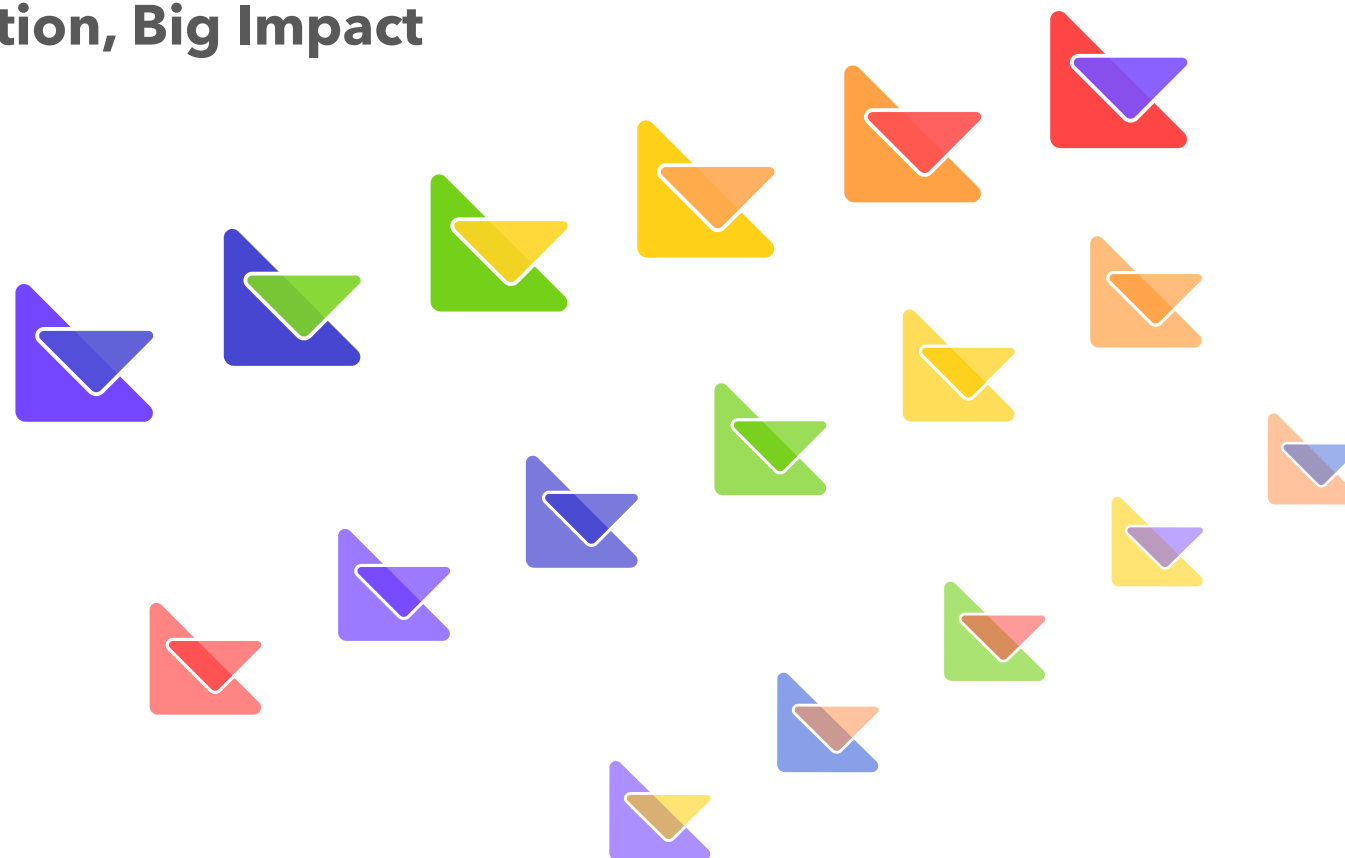


Inner Eastern  
Local Learning and  
Employment Network



## **ANNUAL REPORT 2020**

### **Small Organisation, Big Impact**



# Joint CEO and Chairperson's Report

During 2020 the primary focus of IELLEN work was on fulfilling a new two year Common Funding Agreement (CFA), with the Victorian Department of Education and Training (DET). For 2020 and 2021, all 31 LLEN organisations (ie comprising the Victorian statewide network) were funded to provide school-employer engagement services:

- structured workplace learning (SWL) placements with employers
- career-related events/activities (eg mock job interviews, work readiness sessions, resume writing, industry tours, guest speakers).

Unfortunately, for most of 2020, the impact of COVID-19 and lockdowns was profound, and was felt by key stakeholder groups with which the LLENs were contracted to work. Due to this impact, DET re-prioritised LLEN activities, and as a result, additional complementary activities were added to the scope of our work (through a Variation to our CFA).

This Report summaries IELLEN work under both the original CFA and the Variation.

