



SSAF Student Experience Initiative (SEI) Grants

2024 Grant Outcomes

Name	Project Title	2024 Project Description & proposed Outcomes	Allocation
<p>VUM Team Joseph Kingston Matthew Lamb Lawrence Gibbs Matthew Bruinewoud Elliott Vincent Bao Nguyen Joseph Warren Ryan Doan Ali Naqvi</p>	<p>Motorsport 2026 FSAE race car parts & materials</p>	<p>Following the success of VUM’s 2022 car, the team is looking to return to the F-SAE-A competition in 2026 which requires the development of a new vehicle. To allow this, the team is seeking funding to purchase materials and parts for the new car which is currently progressing in the design phase. The purchase of these parts and materials will allow the team to continue to move forward in the design process and to begin realising the designs of the 2026 car, which has been in planning and design since 2023. Purchase of the materials will allow the team to finalise designing and begin the manufacturing process of student designed parts. The parts the team hopes to purchase will greatly assist in the safety and performance of the 2026 car and will enable the students’ designs to be uncompromised. Without this funding, significant time will be required to raise funds and the learning and creativity of the students will be heavily limited by the financial constraints and reduced time availability.</p> <p>The main outcome of the project will be building a new race car for entry into the F-SAE-A competition. Funds to procure the materials and parts will play a substantial role in helping students finalise and realise the design of the 2026 car.</p> <p>Additionally, the funding will allow the students to further develop industry design skills including creating bills of materials, cut lists, and conversion of detailed engineering drawings into physical parts.</p>	<p>\$9940.73</p>



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		<p>Furthermore, with a large public audience the influence of our passion could really help inspire dreams and goals in young minds. Building a race car is a continuous learning opportunity and provides a range of practical engineering and business skills that require the students to collaborate and apply theory from the classroom in an innovative manner. Week to week, students will work with each other to create solutions and provide guidance to each other on tasks and problems, and help each other meet deadlines. Our collaborative approach to developing the car has allowed the club to keep strong bonds between VUM alumni who frequently provide guidance, mentorship, and access to services and equipment for members of the team. Additionally, we have also worked hard to build a rapport with local businesses that have supported us throughout our journey. Completion of the car and attendance to the F-SAE-A event allows us to showcase their contributions as well as our own.</p> <p>Our club has a rich history of students from broad socio-economic backgrounds, many of whom have not had the opportunity to participate in motorsport. By investing in this project, it is hoped that VUM will continue to be able to provide the opportunity for its student members to participate in a world-class motorsport and, in doing so, continue enriching their life experiences.</p>	
Rhiannon Madden	NAIDOC Event	NAIDOC celebrates the cultural histories of both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We are looking at hosting an event that would	\$10,000.00



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<p>Meriki McCrae - Cooper Marcus Brooke</p>		<p>align with this year's theme - Keep the Fire Burning - Blak, Loud & Proud. The details of the event are yet to be established, but we have a few ideas in mind. This event provides students with the opportunity to engage in the significance of NAIDOC by participating in celebrations hosted by our Indigenous Unit, Moondali Balluk, here at Vic Uni. Through these events, we welcome all students and staff to immerse themselves in our culture, deepen their understanding of our history, and educate those who may be less familiar with our traditions.</p>	
<p>Piera Ibrahim Noor Alkazali</p>	<p>Student Advocacy Support Animated Videos</p>	<p>The Student Advocacy at Victoria University (VU) proposes the development of a series of short informative videos aimed at assisting VU students in navigating crucial processes such as preparing for a General or Academic Misconduct meeting, completing a Remission of Debt application, preparing for a Show Cause Panel meeting, lodging a complaint, and submitting a Review of Assessment Outcome. The primary goal of this initiative is to empower VU students with the knowledge and guidance required to develop an understanding of the process to manage their situation and/or independently manage various administrative processes without the necessity of face-to-face or phone consultations with a Student Advocate. The project endeavours to enrich the student experience by furnishing VU students with accessible and timely information via an online platform, thereby diminishing the necessity for in-person and phone appointments with Student Advocates for initial inquiries. By affording students immediate access to this information, the initiative aims to bolster overall support for VU</p>	<p>\$9,900.00</p>



