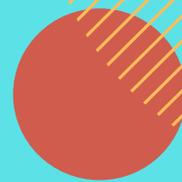
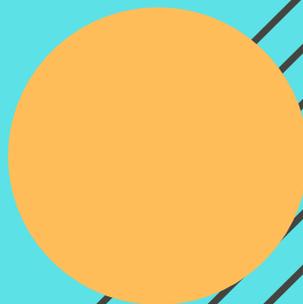


NELLEN

creating futures for young people



ANNUAL REPORT 2019



NORTH EAST LOCAL LEARNING AND EMPLOYMENT NETWORK INC. (NELLEN)



Our Vision

All young people are valued in our community

Our Mission

To facilitate diverse opportunities for young people to be the best they can be

Level 3 / 111–113 Hume St,

Wodonga, Vic 3690

02) 6056 0966

W: www.nellen.org.au

E: administration@nellen.org.au



<https://www.facebook.com/NELLEN2016/>



<https://twitter.com/NELLEN2016>



<https://www.instagram.com/nellen2016/>

Throughout 2019 NELLEN's members received a monthly e-newsletter, distributing best practice information about Education, Employment and Community projects and programs, and sharing upcoming training opportunities and events. You can see archived editions of the newsletter here:

<https://www.nellen.org.au/resources-2/newsletters/>

If you would like to join NELLEN, please complete an application form, which can be obtained from our website, <https://www.nellen.org.au/membership/>.

CHAIR'S REPORT



Mark Cottee
NELLEN Chair

"We're not in Kansas anymore, Toto"

My first run as the Chair of NELLEEN could not have come at a more interesting time. Over the past several months we have a lot of phrases come into existence and often repeated, 'unprecedented' being one of the most common. Despite the challenges being felt by one and all, NELLEEN continues to deliver on its program goals and outcomes.

In 2019 I accepted the role of Chair to build on the great work that my predecessors had established with a particular focus on streamlining our internal process, particularly in terms of strategic planning and operations. The deliberate intent to focus on our strategic directions and the role of our board sub-committees to improve our efficiencies is now delivering in terms of pro-active engagement rather than reactive approaches in reaching our goals. With this in mind I would like to highlight the following. I am pleased by the direction of the relationship with the state government and role the LLENs play in their overall youth strategy.

However, I am more excited by the fact that NELLEEN continues to expand its operations outside of one single stream of funding. I am enthused by the hard work of the board operating within a refreshed cohesive teamwork. We have had several dedicated sessions to team building, strategic planning and governance over the past year and I extend a big thanks to the board. Not only for their insightful direction, advise and commitment to the NELLEEN mission, but also for that dedication in trying times.

It has a been both a pleasure and humbling experience to work with such an incredibly respectful, resourceful and professional team. I am delighted by the launch of a new strategic plan for NELLEEN. Fully understanding that this needs to be a living breathing document, I anticipate that the guidance it will provide to our CEO, staff and supporting members can only help give stability within a future of uncertainty. On behalf of the board I would like to take this opportunity to formally thank our CEO and staff for all their hard work and resilience over the past twelve months.

To all our members, partners, sponsors, and supporters, I hope you find the following report heartening and I look forward to another year of continued improvement. Be well and stay safe.

CEO'S REPORT



Bev Hoffmann
NELLEN CEO

NELLEEN's work in 2019 seems a distant memory but, increasingly, I'm encouraged to discover how that work has set NELLEEN on a strategic path to meet the demands created by the extraordinary events of 2020, and the ongoing impacts these will have on our region's young people, schools, agencies, businesses and local governments.

The initiation of the Workforce Development Project, the completion of the consultations and review for There Is Capacity, the commencement of our NDIS Employment Support program, a successful funding application to initiate employment support for newly arrived refugee young people, and the continued growth of the Structured Workplace Learning program all directed our attention to what skills, assistance and encouragement young people need in order to make that transition from education into employment.

Our staff numbers swelled as each of these projects and programs got started. We commenced researching regional statistics and services, and engaged with some of the most disadvantaged, exploring locally available supports and mentoring mechanisms. The upshot of this activity and consultation is that NELLEEN is well equipped to guide our young people into employment and further education opportunities in spite of the emerging and, at times, overwhelming barriers.

