

Annual Report 2024

Acknowledgement of Country

Skyline Education Foundation Australia acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we live, learn, and work. We recognise their enduring connection to Country, land, waters, and skies and pay our deepest respects to Elders past and present.

We honour the strength, resilience, and knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, whose cultures and traditions have thrived for over 65,000 years. Their wisdom continues to shape and enrich our communities, particularly in education, leadership, and storytelling.

As an organisation dedicated to empowering young people, we are committed to fostering an inclusive and equitable future where all students, including First Nations learners, have the opportunity to thrive. We recognise the importance of listening, learning, and amplifying the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

In the spirit of truth-telling and reconciliation, we pledge to walk alongside First Nations peoples with respect, understanding, and a shared commitment to positive change.

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I am proud to present my first Annual Report as CEO of Skyline Education Foundation Australia.

Firstly, I want to acknowledge the work of my predecessor, Bridget Sutherland, who adeptly guided Skyline through post-pandemic challenges.

I am thrilled to have this opportunity at Skyline helping talented Year 11 and 12 students complete VCE (Victorian Certificate of Education) and go on to pursue their career goals.

2024 in Review

Our Students

In 2024, Skyline's 157 students represented 39 schools, including 19 in rural and regional areas. The year started with the annual residential camp; this time held at Monash University. Each year the camp introduces the new cohort of Year 11 students to the Skyline program, and the team on hand who will support them through their journey. For the Year 12 students the workshops, panel discussions and lectures help get them off to a great start for the year ahead. We thank our hosts at Monash University, and the guests who gave their time to lead sessions and engage with the students.

Our students came together at the April NGV Masterclass for a day to broaden perspectives on what can be expressed through art and how



From our CEO

Samantha MacRae
Chief Executive Officer

the creative process, including critical thinking and problem-solving, relates to all facets of life. Meanwhile, the July masterclass at the University of Melbourne introduced life at university and enabled the students to sample a wide range of workshops from biochemistry to jazz improvisation, attend a course and student services expo, and take a tour of Newman College.

It is wonderful to see how the students engage with their peers and our Skyline alumni mentors on these occasions.

In October we were honoured to welcome former Prime Minister, the Hon. Julia Gillard AC, as guest speaker at an event held to celebrate the power of education and resilience. In her speech, Ms Gillard endorsed Skyline's work as she highlighted the importance of supporting high-ability students facing economic challenges. I was inspired to hear several of our students and alumni tell their own personal stories and achievements and speak of how Skyline's program had changed their lives.

Of the 77 Year 12 graduates in the Class of 2024, six were named dux of their schools, and many earned full residential scholarships to leading universities. Among them, Keely Xia from Dandenong High School received the prestigious Hansen Scholarship at the University of Melbourne, joining past recipients Haisong Qi and Chelsea Wiramanaden from the Class of 2023. This scholarship recognises students from around

Australia who have demonstrated resilience to adversity, and a commitment to supporting others.

Skyline Hatch

In 2024, our social enterprise, Skyline Hatch, broadened its reach, further reducing educational inequity by providing crucial VCE resources and support to over 5,000 students and teachers across Victoria. Hatch employs Skyline Program alumni and other high-achieving VCE students to deliver on-demand self-paced modules, live interactive masterclasses, and Q&A sessions. Their expertise drives support across ten VCE subjects, SAC and GAT preparation, and a specialised VCE Exam Revision Series. This dynamic program continues delivering expert guidance and learning opportunities to those who need them most.

In Conclusion

Since joining Skyline I have been overwhelmed by the generosity and support of the whole team. I give my heartfelt thanks to our Board of Directors for their strategic leadership, and to our Ambassadors and Patrons for their continued advocacy and support for Skyline. And above all, an enormous thank you to the Skyline team who welcomed me warmly in July and have guided me as I have settled into the rhythm of the Skyline year.