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		<p>students, encouraging a proactive approach to managing administrative processes and potentially hastening the resolution of their concerns. Consequently, VU students will gain access to preliminary information conducive to promoting their health or welfare, aiding them in financial matters, fostering better academic integrity skills, offering guidance on VU's rules, advocating for their interests in accordance with VU policies and procedures, and addressing the specific needs of overseas students concerning welfare, accommodation, and employment. Furthermore, as the anticipated decrease in in-person and phone consultations for routine matters materialises, Student Advocates can devote more time to complex cases, thereby enhancing overall efficiency.</p>	
Amin Eslami	Guardians of Nature	<p>The project "Guardians of Nature" is a hands-on initiative aimed at promoting environmental stewardship, cultural awareness, and community engagement among students, particularly international students, at VU. The project involves organising trips to various national parks in the region, where participants engage in activities centred around environmental conservation and appreciation for Indigenous culture. At the heart of "Guardians of Nature" is the belief that fostering a deeper connection with the natural environment leads to greater respect and responsibility towards its preservation. By taking students on bushwalks through Victoria's national parks, the project provides them with opportunities to immerse themselves in the beauty of nature while actively contributing to its protection. One of the distinctive features of the project is its emphasis on acknowledging and honouring</p>	\$760.00



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		<p>the traditional custodians of the land. Each event begins with an informative session highlighting the Indigenous peoples who have lived on and cared for the land for thousands of years. This acknowledgment not only pays respect to Indigenous culture but also underscores the importance of learning from and preserving traditional ecological knowledge. The primary activity of the "Guardians of Nature" project is rubbish collection during bushwalks. Participants are equipped with gloves and bags as they embark on guided walks through the parks. Along the way, they collect litter and debris, helping to clean up the natural environment and mitigate the harmful impacts of pollution on wildlife and ecosystems. This hands-on experience instils a sense of responsibility and ownership over the places visited, empowering participants to become active stewards of the environment. Participating in the "Guardians of Nature" project offers students a transformative experience with a range of benefits: Firstly, students gain environmental awareness and education through hands-on activities like bushwalks and rubbish collection. They learn about local ecosystems, flora, and fauna, fostering a deeper understanding of environmental issues and sustainable living practices. Secondly, the project promotes cultural appreciation and respect by acknowledging the traditional custodians of the land at the beginning of each event. This fosters an understanding of Indigenous cultures, traditions, and their profound connection to the environment. Engaging in community-driven conservation efforts allows students to actively contribute to</p>	
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		<p>environmental preservation. By participating in rubbish collection activities, they develop a sense of responsibility towards the environment and learn the importance of sustainable practices. Moreover, the project encourages networking and community engagement. Students connect with like-minded peers who share their passion for environmental conservation and cultural appreciation, fostering friendships and a supportive community. Participating in outdoor activities also promotes physical and mental well-being. Spending time in nature, engaging in physical activity, and connecting with peers have been shown to reduce stress, enhance mood, and improve overall well-being. Additionally, the project fosters personal growth as students develop leadership skills, teamwork abilities, and problem-solving capabilities. They gain confidence in their ability to make a positive impact and become empowered to advocate for environmental and cultural causes. Finally, engaging in activities that promote environmental sustainability and cultural understanding aligns with the principles of global citizenship. Students develop a sense of responsibility towards the planet and its diverse cultures, preparing them to be informed, compassionate, and actively engaged global citizens.</p>	
Nicole Carrie	VU Ready Bootcamp	<p>This two-day program aims to facilitate students' academic transition to university by enhancing their awareness in academic writing, time management, and communication skills. Additionally, it seeks to raise awareness of the suite of VU support services and foster critical peer-to-</p>	\$2961.08