Throughout 2019, staff developed their skills and knowledge of the region's circumstances, regularly visiting our outlying regional communities, and built a strong regional network that has enabled the delivery of each project and program outcomes.

Please enjoy reading about the work NELLEEN delivered in 2019, the year that will eternally be remembered as PC – pre-COVID.

2019 BOARD MEMBERS



Dr. Anne Ryan - on leave from Feb-Dec



Jenny Gordon



Dr. Kaye Harris
Deputy Chair June-Dec



Chip Eling
(Deputy Chair Jan-June
Acting Chair June-Aug)



Louise Lowe



Warren Mirtschin



Brett Bament - Treasurer



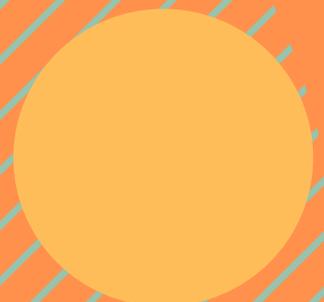
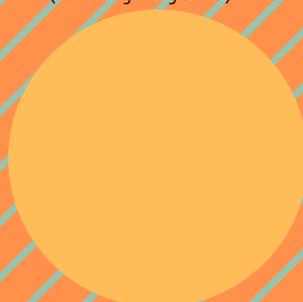
Graeme Sayer - resigned June
(Chair Jan-June)



Vern Hilditch



Bernie Boulton



2019 STAFF

Organisation Staff

DEANNE TANNER
Operations Manager - Nov-Dec

KIRSTI LONI
Operations Officer - Feb-Nov

MARK WILLIAMSON
Operations Manager - Jan-Feb

NAOMI PETERS
Communications Officer

Project/ Program Staff

BILLY MUNRO - Jan-Aug
SWL School Liaison Officer

DAN GIBBS
ESTeam Support Worker - Team Leader
Structured Workplace Learning (SWL) Marketing and Promotions Officer

EMMA-LEIGH BLAKE Jan-Dec
NDIS Support Officer

JULIE ALDOUS
Workforce Development Industry Education Liaison Officer

KRISTIN KEMP
Project Administration Officer

LUCIE WALLIS - Jan-Oct
Workforce Development - Health Industry-Education Liaison Officer

MELISSA BELL
Research Officer

NORM MADDEN
Workforce Development Project Manager

SUE BRUNSKILL - Apr-Dec
Workforce Development - Horticulture Industry-Education Liaison Officer

PROJECTS/PROGRAMS

CALD
EMPLOYMENT
PROJECT

NDIS
EMPLOYMENT
PROJECT

ON TRACK
CONNECT
PROGRAM

ONLINE
RESOURCES
PROJECT

STRUCTURED
WORKPLACE
LEARNING
PROGRAM

THE WODONGA
PROJECT

THERE IS
CAPACITY
PROJECT

WORKFORCE
DEVELOPMENT
PROJECT

CALD EMPLOYMENT PROJECT

Keys to Unlocking our Future

Keys to Unlocking our Future will develop local partnerships that deliver an employment program targeting the specific needs of the culturally and linguistically diverse, migrant and refugee community in Wodonga. The project will employ a part-time coordinator from January 2020 and aims to increase the collaborative response to young people's needs as they exit Year 12 and commence job-seeking or job-creating activities.

The project is funded by the Department of Premier and Cabinet with the funds held by the Rural City of Wangaratta. Consultations with stakeholders commenced in September 2019 with participants including the Albury-Wodonga Ethnic Communities Council and the Albury Wodonga Volunteer Resource Bureau. The project's objective is to deliver the model's employment support program over a six-month period in 2020, with evaluation and report recommendations to be finalised in September 2020.

ESTeam - Employment Support Team

NELLEN's Employment Support initiative provides individual assistance to young people living with a disability aged 17 to 25 years who are transitioning from secondary schooling into employment. The introduction of the NDIS and, specifically, School Leaver Employment Supports (SLES) funding has enabled NELLEN to expand into the provision of one-on-one guidance for the most vulnerable young people in our community. The nature of our registration means we can support young people who have self- or agency-managed packages that results in these young people 'finding and keeping a job.'