Until COVID-19 and lockdowns impacted, the IELLEN was on track to meet its Key Performance Indicators, but from Term 2 the number of employers willing or able to host a student was significantly reduced, as was interest from students and schools for SWL placements. Similarly, just prior to government imposed lockdowns, the IELLEN

had in place numerous agreements with schools to conduct career related events and activities, which then had to be cancelled.

However, despite these challenges, we can happily report the following achievements.

- The IELLEN adapted to changed circumstances, and largely shifted our activities on-line. We created and made available to schools a series of career-related, work readiness videos. These videos covered topics such as Interview Preparation (with the option of follow up Mock Job Interviews); Employer Expectations; Workplace Do's and Don'ts; Resumes and Cover Letters; and Job Searching and Applications. Each video session had accompanying worksheets, and other documents for students to use. These were very well received and utilised by schools.

- The IELLEN facilitated on-line Mock Job Interview sessions for schools, using our resources and a Zoom account. We also coordinated on-line sessions for Senior VCAL students, both in mainstream schools and flexible education settings. Despite the obvious challenges in filling SWL opportunities, we were very pleased that by year's end, we over achieved in one of our two key KPIs, exceeding our target of the number of career related events to be provided.

- Under the Variation to our CFA, we led a VCAL Network to support VET delivery. We facilitated non mainstream education

providers to meet (quarterly, on-line) to discuss issues, strategies and opportunities. Among issues raised and addressed in meetings was the need for more information regarding VCAL opportunities and the differences in organisational delivery; support for work experience and SWL opportunities; and challenges with engagement as face to face learning returned after COVID-19 learning from home. A response to these issues was the IELLEN leading and co-ordinating the development of a new VCAL resource. Developed in consultation with members of the VCAL Network, this resource was completed mid-year, and uploaded onto our website and circulated to a broader mailing list.

Under the Variation to our CFA, the IELLEN also led three other partnerships or networks.

- Pathways Partnership (with a membership of schools and providers such as Learn Local organisations and NFPs with multiple funding contracts across education and employment areas) focused on benefitting young people with barriers to learning and/or work participation. This partnership met throughout the year (quarterly, on-line), contributing to provider capacity for promoting learner/client resilience and participation; identifying current and common member issues and challenges; and sharing strategies and resources.

- A Resilience and Wellbeing (RaW) Network brought together staff from up to 25 government, independent and Catholic schools to identify and share current and common issues and challenges; strategies and resources; connecting wellbeing staff to one another; and to generally support student attendance, school engagement and vocational pathways. Four partnership network meetings were held, all on-line. A key benefit, as indicated via feedback surveys, were meetings providing a safe, confidential forum for airing challenges and sharing wellbeing strategies and resources. Aside from information being shared and disseminated, we also organised guest speakers. Topics covered school refusal; alcohol and other drugs; and external counseling services. Through these partnerships and networks we learned about the mixed impact of COVID-19 restrictions.

Some students fell behind, others blossomed. In other words, there were students who responded to remote on-line learning and support, and those who didn't.

- A Local Government Areas Youth Pathways Partnership, to support LGA Youth Services of Boroondara, Port Phillip and Stonnington in connecting with one another and with external service providers. Related to this partnership was IELLEN's ongoing contribution to the Youth Engagement Partnership (YEP) across the Cities of Port Phillip and Stonnington, including support to a data collection and analysis group. To complement our work with LGAs, the IELLEN provided written input into the City of Port Phillip's Youth Strategic Plan 2020 – 2023; and also contributed to the next Boroondara Children & Young People Action Plan, with a focus on issues such as education engagement and pathways.

In addition to the above, IELLEN staff continued active support for providers, organisations and community initiatives. These included the Oakwood School Council; Prahran Community Learning Centre (Committee of Management and Sub-Committees); the Youth2Industry College (Board of Management); and Communities That Care Stonnington.

#### Staff and Committee

For the work done and the results we achieved, a special thank you to IELLEN staff, Tracey Fenton, Dennis Cindric, and Tom Rankin. Aply led and supported by Andrew their efforts were outstanding, especially given a year which presented new challenges, and much uncertainty. The organisation was fortunate to have such a talented team who shared a sense of purpose, and a commitment to quality of work and outcomes.

**COMMITTEE LEFT TO RIGHT** Nathan Chisholm, Cherry Grimwade, Sam Joukadjian, Gary Buckeridge, Bronwen Thompson, Angela Stathopoulos, Graeme Mawson, David Paton **ABSENT** Philip Javier



With regards to the Committee of Management, we would like to acknowledge our appreciation for their interest, wisdom, and strategic oversight, again, especially valued last year. Thank you to our outgoing and long-serving Chair, Angela Stathopoulos, for your years of service in that role. May we add how delighted we were that you have been able to stay on the Committee. We extend our gratitude to the rest of the Executive Committee: Deputy Chair, Bronwen Thompson; Secretary, Gary Buckeridge; and IELLEN Treasurer, David Paton. In all cases, they were accessible and performed their roles diligently. Finally, our sincere thanks to the remainder of the Committee: Cherry Grimwade, Philip Javier, Nathan Chisholm, and Graeme Mawson. We are likewise, grateful for your contributions.