Skyline is immensely grateful to our many partners and supporters whose financial and in-kind support

is critical to our successful future. These include MECCA, the Hansen Little Foundation, the Wood Foundation, the Dawn Wade Foundation, The Anthony Costa Foundation, the Zig Inge Foundation, the Nigel & Patricia Peck Foundation, auDA, Clare Whitbread, and the Department of Education. Thank you also to the Cairnmillar Institute, the National Gallery of Victoria and Krystyna Campbell-Pretty AM, Champion, Edrolo, HEX, Lander & Rogers, the Institute of Inquiring Minds, CVS Lane, and Stellan Capital.

All in all, 2024 has been a year of great progress.

Looking ahead, Skyline is focused on:

- Increasing access to our program so we can support a larger number of high ability students facing social and economic challenges, and;
- Developing new Skyline Hatch programs to promote educational equity and meet the evolving needs of Victorian students.

Thank you all for your support and dedication to Skyline.



From our Chair

Looking back at 2024, I am filled with immense pride for the difference we have made to the lives and futures of our young people.

Stephen Adrian
Chair



It has been an incredibly rewarding journey, reaffirming our purpose to enable high ability students navigating economic and social adversity to flourish in our community.

I am thrilled to report that our flagship Skyline Program continues to empower students in their VCE journey. We selected 80 new Year 11 students for the program, and I am delighted to share that 77 Year 12 students graduated from the program equipped with the tools and support to navigate their education paths successfully.

2024 was a particularly challenging environment marked by a cost-of-living crisis and growing discord in our community. We understand the impact these challenges have on private philanthropy, and we continue to explore innovative strategies to secure our financial future. We remain committed to ensuring the sustainability and independence of our organization.

Our social enterprise, Skyline Hatch, has continued to develop. It remains a beacon of hope for a much broader student community than our Program. We are grateful to have received funding from our philanthropic partners and the Department of Education. We remain dedicated to developing Hatch into an impactful and sustainable venture.

Collaboration remains key to enhancing student outcomes, and we are proud to partner with many organisations. These partnerships enable us to leverage resources and expertise, furthering our collective mission of supporting students in need.

I would like to express my gratitude to the exceptional organizations that have supported us, including Mecca M Power, Stellan Capital, Koala Cherries, CVS Lane

and Boomaroo Nurseries. Joining them have been many generous Foundations and individuals who have combined to allow Skyline to deliver on its purpose. Your unwavering commitment to our cause has made a tangible difference in the lives of countless students.

I also extend heartfelt thanks to our dedicated team, led by CEO Samantha MacRae, whose tireless efforts in a difficult environment have propelled our programs forward. Special thanks are due to our community supporters, such as Lander and Rogers, Champion Education, Edrolo, Monash College, the NGV, HEX, and The Geelong College whose generosity and support have been invaluable.

Additionally, I want to express my appreciation to our hardworking directors, including Alistair Mytton, Amanda Derham, Ryan Gunasena, Roger Page, Thely Nguyen, Clare Harper and Professor Jayashri Kulkarni AM (for part of the year).

As we look to the future with optimism and determination, let us continue to work together to empower our students and build a brighter tomorrow.



Looking back, my family didn't have a lot. My parents were Vietnamese immigrants and I'm a first generation Australian, and we lived in government housing. They divorced when I was pretty young, and my mother became a single mum of two kids. She didn't speak English very well, but she had this almost MacGyver-like tenacity.

My father was a little bit in and out, but we were always really close. And so, when he was diagnosed with lung cancer and passed away when I was in Year 10, and after after a year and a half battle, I was shattered. I was really broken, both in heart and in spirit. I didn't know my worth at the time, as a 15 year old who was really lost.

When I was accepted into Skyline, I was taken aback. Maybe I didn't know my worth, but somebody else did. Maybe I didn't see myself in a way that was a true representation of my potential. Maybe someone else could see a future for me that I couldn't imagine for myself.

With this new feeling of 'what could be', combined with the opportunities, the financial support that was important for me and my family, and everything that comes with Skyline: the community that's around it, the program managers, alumni mentors, I now had people whose roles were to support me. They helped me, gave me the resources to finish Year 12, do a Bachelor of Science at the University of Melbourne, a Masters degree at the University of Melbourne, leave my hometown, my family, my country, and pursue a PhD at Tufts University in Boston in DNA repair biology.

