students with disabilities, including delivering reasonable adjustments and equitable assessment arrangements, and support to ensure inclusion of students with a disability at I-Belong events for low SES students with disabilities.
Priority #5. Ignite passion and promote possibility	
Ignite passion and promote possibility (I-Belong) Partnership activities (outreach)	A deep, immersive single or multi-day on-campus engagement program showcasing career and learning opportunities in various occupations and industries for secondary students from schools in the Schools' Network Access Program (SNAP) with high concentrations of students from low-SES backgrounds.

<p>Supporting low SES Indigenous Australians to access university/further education Partnership activities (outreach) Transition programs Inclusive entry processes Academic preparation</p>	<p>Lift access, participation and success for low SES indigenous students through outreach and student support, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • developing partnerships with community-based organisations to increase awareness and participation in pre-tertiary education & pathways; • conducting outreach activities with partner organisations and secondary schools; • improving indigenous access programs and pathways; and • providing ongoing support for low SES indigenous students.
<p>Priority #7. Expand and integrate financial assistance</p>	
<p>Expand and integrate financial assistance Administering student scholarships</p>	<p>A significant scale-up in financial scholarship support directly to low-SES students, including targeted support for those affected by COVID-19.</p>
<p>Priority #8. Curate and integrate support services</p>	
<p>Technology-supported peer mentoring Mentoring, peer support, tutoring</p>	<p>Trial of an academic peer mentoring program supported by a newly developed mobile application, for programs with high concentration of low SES students, including nursing & education.</p>
<p>Promotion, prevention and support of student mental health (Mental Wellbeing Strategic Action Plan 2020-2025)</p>	
<p>Student mental health and wellbeing initiatives Other (student support) Research & monitoring</p>	<p>Invest in improved mental health promotion for students and training for staff on assisting students in distress, with a focus on ensuring accessibility for low SES students in line with the priorities set out in RMIT’s Mental Wellbeing Strategic Action Plan 2020-2025</p>

3 Evaluation: how the university plans to evaluate the effectiveness of the equity strategies.

RMIT tracks a range of indicators, including percentage of commencing domestic higher education students from a low SES background, student progress rate, good teaching score and overall satisfaction. All RMIT University initiatives funded by HEPPP are supported by detailed plans and performance targets, against which they are monitored. RMIT University also periodically commissions independent external evaluations of equity initiatives, including the evaluation noted above which informed the development of RMIT’s Student Inclusion Plan.

4 Partnerships and collaboration: who the university will partner and collaborate with and how this will improve equity performance.

RMIT’s partnerships with SNAP secondary schools will support targeting of the I-Belong program and enable the SNAP inclusive admissions scheme. Partnerships with the Smith Family and Western Chances will enable RMIT to link students supported by these organisations with RMIT programs, including I-Belong and scholarship programs. Partnerships with a wide range of employers including the Australian Centre for the Moving Image, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne Museum, National Trust (Old Melbourne Gaol), SYN Media and Engineers Without Borders will provide SNAP students with real world insights from these industries.

In addition, RMIT partners with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations and Community Organisations, including Gambina, Victorian Aboriginal Health Service, Spark Health, Black Wallaby, Torch, Blak and Bright, Worowa College, Victorian Aboriginal Community Services Association Ltd, Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency, Dandenong and District Aborigines Co-operative, Nairn Marr Djambana, Willum Warrain, and Yappera. These partnerships enable RMIT to build aspirations for tertiary study in the Aboriginal community, link community members to RMIT scholarship programs and to other tertiary education providers through the Toorong Marnong network of Victorian universities.