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		<p>peer and student-staff connections early in the students' transition journey. This program is planned to be delivered 1-2 weeks prior to the start of S2B1 (mid-July 2024). The program consists of four intensive 3-hour workshops spread across two days at City Towers. It is designed to familiarise students with university life and equip them with the necessary skills and strategies to succeed at Victoria University. Participants will enjoy a complimentary lunch each day of the program. While the program is predominantly targeted at commencing undergraduate and masters students, it will also be open to all VU students (HE and TAFE) seeking to enhance their academic skills. In addition, a promotional campaign will target students from low-SES backgrounds, regional/remote areas, Indigenous students, and students with ESL backgrounds to increase their participation rates in this program. The project aims to achieve the following outcomes: 1. Improve learning outcomes for students by boosting their academic skills and confidence in handling their first assignments. 2. Foster a sense of belonging by creating structured networking opportunities for students to interact with their peers, student mentors, and VU staff. 3. Facilitate a smoother transition to university life by raising awareness of student support services, building confidence and ability to meet the demands and challenges of their first semester of study, and increasing the sense of belonging by building staff and peer-to-peer networks.</p>	
<p>Lewis Kidson Kate Benesovsky</p>	<p>Arts Fest 2024</p>	<p>Arts Fest, designed by the Student Life team, is a new festival celebrating VU students' artistic talents on campus! The artistic talent</p>	<p>\$8,300.00</p>



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<p>Nix Pinferi Daisy Spiteri Liana Gainutdinova</p>		<p>and culture in the western suburbs of Melbourne are vibrant and extensive, with much growing talent located on VU campuses from current students. The festival aims to give students of all disciplines the platform to showcase their artistic talents, including but not limited to visual arts, music, and film, while supporting them to develop and grow. Our team plans to run three events across our Higher Education campuses, giving students an opportunity to showcase their classwork on campus. Each campus will have a variety of activities and small refreshments to draw students in. All students will be welcome to join and participate in the event for free. We aim to target three key creative avenues – music performance, visual art, and film. The event will go all week, with 3 key events: 1. Film – Student films will be publicly screened on campus to show diverse talent in a chilled-out lunchtime environment. This will involve tables and chairs set up in viewing areas, with free food being provided on one day as a central piece of the festival. 2. Art – A week-long showcase of student pieces. As part of this, we will also host an opening, which will give all of the students featured an opportunity to come together with music and food. This will be an art gallery-type setting, converting an existing space into an area that students can explore while on campus. Pending interest, this may also be set up at multiple campuses or go on a small tour from campus to campus. 3. Music – Live student musicians will partake in a mini battle of the bands-style event to connect VU Kindred to the rest of the students. This will take place on a specific day with free food available for</p>	
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		<p>students who want to come and watch. 4. Craft & arts fair-style activities to promote students undertaking art regardless of their degree. These will be in a more pop-up format and work to promote the main three events. These pop-ups could also take place in the lead-up to the event to generate buzz. 5. Involvement from relevant external VU partners, such as Footscray Community Arts. 6. Potential for a special edition of Twilight cinema centred around student and alumni films.</p> <p>Benefit to the students attending – This will be of huge benefit to the students of VU, not only in that it is a free and enjoyable event but also that it contributes overall to the culture of VU, creating an environment of respect and genuine interest in their studies. It also gives students an opportunity to connect with like-minded students in all disciplines.</p> <p>Benefits to the students conducting activities – For the students conducting activities, they will have an opportunity to gain exposure and engagement with their works in a direct and real-world context. The primary goal of this event is to give those participating students a chance to show their works and have that work celebrated by the VU community.</p>	
<p>Elisse Baitz Ashlie Thorburn Mickey Sajwan</p>	<p>Guest Speaker Sessions</p>	<p>Our project aims to facilitate guest speaker sessions focused on fostering networking skills among students. These sessions serve as invaluable opportunities to cultivate and leverage personal networks, fostering relationships and connections within professional circles. Our survey findings revealed a demand among students, with 90% expressing a strong preference for guest speaker sessions combined</p>	<p>\$4556.00</p>