I stand with you today as Dr Mai Tran, as I stood in front of a lectern and lectured 250 wide-eyed freshman at Tufts University, where I did my doctorate. I know the value of education. I received the opportunity to see that I could actually go through it. This is what a Skyline scholarship does to shift a future."



Mai

Class of 2009

Mai spoke at our event 'An Evening with The Hon. Julia Gillard AC' in October 2024.

Our Purpose

Identifying and supporting students with high academic potential from low SES backgrounds

Addressing barriers to success in education

Encouraging peer and community support

Developing motivation and self-belief

Assisting in the transition to university and beyond

Skyline aims to break cycles of disadvantage and empower students to achieve their full potential. We identify high-ability students and work with them throughout their Year 11 and 12 studies, providing 'wrap around' support by connecting with students, their schools, parents, and guardians.

During the two-year program, students develop motivation and self-belief through evidence-based, targeted masterclasses. They meet like-minded peers, and join the larger Skyline community from their very first day.

Throughout the program, we provide access to VCE textbooks, tutoring, mental health support, and importantly, someone always in their corner. We help students graduate, and when they do, they join an established and thriving alumni community.

We believe in our students, and help them believe in themselves. We create the steps to success.

Evidentiary Basis

"Economic capital/poverty is the key defining barrier in accessing gifted education" and "Social and cultural capital define networks of influence and opportunity." (Reynen-Woodward et al 2023)¹.

Evidence shows that up to half of gifted students go unrecognised and under-supported in traditional education systems. This coupled with socio-economic barriers and other emotional and familial challenges means that often, these students are unable to realise their full potential, and are at risk of leaving the school system early.

Systemic barriers include limited access to resources (such as technology, books, and tutoring), lack of support at home, financial pressures requiring students to work while studying, or low expectations from teachers or schools.

¹ Reynen-Woodward, K., Round, P. & Subban, P. (2023). Gifted, disadvantaged, unseen: A scoping study of giftedness, disadvantage and cultural difference in young adult learners, Social Sciences & Humanities Open, 7.

² Parliament of Victoria. Education and Training Committee. (2012). Inquiry into the education of gifted and talented students: Final report.

³ Lamb, S., Glover, S., Walstab, A., & Maire, Q. (2020). Educational opportunity in Australia 2020: Who succeeds and who misses out. Centre for International Research on Education Systems, Victoria University.

⁴ Taylor, C. (2024, December 8). Gifted and ignored: The smart kids who can't afford to succeed. ABC News.

Up to **50%**
of gifted students
are underachieving²

Low SES students are **2.5x**
less likely to
complete tertiary
education³

Up to **20%**
fail to complete
high school⁴

Skyline in Numbers

634

students supported
since inception

74

alumni employed by
Skyline to date

100%

class of 2024
students entered
tertiary education
or career pathway
of their choice

