



Merri-bek
City Council

VCE Vocational Major

Council Project Opportunities

May 2024



Acknowledgement of Country

Merri-bek City Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people as the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waterways in the area now known as Merri-bek. We pay respect to their Elders past and present as well as to all First Nations communities who significantly contribute to the life of the area.

Purpose

This document is designed to support local educators in the planning and delivery of projects and learning experiences under the VCE Vocational Major curriculum. It provides information on useful community resources and possible project ideas that could be undertaken in collaboration with Merri-bek City Council.

This document and initiative aligns with Outcome 3 (Lifelong Learning and Participation) of [The Children, Young people, and Families Plan 2021-2025](#), by contributing to the following objectives and actions:

3.3 Collaborate with education providers to support quality settings

3.3.1 Build stronger partnerships with primary and secondary schools across Merri-bek

The information in this booklet has been compiled by Merri-bek City Council's Youth Services Team (Merri-bek Youth) and is accurate at the time of writing (March 2024). We envision that project opportunities will change and evolve. As such this document will be updated periodically.

Please contact Liam Walsh, Youth Health and Wellbeing Coordinator, Merri-bek City Council for all enquiries relating to projects and this document at: lwalsh@merri-bek.vic.gov.au

Acknowledgement of Contributions

Thank you to all Council officers and community partners who have recognised the importance of young people's inclusion in civic life by contributing project ideas to this initiative.

1. The Adaptation Game

Learn about how climate change will affect Merri-bek now and in the future.

Develop climate resilience through play.

Developed by Council in partnership with researchers and creatives, The Adaptation Game (TAG) is based on real science about how climate change will affect Merri-bek.

Participants will play out real-world ways to prepare and protect their home, family, community, and environment. It's an innovative way for community members to talk about and respond to the impact of climate change in their neighbourhoods.

You can watch a video of TAG being played on YouTube: [TAG: The First Game](#)

The Opportunity

Community game kits will soon be available via Merri-bek Libraries. These kits are designed so people can play the game in their own homes, community groups and schools.

You could:

- Host an in-class game
- Host a peer-led game for the wider school community
- Create strategies that encourage people to take action after playing the game

Council Project Lead: Zero Carbon

2. Community Litter Collection

Learn skills in event planning and risk assessment.

Engage in a practical activity outdoors, with a visible positive outcome.

Merri-bek City Council funds the Merri Creek Management Committee (MCMC) \$7,000 per year to support the community to self-organise litter collection events.

MCMC provides support in the following ways:

- Safety induction training
- Provision of litter collection equipment
- Education sessions on the impact of litter to the Merri Creek

The Opportunity

After completing a safety induction session with MCMC, you could:

- Develop a detailed litter collection event plan
- Host and participate in a litter collection event at school/in the community
- Analyse collected litter and identify their source (e.g. a slurpee cup from 7 Eleven)

Council Project Lead: Towards Zero Waste

3. Sustainable Period Care

Design a behaviour change initiative to promote greener choices.

Merri-bek City Council offers a subsidy for reusable period products via [Greener Everyday](#). This initiative is part of our efforts towards a zero waste Merri-bek.

More and more households, businesses and councils are facing the urgent challenge of responding to the climate and nature emergency, together.

The strategy aims to engage all members of our community including residents, businesses, schools, local community groups, as well as Council itself, to take action to transition our community to zero carbon and zero waste.

The Opportunity

- Design and deliver a marketing/awareness building campaign to promote the use of reusable period products and the Greener Everyday subsidy to fellow students or the community
- Design a behaviour change initiative identifying possible barriers and enablers
- Identify other examples of gendered waste. What implications are there for inclusion and equality when discussing this topic?

Council Project Lead: Towards Zero Waste

4. Green My Plate

Help reduce landfill in Merri-bek and evaluate the effectiveness of a real-world project.