Our client work in this space began when NELLEN introduced a 'support team' approach and undertook its first Service Agreement in August 2018. Throughout 2019 the Employment Support Team (ESTeam), comprising Dan Gibbs, Emma-Leigh Blake and Kristin Kemp, offered clients the choice to work with male or female employment support workers. The client group grew from one to four clients with all four clients having had successful outcomes by the end of the year, either in the workforce or in training. With one client continuing into 2020, the ESTeam is looking forward to growing its client base and continuing to build networks.

Over the course of the year, the team promoted the employment support initiative by attending several local careers events held at Wodonga TAFE including the Wodonga Jobs Fair: Careers in Disability day in May, and Work ConnectED, Albury-Wodonga's hands-on careers event, in October. The team also attended meetings held by the Albury Wodonga Autism Community of Practice, presenting at a meeting on Employment and Autism in July; and were available to speak to Year 10 to 12 students and their families at Belvoir Special Schools Post School Expo in August.

This employment support initiative is the most obvious indicator of NELLEN's mission 'to facilitate diverse opportunities for young people to be the best they can be.'

ESTEAM NDIS EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT PROJECT



ESTeam L-R
Kristin Kemp, Dan Gibbs, Emma-Leigh Blake

ON TRACK CONNECT PROGRAM

On Track Connect

On Track is a Victorian Government initiative, launched in 2003, which is designed to ensure that young people are on a pathway to further education, training or employment after leaving school.

In late May each year, On Track surveys young people who left schools or other training organisations from Years 10-12 in the preceding year. The survey is designed to provide information on post-school destinations, and to identify young people not in education, training or full-time employment. This data provides a better understanding of outcomes from education as well as assisting the government to improve pathways planning both centrally and at the local level. Data on destinations is also published annually on a school by school basis.

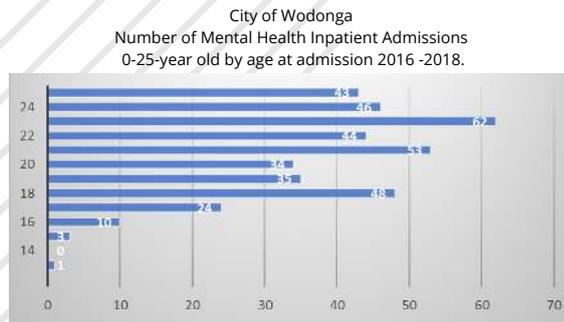
On Track Connect, as part of On Track, aims to assist those young people who have left school and, at the time of the survey, are not studying or in full time work.

Local Learning and Employment Networks (LLENs) managed the implementation of On Track Connect from its inception until 2009. Their role was to set up appropriate referral arrangements to provide advice to young people requesting further assistance about options for re-engagement with education, training or employment. LLENs also reported outcomes of the On Track Connect process back to the Department of Education and Training (DET).

Online Resource Project

During 2019, NELLEN explored an opportunity to collate and present regional data, and gather information about the services, programs and projects operating in our four local Government areas. This project is not yet completed but below is a sample of the collected data.

ONLINE RESOURCE PROJECT



Reference: Child and Youth Mental Health Victorian Auditor-Generals
Report https://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/file_uploads/050619-Youth-Mental-Health_zbR3N9gg.pdf

Structured Workplace Learning (SWL)

NELLEN's Structured Workplace Learning (SWL) program connects Years 10, 11 and 12 students across our service region to work placement opportunities offered by local employers. SWL is available to school students undertaking a Vocational Education and Training (VET) program as part of their VCE or VCAL studies, including School Based Apprenticeships and Traineeships (SBATs). The 31 Statewide Local Learning and Employment Networks have been funded by the Department of Education and Training to facilitate student access to SWL placements and SBATs that are tailored to local priorities and employment opportunities. SWL opportunities are shared direct to teachers via the Statewide Portal, an online database and referral point.

STRUCTURED WORKPLACE LEARNING PROGRAM

SWL enables students to integrate on-the-job experience with secondary study. The program seeks to develop workplace skills, provide practical application of industry knowledge, enable achievement of some learning outcomes, and improve employment opportunities.

NELLEN's SWL team seeks to offer support and placement to those most in need, working with students with various complex challenges and those identified as at risk of disengaging. In 2019 our team focused more on working with disadvantaged and hard-to-place students with visits made to schools and business in rural communities. The team arranged and supported meaningful SWL placements for students across our service region in a variety of industries. In addition, the SWL team introduced motivational interviewing with students one on one to build their employability skills ready for placements, and this approach will continue in 2020.