During 2020 the team of four EFT staff engaged with 135 stakeholders (schools, not for profits, employers) and we are pleased that, despite COVID-19 and lockdowns, 223 young people directly benefitted from our partnerships, programs and services. Although this figure was less than in the previous year, we are proud that we continued to make a difference to the lives of young people.

By year's end, things were looking upbeat. After seeking and receiving philanthropic funding, the IELLEN is in the process of establishing an additional partnership project with a leading tertiary public healthcare service. We were further delighted to have been invited to represent local community services in a new local

Victoria Police initiative (Project Cassius) providing a link to education, employment and support services for young people who interact with VicPol. Finally, we felt optimistic about our concerted efforts to secure additional funding, and we are confident that these will yield results in 2021, a year which also marks twenty years of IELLEN service to the community.

Andrew Neophytou, CEO  
Sam Joukadjian, Chairperson



LEFT Andrew Neophytou, CEO  
RIGHT Angela Stathopoulos, outgoing Chair

### During 2020, the IELLEN led these partnerships and networks

- VCAL Network
- Resilience and Wellbeing (RaW) Network
- Pathways Partnership (providers working with disengaged young people)
- LGAs Youth Services Network

### We also actively supported other partnerships, providers and initiatives

- Prahran Community Learning Centre (Committee of Management and sub-committees)
- Oakwood School Council
- Youth 2 Industry College (Board of Management)
- Communities That Care Stonnington (Community Board Member)
- Youth Engagement Partnership (YEP) across Stonnington & Port Philip





4 EFT staff



15 partnerships, networks, projects and committees facilitated or supported



16 career related events/ activities delivered to schools



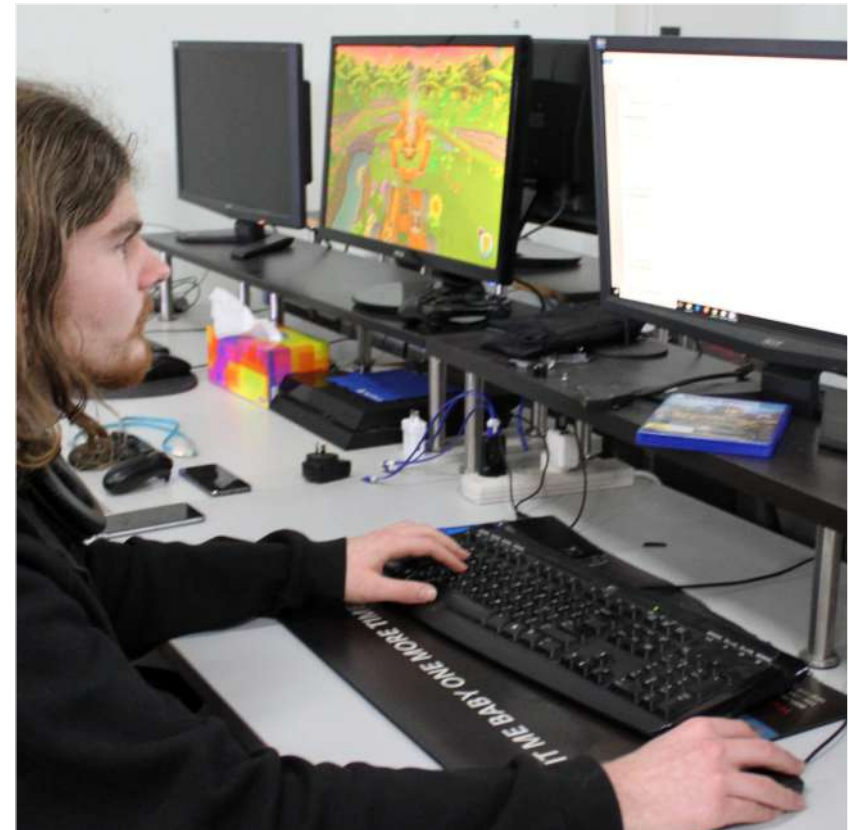
223 young people directly benefited from our programs and services



135 stakeholders engaged (schools, not-for-profits, employers)



20,000 + reached through our Facebook page



## WHO WE ARE

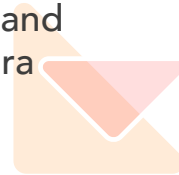
A not-for-profit organisation, working to improve education, training and employment options and outcomes for young people

## WHERE WE WORK

The IELLEN works with stakeholders across Stonnington, Port Phillip and Boroondara

## STAKEHOLDERS

Schools, community organisations, business and industry – and young people themselves



# Help us build BETTER FUTURES for YOUNG PEOPLE

Together we can do more to combat early school leaving and youth unemployment.



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[www.facebook.com/innereasternllen](https://www.facebook.com/innereasternllen)

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