Green My Plate is a reusable crockery service designed to reduce single use plastic waste from events and public venues ending up in landfill. Merri-bek City Council will trial Green My Plate at the 2024 Glenroy Festival on Sunday 5 May.

The Opportunity

Council will collect data from Glenroy Festival with the aim to demonstrate a reduction of waste as a result of using Green My Plate. Using council's data you could:

- Analyse council's data and write your own evaluation report
- Brainstorm other opportunities within our community where Green My Plate could be implemented
- Explore the feasibility of implementing a reusable crockery system at your school and develop a proposal
- Host an event at your school using reusable crockery to teach your peers about the importance of minimising single use plastic waste.

Council Project Lead: Towards Zero Waste

5. Citizen Science - iNaturalist

Connect with Nature.

Explore and share your observations from the natural world.

We are lucky to have many unique and wonderful nature experiences in Merri-bek. The most well-known examples are the Merri and Moonee Ponds Creek corridors that host many species of plants and animals, wetlands, and opportunities for activities and recreation for our community.

[iNaturalist](#) is a citizen science app that enables community members to contribute to biodiversity science. Contributions are shared with global networks enabling scientists to use your data for research.

The Opportunity

Using iNaturalist and Merri-bek City Council's [Find a Park web tool](#), you could:

- Plan and host a local Bioblitz competition with your school community.
Challenge your peers to find and record as many different species as possible in as many local open spaces as possible. Will your Bioblitz challenge last a day? A weekend? You decide!
- Independently or in small groups you could record your own observations in a specific location over a set timeframe and compare and discuss your findings as a class.
If each group chooses a different park, you could work together as a class to create a biodiversity map of a specific suburb, or the entire Merri-bek area.
- After recording your observations conduct further research into the species you have found including information about their habitats, and conservation considerations.

Council Project Lead: Conservation Programs Team

6. Sustainability in Action with Circular Growth

Want to be a future leader in sustainable practice?

Let us show you how.

Merri-bek City Council has joined forces with a local sustainability agency ([Circular Growth](#)), to teach sustainability practices to our young community members, who will be our future leaders. The program includes hands on practice, grounded in theory. Students will have the opportunity to visit places like recycling and food rescue facilities before completing a workshop on how to discuss climate change in a positive way.

The Opportunity

This immersive program will cover the following topics over 6 sessions:

- Our veggie garden. Starting a school veggie garden with seasonal and fast-growing vegetables.
- Fast fashion. Why am I able to contribute to the problem and solution?
- Recycling. What belongs in each bin? What happens after the bins are collected?
- Fighting food waste. Local solutions for a global issue.
- Energy. What are the forms of renewable energy, and how cool are they?
- Climate Change: A call to Action. How can we communicate it to others effectively?

7. Merri-bek Youth Awareness Day Campaign

Contribute to the conversation.

Advocate for the tomorrow you want to see.

Merri-bek City Council promotes respect for diversity of cultures, religions, and identities. Celebrating days of significance, social awareness, and health promotion are an important first step in building community cohesion and inclusion.

Merri-bek Youth is committed to celebrating the achievements and contributions young people make to our community. We are always looking for opportunities to shine a light on the issues that are important to local young people, by sharing these with the public and other areas of council, we advocate for the inclusion of young people in civic life and decision-making processes.

The Opportunity

Using Diversity Council Australia's calendar of important dates (accessible at: <https://www.dca.org.au/resources/di-planning/di-days-dates>), select a day that builds awareness for a cause that you are passionate about. Capture content to commemorate or promote your chosen date and Merri-bek Youth will help to spread your message far and wide via our social media platforms. You can raise awareness in many ways, the following are just a few ideas to get you started:

- Create a myth-busting reel or meme for Instagram
- Host an in-person event at your school and capture photos
- Develop an infographic using local demographic data to show how many people in the Merri-bek community observe your chosen day or are affected by your social issue
- Write an article or call for action advocating for your chosen cause that can be shared with council.

Council Project Lead: Merri-bek Youth