96%

students graduated
from Skyline Program
since inception

46

partner schools
statewide

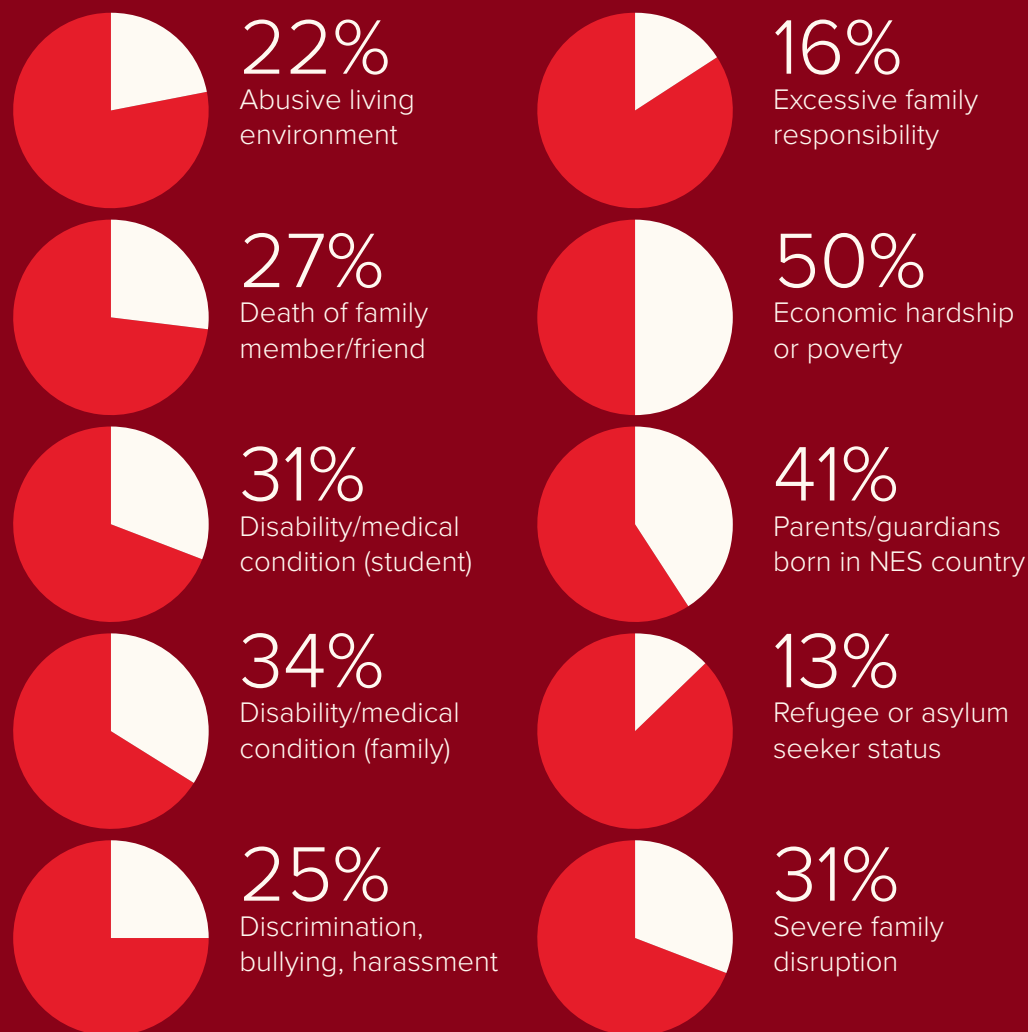


Catherine (left) and Thach-Nam (right) perform 'Unravel' by Ling Tosite Sigure at Graduation in November.

Our Students

Of the 138 applications received in 2024, 69% of students stated that they were living on or below the ACOSS poverty line*.

The following difficult circumstances were also reported:



Skyline was, for me, a life changing experience; 2 short years, but a lifetime of impact.

