

Media Release

The Hon Ros Spence MP
Minister for Agriculture
Minister for Community Sport
Minister for Carers and Volunteers



Tuesday, 19 March 2024

FUTURE OF VICTORIA'S DISTILLERY INDUSTRY IN SAFE HANDS

Aspiring Victorian distillers now have the opportunity to benefit from a new pilot training program focused on cutting edge distillation techniques and industry safety as part of the \$20 million Distillery Door Program.

The \$1.2 million program education pathway for distillers is being delivered by the National Distilling Institute in collaboration with the Spirits Victoria Association and the Australian Distillers Association. The initial courses will be a Certificate IV in Artisan Fermented Products and micro-credential courses for safety in distilleries.

The first session was held at Starward Distillery in Port Melbourne today and will be followed by sessions at regional distilleries in Geelong, Ballarat, Mornington and the High Country throughout April.

Over the next 18-months, the first round of students will complete up to 22 different subjects where they will gain expertise in areas ranging from how to blend spirits and filter fermented beverages, to how to perform basic safety tests and control food contamination and spoilage.

Further development will involve a Certificate III in Food Processing (Distilling) and funding of up to \$2000 per distillery for staff to attend other micro-credential courses.

Victoria is the distillery capital of the nation with more than 180 distillers that employ over 9,000 people in rewarding jobs across regional and metropolitan Victoria.

This program is part of the \$20 million Distillery Door Program which promotes Victoria's world-class distilling industry through supporting skills development, boosting visitor economy, improving infrastructure and safety, and increasing export capability.

Quote attributable to Minister for Agriculture Ros Spence

"We're investment in the future of distilling and we are thrilled to be partnering with industry leaders to deliver this new course that will set Victorian distillers apart from the rest."

Quote attributable to Member for Albert Park Nina Taylor

"It's great to see top industry bodies coming together to nurture and empower the next generation of distillers."

Quote attributable to Spirits Victoria Association President David Irwin

"Victorian spirits are already globally renowned for the awards they have won on the world stage, but we believe further skills development is vital to safeguarding our industry's future."