

Community Colleges Australia Statement on Sustainability and Climate Change

Community Colleges Australia (CCA) acknowledges the [scientific consensus](#) regarding the existence of climate change and the substantial contribution that human population is now making to this via greenhouse gas emissions.

CCA also acknowledges that climate change is one of the Australia's greatest environmental and social challenges. CCA actively supports the global response that is needed to address these challenges.

CCA supports Australia's engagement with the [United Nations Sustainable Development Goals](#), the [Talloires Declaration](#) of tertiary education leaders for sustainable futures, and the [UNESCO programs for sustainability](#).

CCA accepts as an imperative that we and others must work at all levels to preserve the environmental sustainability of the planet. CCA will demonstrate leadership in its own practice, act as an advisor to its adult and community education (ACE) member organisations, and take all reasonable measures to support sustainability efforts at a national level.

CCA believes that ACE organisations have both the opportunity and a responsibility to demonstrate institutional practices that promote operational and educational sustainability and encourage problem-solving and innovation across their student cohorts and the communities they serve in support of climate action based on science.

In practice this means making lifelong learning an inclusive and collaborative experience with sustainable approaches as central parts of how we all live. This process involves envisaging an improved future and taking action to change patterns of behaviour that have led to the degradation of the environment and educating citizens to understand how economic, social and political systems are all interrelated with the environment.

As a peak body comprised of educational organisations, CCA recognises that planning for sustainability is an evolving and iterative practice.

Key Commitments:

CCA will:

- Work with governments to include the fundamental pillars of sustainability and eco-literacy in Australian adult learning programs, aiming to give people holistic and environmentally sustainable skills for life;
- Build awareness of the threat of climate change and use the findings of existing research as a basis for local and national advocacy to effect change to protect our communities and future generations; and
- Participate in and support its members to embrace environmentally sustainable strategies, including:

- A cycle of continuous improvement in greenhouse gas emission reduction and integrated organisational sustainability, including reduced use of fossil fuel energy, increased energy efficiency, use of renewable energy, reduced waste, reduced personal transport emissions and, where possible, purchasing of carbon offsets for electricity and gas and transport (including air travel) and monitoring the carbon footprint of suppliers;
- Providing educational programs and encouraging inquiry for students and the community concerning positive sustainability and innovation practices;
- Building networks, partnerships and/or outreach services which support environmentally sustainable actions and development; and
- Participating in professional development programs that incorporate sustainability elements which support best practice in all areas of teaching, learning and skills development.

Adopted by the Community Colleges Australia Board of Directors
10 February 2020