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		<p>with networking opportunities. This clear indication highlights the interest among students to actively enhance their leadership skills. By providing a platform for students to engage in self-promotion, refine communication abilities, and enhance confidence, this initiative equips them with essential skills for success in their future endeavours. Our project is dedicated to guiding students towards leadership excellence, refining their interpersonal skills, and facilitating invaluable networking opportunities. Through engaging sessions, participants will gain insights into effective leadership practices while honing their ability to communicate and collaborate effectively. These sessions serve as platforms for students to connect with peers and leaders from Victoria University (VU) and the wider community, fostering meaningful relationships that can support their academic and career aspirations. Students have expressed that the Student Leadership Program is missing “getting in important and influential guest speakers.” This exposure that the students are missing to diverse perspectives will allow personal growth and innovation, equipping students to navigate challenges and seize opportunities. Furthermore, personalized Q&A sessions with speakers offer individualized mentorship, empowering students to tailor their learning experience to their unique interests and goals. Ultimately, our project aims to equip students with the skills, connections, and perspectives necessary to thrive academically, professionally, and personally.</p>	
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<p>Rohenna Young</p>	<p>Women's Self Defence Sessions</p>	<p>Empower yourself with confidence and safety through our Women's Self-Defence Classes. In a supportive and encouraging environment, you'll learn practical techniques to protect yourself in real-life situations. Our expert instructors will guide you through effective strategies, combining physical skills with mental awareness to ensure you feel secure in any setting. Whether you're a beginner or looking to enhance your skills, join us to build strength, resilience, and peace of mind. Each session will have a theme that combines a real-life scenario, how to navigate this to minimize dangerous situations, and basic self-defence moves, including blocks, strikes, and breakouts. No prior experience is required. Sessions will comprise a review of the preceding week, theory, and practice, so while you will get the most out of attending multiple or all sessions, you can elect which ones you book and participate in.</p> <p>Sessions: 1. Stages of Self Defence – September 4th 2. Moving between Points of Safety – September 11th 3. Being Safe on a Night Out – September 18th 4. Using Transportation Safely – October 2nd 5. Being Safe on Holidays – October 9th 6. Prioritising Safety - Recap – October 16th</p>	<p>\$6500.00</p>
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<p>Nardo Wai Bibi Fatema Mousavi Tanishq Samant Loandy Jordan</p>	<p>Aroha Community Cookbook Project</p>	<p>Our VU communities host a rich tapestry of diverse backgrounds, including international students, refugees, and asylum seekers seeking a safer environment and better opportunities in Australia. Unfortunately, many face challenges settling in due to disconnection from their culture, lack of support, unemployment, and difficulties accessing essential services. The Aroha Community Cookbook Project aims to address these issues and foster a sense of belonging and community by celebrating life and love for food. This project is initiated by student leaders, who are passionate about bringing together native and refugee populations in Melbourne through the shared experiences of food and stories. We will create a welcoming atmosphere by sharing cuisines and comfort food through recipes, cookbooks, and cooking videos. We will invite participants from diverse regions such as China, Iraq, Congo, India, Syria, Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Iran, and more, not only to share their cultural cuisine but also their stories of hardship, healing, and love for life. This project transcends culinary experiences, weaving pieces of history into the flavours of their cultures, and reshaping the concept of cuisines without borders. We strive to build connections, celebrate differences, and give back to the community through the project's proceeds. Our goal is to enable voices that have experienced trauma and healing to be heard and appreciated through the medium of cuisine. The bridge between local and foreign populations will highlight similarities and differences, creating a friendly, safe, and inclusive space. To achieve our goal, this project will be divided into three main tasks: 1) Create the</p>	<p>\$9,932.20</p>
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		<p>cookbook: We will invite student participants to contribute recipes of their cultural cuisines and share personal stories. We also aim to produce videos/audio that can be embedded into the cookbook to enhance the human connections between the participants and the audience. The final product of the cookbook will then be distributed to the VU Community. 2) Organise cooking classes: We will organise cooking classes as a recreational and fun activity that allows students to practice their culinary skills, make new friends, and network. 3) Encourage career development: The project team will work closely with the participants and provide support to ensure they receive support and mentoring that help with career development. This part will be seeking assistance from Student Mentors and collaborating. On the other hand, we plan to provide a Food Handling Certificate course for participants, which will help extend their skills and improve employability. Our team hopes to collaborate with students and staff from different student services teams at VU, particularly the Student Mentors from Learning Hub, as well as the Student Life team and VUSU committees. With the goal of achieving the following objectives, which include: 1) Enhancing English writing and verbal skills through storytelling sessions with Student Mentor support. 2) Fostering a positive and inclusive environment for students new to the local community by encouraging the participants to join the project’s activities. 3) Building relationships through similarity of taste, habits, and childhood. 4) Improve the mental health and well-being of students by sharing experiences and hardships.</p>	
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		5) Encouraging independence and confidence that improves employability and leadership skills. 6) Share knowledge on culinary, culture, history, and food nutrients from the process.	
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