During 2019, the SWL team also attended several local careers events including the Hands On Trades Career Expo, held at Winton Motor Raceway in May, and Work ConnectED, Albury-Wodonga's hands-on careers event, held at Wodonga TAFE in October. In July it was great to be involved in the Be a Force for Good info session involving Victoria Police and Year 11 and 12 students from several local schools. A team from Victorian Police spoke to students about the application process, career opportunities and their personal experiences within the police force, and students were then challenged to test their fitness with some entry-level exercises.

NELLEN continues to support the VET in Schools Network, which was established for our region in December 2018. With quarterly meetings facilitated by NELLEN, the initiative partners schools and training organisations to support and strengthen VET in Schools provision across our region.

NELLEN's SWL Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/NELLENSWL>

THE WODONGA PROJECT

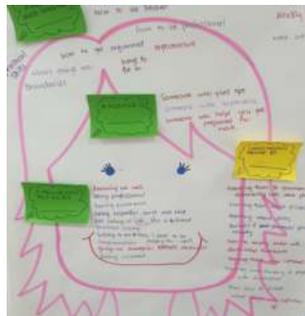
The Wodonga Project

The Wodonga Project is working to address social and educational disadvantage in schools by providing a coordinated response for young people identified to be at risk of homelessness or disengagement from education. It is doing this by implementing the successful Community of Schools and Services (COSS) model, which is achieving significant outcomes for young people in Geelong, now regularly identified as The Geelong Project, and being established in several sites across Australia including a sister project in Albury coordinated by YES Unlimited. The COSS model is grounded in systems change and data-driven early intervention practice, with strong collaboration between participants.

Key participants include Junction Support Services, Gateway Health (including School Focused Youth Service and headspace Albury Wodonga), North East Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service, Upper Murray Family Care, Wodonga Middle Years College (WMYC), Wodonga Senior Secondary College (WSSC), the Victorian Department of Education and Training, the Victorian Department of Health and Health Services, and NELLEN.

NELLEN's involvement in the Wodonga Project, which is guided by the successful work of Professor David MacKenzie, began with the facilitation of discussions to gauge stakeholder interest in September 2018. Planning and delivery of the Wodonga Project continued into 2019 with further funding applications and the implementation of the research and development stages. In March a working group was formed with Gateway Health, headspace Albury Wodonga, Junction Support Services and NELLEN all committing finance to the project. In May NELLEN was awarded three years of funding by Wodonga City Council, via the Community Impact Partnership Program, for the delivery of Stage Two of the implementation of The Wodonga Project. The following month Junction Support Services was ratified as the Lead Agent, and recruitment began for a Wodonga Project Coordinator. In October representatives from WSSC, WMYC, Gateway Health and Junction Support Services attended a Community of Schools and Services Forum held in Geelong.

The year ended with the Wodonga Project transitioning from the research and development phases into the implementation phase, culminating in the appointment of Rachel Habgood as Project Coordinator. Early in 2020 it is intended that a localised pilot model will be implemented into Wodonga Middle Years Colleges—Huon and Felltimber campuses, Wodonga Flexible Learning Centre and Wodonga Senior Secondary College.



There Is Capacity

Funded by the Victorian Women's Trust and in partnership with Women's Health Goulburn North East, There Is Capacity (TIC) is a scoping project that has identified the educational, vocational, formal and community supports available to women living with disability transitioning from education into employment in the Wodonga region.

As Stage One of a longer-term project, TIC consulted with the key stakeholders, researched suitable programs, and identified systemic trigger mechanisms that ensure women living with disability have access to coordinated support during the important transition from secondary education to employment. Facilitated by Projectura, two workshops with local women with disability were held—one at Belvoir Special School and one at Wodonga TAFE. NELLEN received the TIC Stage One Report in August 2019.

Working with Karina Bonnitcha, from Projectura, City of Wodonga staff Anthea Maher and Annie Hooper, and National Disability Coordination Officer Mark Cottee, TIC has developed a framework for a sustainable network of women who will, in Stage Two of the project, assist young women living with disability into employment opportunities by providing community mentoring support.