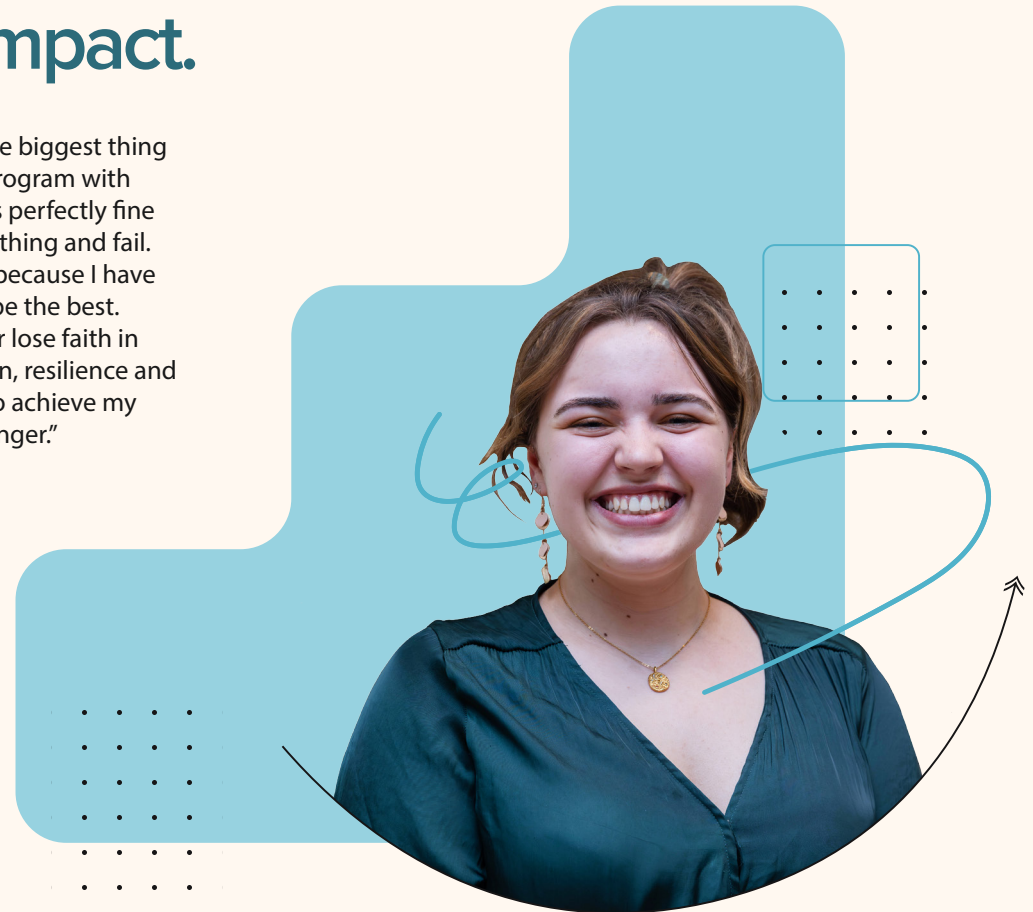
So many people see the financial support as the largest part of the program, and while it is true that it has a significant impact, the support provided is perhaps the most vital part of the program. I saw a truly staggering amount of improvement in my own self confidence thanks largely to the support system of program managers and mentors who consistently provided me with the knowledge that they believed in me and my ability, therefore allowing me to do so also.

I truly believe that without Skyline, I would not be where I am today; I would not be studying at my dream university and my dream course, or at my dream college. I highly doubt I would have scored as well either.

Despite all this, I feel that the biggest thing that I walked away from the program with was the knowledge that it was perfectly fine to be myself. To attempt something and fail. To try something new simply because I have never done it before and not be the best. But most importantly, to never lose faith in myself; to trust that my passion, resilience and determination will allow me to achieve my goals, even if it takes a little longer."

Abby

Class of 2024



Theory of Change

If we provide...

Financial Support

offsetting students' educational costs so they can focus on what matters.

Residential Programs

Transformational overnight learning experiences focusing on self-development.

Masterclasses

Six informative full-day seminars centering evidence-based learning and real-life skills.

Wrap-Around Care

One-to-one psychosocial and educational coaching in tandem with guardians and schools.

Curriculum Support

through Partnerships and Skyline Hatch, supporting students through their studies.

Mentorship Program

Corporate and alumni mentoring, providing real-world experience and knowledge.

Alumni Community

assisting in the shift to the tertiary and career settings, providing internships and mentoring.

...our students experience...

Being

in an inclusive, respectful, talented community. Feeling valued and supported.

Becoming

through learning new skills, personal development, and setting goals and future aspirations.

Belonging

by connecting and working with board, sponsors and alumni within the Skyline community.

...leading to...

Social Connection

Developing opportunities and networking skills.

Leadership

Creating educated leaders of the future.

Confidence

Instilling belief, cementing values and growing self-confidence.

Security

Improved educational outcomes and opportunities.

Agency

Creating opportunity and independence to be empowered in one's own life.

Students at our 2024 Spring Masterclass were given the opportunity to take photos in a studio at RMIT as part of a larger workshop.





Regions and Schools

In 2024, the Program Team supported 157 students: 80 in Year 11 (Class of 2025) and 77 in Year 12 (Class of 2024). These students came from 39 partner schools across Melbourne's Metro and South East areas, as well as regional locations including Geelong, the North East, North West and the Peninsula.

By the end of 2024, the total number of schools that have partnered with Skyline since the Program began had grown to 46. Four new schools joined in 2024: Daylesford College, Gleneagles Secondary College, Scoresby Secondary College and Sunshine College.

Geelong continues to shine as a key region in the Skyline Program. Since first partnering with local schools in 2017, Skyline has supported 111 students across seven Geelong-based schools. Northern Bay College had 49 students participating in the Program. This

represents 44% of Skyline students in the Geelong area and ranks the school third in overall student numbers from a single school.

The North East region has also seen impressive growth. Starting with just six students in 2019, the number of students from this region has expanded to 40 by 2024. This success has been made possible by strong community support, sparked by generous donors Tina and Michael Reddrop and enhanced by local services like free transport to the Residential Program from Fallons Bus Services in Alexandra.



Toby

Class of 2024



"During Year 10 and 11, I was in a dark place. I made friends with some people who probably weren't the healthiest relationships, and I made some bad choices overall. Becoming a Skyline student was a big moment, because Skyline is responsible for the complete turnaround that my life has had now. I'm getting 100% on my SACs. I'm getting averages of 90+ across all my subjects. I'm playing in my band in front of hundreds of people weekly. It's such a drastic change from how I was living, and how I was planning to live the rest of my life."

Toby spoke at our event 'An Evening with The Hon. Julia Gillard AC' in October 2024. Find his full speech and more on our website.

Challenges and Opportunities

Each year, as costs climb and student needs grow, Skyline remains unwavering in our mission to make every dollar count and create lasting, meaningful change.

The demand for our program in 2024 reached unprecedented levels due to the cost of living crisis.

But our vision for the future is clear and ambitious: to expand our cohort to 200 students by 2027, with 100 Year 11 and 100 Year 12 students. This growth means life-changing opportunities for even more young people in desperate need of support.

To reach this goal and serve more students annually, additional funding is critical.


Our mission is made possible only through the generosity of financial donors, as well as the invaluable contributions of partners in transport, education, and health services.

We are deeply grateful for their commitment and assistance their potential and secure their future.

Together, we can give these young people the lifeline they need.



Two students at our
2024 Spring Masterclass.

A young man with dark hair, wearing a black t-shirt and a red lanyard, is smiling at the camera. He is sitting at a table with other students. In the background, other students are visible, some sitting and some standing. The setting appears to be a classroom or a meeting room. A large red shape is on the right side of the page, partially obscuring the image.

Skyline Education Foundation's social enterprise, Skyline Hatch, is on a mission to reduce educational inequity by providing VCE students with access to high-quality academic and wellbeing resources.



My journey with Skyline, both as a student and now as an employee, has been truly transformative.

It has been filled with exhilaration, cherished memories, and meaningful challenges. As a student, I was incredibly fortunate to be among the select individuals inducted into the Skyline program, an opportunity that immersed me in a community of some of Victoria's brightest minds. Through enriching camps and masterclasses, we forged deep, lasting connections while developing the academic, personal, and social skills that shaped our VCE journeys and beyond.

Transitioning from a student in the program to a staff member at Skyline Hatch has been an equally enriching experience. It has allowed me to give back to the very community that once uplifted me while continuing to benefit from its unwavering support. This shift has given me invaluable insight into mentorship. Where I once stood on the foundations laid by my mentors, I now help build those foundations for others.

Seeing Skyline's mission from both perspectives has

deepened my appreciation for its enduring values while highlighting how its strategies evolve to meet new challenges. Working here has reinforced my commitment to educational equity and personal growth, proving that the impact of programs like Skyline extends far beyond academics. It is about fostering potential, empowering individuals, and creating a cycle of support that continues to shape lives long after graduation. I take great pride in how Skyline has equipped me with the ability to build meaningful connections and foster a sense of belonging among individuals from diverse backgrounds.

Oliver
Class of 2021

Since its launch in 2021, Hatch has provided more than 12,000 VCE students and teachers across over 300 Victorian high schools with access to our services, helping drive meaningful change in the educational landscape.

In 2024, feedback from participants in Hatch's online masterclasses was overwhelmingly positive. 96% of students reported finding the sessions useful, while 89% felt more confident about their VCE and VCE exams, and 87% reported feeling reduced stress and overwhelm. These outcomes underscore Hatch's commitment to empowering students with the tools and strategies necessary for success.

Central to the Hatch model is its dynamic and engaging team of tutors and presenters. Comprised of high-achieving recent VCE

graduates, including inspiring Skyline Alumni, the Hatch team brings firsthand experience and proven strategies to guide students throughout their VCE journey. Their ability to empathise with and relate to the challenges of VCE students makes them uniquely qualified to offer guidance, motivation, and practical study tips.

To date, Hatch has employed 74 Skyline Alumni in various roles including development and delivery of content, marketing, operations, and IT support, reinforcing its commitment to nurturing talent and leadership among young people.

Hatch: Reach & Impact



Hatch's partnership with the Department of Education Victorian Challenge and Enrichment Series allows high-ability students to access the VCE Hack Series at no cost, further emphasising Hatch's commitment to accessible, quality education.

The SAC Success Series features live online masterclasses and curriculum-aligned short courses that delve deeply into subject content. By addressing common challenges and facilitating direct interaction with experienced tutors, the program is designed to boost students' understanding and performance in School Assessed Coursework (SACs) while also providing valuable exam revision support.

In 2024, the series was available for five subjects including English, English as an Additional Language, Chemistry, General Maths, and Maths Methods. With the generous support of the auDA Foundation and The Wood Foundation, Hatch is expanding its SAC offerings to cover ten subjects in 2025, including Biology, Health and Human Development, Physics, Psychology, and Specialist Maths.

Hatch's flagship Exam Revision Series, held during the September school holidays, provides comprehensive live and online revision sessions for twelve leading Unit 3/4 VCE subjects. Featuring topic summaries, exemplar responses, interactive exercises, and live Q&A, this free

program - supported by the Department of Education Strategic Partnerships Program - equips students with targeted support to excel in their exams and helps ensure that every VCE student has the opportunity to succeed.

Skyline Hatch extends its gratitude to all supporters, partners, and the dedicated team behind its initiatives. To learn more about how Hatch continues to transform VCE education, please contact hatch@skylinefoundation.org.au.

Hatch: Programs



The advice given by all the tutors was so valuable and in-depth! Everyone was super friendly and the entire session was super interactive through Q&A's. I've been to many revision lectures both last year and this year, and found that this one was the most beneficial!"

Teacher, SAC Success



The presenters are really engaging and understanding, and as they often graduated a few years prior, they understand how stressful and difficult year 12 is. They always explain content in a perfect amount of detail, the Q&A was so helpful, and it was great that I could rewatch the recording again closer to my exams!"

Student, Exam Revision Series



Really great interactive workshop - will definitely get my VCE students to go through the modules to explore these strategies. All presenters were very engaging and the slide presentations were well designed."

Teacher, VCE Hack Study Skills



I found this session to be practical and broken down in an accessible manner for all. Lots of gold nuggets to take away, hoping many of our students attend these sessions! So many benefits."

Teacher, SAC Success

Hatch: Testimonials





Students unlocked their inner artists at our Autumn Masterclass, organised in partnership with the National Gallery of Victoria.

