

Media Release

The Hon Natalie Hutchins MP
Minister for Government Services
Minister for Treaty and First Peoples
Minister for Prevention of Family Violence
Minister for Women



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BUILDING THE NEXT GENERATION OF CULTURAL HERITAGE LEADERS

A new group of students is stepping up to protect Victoria's Aboriginal cultural heritage, thanks to a unique program backed by the Allan Labor Government.

Minister for Treaty and First Peoples Natalie Hutchins recently met with 15 students beginning La Trobe University's Certificate IV in Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Management, showcasing skills including how to identify and preserve ancient stone tools.

Funded by the Labor Government since 2009, the Certificate IV is a nationally accredited qualification that equips students with the skills and knowledge needed to work in the cultural heritage sector. The course is delivered by Traditional Owners, cultural heritage professionals and university academics.

Students develop the expertise to investigate, identify, describe and conserve Aboriginal places of cultural significance, through on-Country, classroom and skills-based learning – blending Traditional knowledge with academic and industry expertise.

Since 2010, 263 First Nations students have graduated from the Certificate IV. More than 87 per cent have found employment in the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Management sector.

Graduates go on to work in a range of organisations, including Registered Aboriginal Parties – the groups that formally represent Traditional Owners across Victoria – or continue further study through La Trobe University's Bachelor and Master of Archaeology programs.

Protecting Victoria's Aboriginal Cultural Heritage is vital to preserving the state's history and identity, with Aboriginal heritage protected under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*, just as historic buildings and precincts are protected across the state.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Treaty and First Peoples Natalie Hutchins

"Victoria's Aboriginal Cultural Heritage is one of the oldest living cultures on Earth, and we're proud to support the next generation of cultural heritage leaders."

"Our investment is helping Traditional Owners and First Nations students build rewarding careers, while preserving and protecting Aboriginal heritage for all Victorians."

Quote attributable to La Trobe University Vice-Chancellor Professor Theo Farrell

"La Trobe University has an enduring commitment to walk with Indigenous Australians, continuing the process of reconciliation, truth-telling and treaty-making."

Quote attributable to La Trobe University Pro Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous) Associate Professor Michael Donovan

"It is our goal to give back to Indigenous communities, provide excellence in Indigenous scholarship through teaching and research, and be a culturally safe institution where Indigenous staff choose to work and Indigenous students choose to study."

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