THERE IS CAPACITY PROJECT

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

The Workforce Development Project

The Workforce Development Project (WDP) expands on a Year 9 Agriculture/Horticulture pilot program developed and delivered at Mansfield Secondary College. Commencing in 2009, it is now an integrated part of the school's curriculum. The program addressed the need for a sustainable agriculture workforce by recruiting Year 9 students into agricultural careers through early contact with employers, such as farmers, then offering an enrolment into relevant Vocational Education and Training (VET) certificates presented by a local TAFE provider.

From July 2018 to June 2022, WDP will introduce this program, colloquially referred to as 'the Mansfield Model', into 24 education sites in the Ovens Murray region, concurrently extending the students' industry experiences into the Health Care / Social Assistance sector. To deliver the project, NELLEN and NE Tracks Local Learning and Employment Network recruited an experienced and insightful team including the creator of the Mansfield Model, Julie Aldous. Under the guidance of Project Manager Norm Madden, the team in 2019 also included Lucie Wallis and Sue Brunskill—the Industry-Education Liaison Officers.

Following completion of Stage One (Introduction Phase) at the end of 2018, the project entered the first year of the Implementation Phase (Stage Two), which is marked by the liaison and coordination activities that engage education sites, business partners and Year 9 students. In Semester 2 of 2019, the first 20 students commenced in the project's program. These Year 9 and 10 students from Tallangatta Secondary College studied Certificate II in Agriculture with Wodonga TAFE visiting the school to deliver training. In addition, groups of students from Years 8 to 10 participated in industry workshops held on local farms from late 2018 and throughout 2019 including students from Corryong College, Mt Beauty Secondary College and Wodonga Middle Years College (WMYC). Towards the end of 2019, a group of Year 9 WMYC students participated in a Health workshop at Gateway Health Wodonga.

The WDP team thanks business owners and staff from industry, health services and education sites who have given their time and expertise to help make this project a success. The project's success is also heavily intertwined with government policy for schools and the VET sector, ideally with both education streams working more closely together. The project has two industry advisory groups, one for each sector, and a State Government interdepartmental group. These three key advisory bodies meet quarterly, and the project will deliver annual dashboard evaluation reports for distribution.

To improve the visibility of the WDP, marketing materials and a promotional video were developed in 2019 with the project being rebranded as 'What's it REALLY like... Matching learning with jobs: Certificate II @ Year 9'. The promotional video, titled 'Year 9 Certificate II in Agriculture: Mansfield Secondary College', showcases the prototype upon which the project is based and highlights the engagement of students and farmers. You can view the promotional video as well as the project's 2019 Annual Report on the WDP web page.

WDP Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/WorkforceDevProject>

What's it
REALLY
Like...

Matching learning with jobs
Certificate II @ Year 9



WODONGA KOORIE YOUTH NETWORK (WKYN)

Wodonga Koorie Youth Network

NELLEN provides support to the Wodonga Koorie Youth Network (WKYN) through a financial auspice arrangement. WKYN is a group of local young Aboriginal people aged 12–25 years who get together with each other, do fun activities and discuss issues that are important to them. The group was established in 2017 following the BLACKOUT Wodonga Aboriginal youth gathering hosted by the Koorie Youth Council in partnership with Wodonga Aboriginal Network the previous year. WKYN's achievements throughout 2019 include launching their Action Plan 2019–2022 in March, providing presenters for the 8th SNAICC National Conference in Adelaide in September, and winning the Children and Youth Award at the Victorian Department of Justice and Regulation Awards in December.



NELLEN champions speak—The challenge of adult life'

In 2019 NELLEN published two blogs, 'NELLEN champions speak - The challenge of adult life,' written by Sylva Mwala, a 23-year-old young man from a refugee background. In his first blog, published online on 24 May 2019, Sylva introduced himself and described how he was achieving his aspirations while balancing his studies, family life, sport and work. In his second blog, published on 4 September 2019, Sylva wrote about his arrival in Australia three years prior and the interactions that had helped him along the way.

If you know of a young person aged 18 to 25 living in North-east Victoria who might be interested in writing a regular blog for NELLEN's website, charting their progress towards secure employment in their chosen field, please direct them to our blog contributor guidelines on NELLEN's website.

CHAMPION
BLOGGER



Our partners and key stakeholders



without whom we could not achieve these outcomes for all young people



NELLEN is supported by the Victorian Government with recurrent and project funding from the Department of Education and Training (DET), the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (through Regional Development Victoria), and the Department of Premier and Cabinet



Additional 2019 project funding has been obtained from:

