

# Media Release

**Ingrid Stitt MP**

Minister for Workplace Safety

Minister for Early Childhood



Monday, 30 August 2021

## FAST-TRACKED COURSE OPEN FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS

The Victorian Government is supporting more early childhood educators boost their skills and become early childhood teachers through a fast-tracked university course – helping fill workforce demands in the growing sector.

Minister for Early Childhood Ingrid Stitt today announced applications are now open for the second cohort of the Innovative Initial Teacher Education university program at Deakin University.

Diploma-qualified early childhood educators are encouraged to apply for a spot, which will enable them to compress the three-year Bachelor of Early Childhood Education down to just 18 months through Deakin University's intensive trimester model of study.

Aspiring early childhood teachers will be able to complete the course through an employment-based model – combining paid on-the-job employment at an early childhood service while studying.

Financial support packages of \$30,000 are also available for participating early childhood educators to help cover course fees and materials, as well as help with living expenses while they study.

Early childhood services will also receive direct funding for each student to provide wraparound and mentoring support for educators while they train to become teachers.

Eighty-five students are already studying the tailored course this year at Deakin University and will be ready to join the workforce as teachers in 2022 when Three-Year-Old Kindergarten is rolled out statewide.

The program is part of a \$6.9 million initiative with Deakin University to give educators the opportunity to boost their skills and help to fill the high-priority positions.

For more information about the employment-based pathway of the Bachelor of Early Childhood Education course at Deakin University, visit: [vic.gov.au/make-difference-early-childhood-teaching](https://vic.gov.au/make-difference-early-childhood-teaching).

In an Australian first, the Victorian Government is investing almost \$5 billion over this decade to deliver a fully funded 15 hours of Three-Year-Old Kinder to children across the state – creating 6,000 new early childhood jobs.

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Early Childhood Ingrid Stitt

*"This initiative gives educators the opportunity to upskill and become teachers – progressing their career paths and ensuring there are more teachers ready to deliver Three-Year-Old Kindergarten."*

*"This investment will remove financial barriers and support educators ready to take the next step in their career – boosting their skill set despite the challenges of the pandemic."*