Our Partners



Major Funders

Allison Gibson



Graeme and
Norma Fox

HANSEN LITTLE
FOUNDATION

J&B Jackson
Foundation

Jason Fox and
Meg Llewellyn

Krystyna
Campbell-
Pretty AM



TANK Foundation

The Baker
Foundation



The Nigel and
Patricia Peck
Foundation



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Campbell Bairstow	Johanna Podlesak	Peter Isaacson Foundation		
CCI Giving	John Haddad	Peter Woodruff		
	Julian Edwards			

Our Ambassadors and Patrons

Kwong
Lee Dow
AO



Campbell
Bairstow



Katrina
Reynolds
OAM



Tina
Reddrop



Allison
Gibson



Wendy
Bonnici



Our People



Stephen Adrian
Chair of the Board



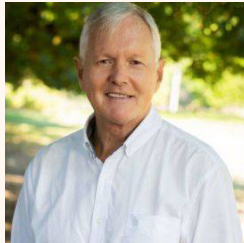
Alistair Mytton
Board Director



Amanda Derham
Board Director



Clare Harper
Board Director



Roger Page
Board Director



Ryan Gunasena
Board Director



Thely Nguyen
Board Director



Samantha MacRae
Chief Executive Officer

Operational Staff

Kerryn Warner
Executive Assistant

Sally Watts
Hatch General Manager

Ashleigh Bell
Lead Program Manager

Silvina Pechiar
Program Manager

Grace Hill
Advancement Officer

Marina Encarnacion
Operations &
Communications
Co-Ordinator

Kristy Chung
Program Manager

Financial Report

The Skyline Education Foundation has undergone remarkable evolution and growth over the past decade. Between 2014 and 2020, the organisation steadily expanded its reach. However, 2021 marked a turning point as the impact of COVID-19 on education drove a surge in revenue, nearly doubling from around \$900k to \$1.7 million. This financial momentum allowed Skyline to increase its annual cohort size from 90 to 160 students and launch Skyline Hatch, a social enterprise now supporting thousands of VCE students and providing employment opportunities for alumni.

Post-COVID, external challenges like the cost-of-living crisis influenced fundraising outcomes, stabilising annual revenue at approximately \$1.1 million by FY23. The expanded workforce, scaled up during the pandemic, introduced higher costs, temporarily affecting financial performance. Skyline's financial year runs from January to December to align with the school year. Australian Accounting Standard (AASB) 15 impacts the reporting of the Foundation's income. The cash received during FY22, FY23, and FY24 amounted to \$1.491m, \$1.078m, and \$1.241m, respectively, reflecting a robust recovery in revenue by 2024. Organisational adjustments implemented in early 2024 have resulted in a leaner, more resilient team, contributing to a reduction in costs for FY24, with further savings anticipated in FY25.

Skyline has strategically enhanced operational efficiency by bringing its communication, marketing, and fundraising activities in-house. This change allows for a more streamlined and focused approach to achieve its goals. With a substantial pipeline of funding applications and bold plans to diversify its fundraising efforts, Skyline is making significant strides towards long-term sustainability.

Diversifying our funding is crucial to ensuring we can continue making a meaningful impact. By expanding our approach to include direct fundraising efforts, we can tap into the generosity and passion of individuals who share our vision for change. This not only strengthens our ability to meet the growing needs of our community but also fosters a collective spirit of support for our mission.

Recent events, such as the October 2024 engagement with Julia Gillard, have introduced influential connections and opened new fundraising opportunities. With these strategic plans and initiatives, the Skyline Education Foundation is on a strong trajectory backed by cash reserves, ensuring ongoing student support. The future looks bright as Skyline continues its mission to empower the next generation and bridge educational gaps across Victoria.

Audited Financial Statement

Category	FY 2024	FY 2023
Income	\$1,133,123	\$1,376,724
Direct Program Expenses	\$935,999	\$1,071,719
Operating Expenses	\$532,716	\$527,140
Profit (Deficit) Before Tax	(\$335,592)	(\$222,135)
Total Expenses	\$1,468,715	\$1,598,859
Net Assests	\$270,173	\$605,765

Thank you to our donors, partners, and wider community of supporters.
We would not be able to do the work that we do without you.

This image is from the 2024 Residential Camp in January, featuring the
Class of 2024 Year 12s and their mentors. Congratulations on completing
Year 12 and graduating, and we look forward to seeing you thrive.

