

# Media Release

**Ingrid Stitt MP**

Minister for Workplace Safety  
Minister for Early Childhood



Sunday, 2 January 2022

## FUTURE-PROOFING OUR EARLY CHILDHOOD WORKFORCE

The Andrews Labor Government is supporting aspiring early childhood teachers to boost their skills and delivering a pipeline of quality educators for a growing Victoria, with the expansion of supported employment-based university courses in early childhood education.

Minister for Early Childhood Ingrid Stitt today announced an extra 1,330 places in the *Early Childhood Innovative Initial Teacher Education* program for 2022, future-proofing the local teaching workforce and supporting the rollout of the Labor Government's signature Three-Year-Old Kindergarten reform.

The program provides accelerated entry for 780 diploma-qualified graduates into the early childhood sector through recognition of prior studies and experience, providing flexible learning options and employment support so they can continue working in early childhood as they upskill to become degree-educated teachers.

A further 550 students will experience better placement and mentoring experiences during their early childhood teaching degree as well as professional development for those in the workforce, under the *Early Childhood Professional Practice Partnerships* initiative.

The program will be offered at the University of Melbourne, Victoria University, Deakin University, La Trobe University and the Australian Catholic University.

The Labor Government has invested \$32 million in the *Early Childhood Innovative Initial Teacher Education* program over three years to help build a pipeline of job-ready early childhood teaching workers.

This investment builds on the Government's Australian-first investment of almost \$5 billion to deliver a full 15 hours of Three-Year-Old Kinder to children across the state over this decade, with the statewide rollout of five funded hours of kinder to all three-year-old to be complete at the start of the 2022 school year.

For more information visit [vic.gov.au/innovative-early-childhood-teaching-courses](https://vic.gov.au/innovative-early-childhood-teaching-courses).

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

*"This innovative program allows early childhood educators of all backgrounds to upskill to become qualified teachers and progress their career pathways – supporting the statewide roll-out of Three-Year-Kindergarten in 2022."*

*"There really has never been a more exciting time to get into the early childhood workforce – and I'd encourage anyone thinking about a career in this space to get involved."*

### Quote attributable to Minister for Higher Education Gayle Tierney

*"This valuable program is a great partnership between Government, Victorian universities and industry – delivering a pipeline of highly skilled workers for our growing early childhood sector now and into the future."*