



**Student Leadership
Conference**

**Leading Forward:
Purpose, People and
the Power to Adapt**

2026 Program



**VICTORIA
UNIVERSITY**

*Student
LIFE*

**SSAF
FUNDED**



Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Ancestors, Elders and families of the Kulin Nation (Melbourne Campuses), the Eora Nation (Sydney Campus) and the Yulara/Yugarapul and Turrbal Nation (Brisbane Campus) who are the traditional owners of University land. As we share our own knowledge practices within the University may we pay respect to the deep knowledge embedded within the Aboriginal community and recognise their ownership of Country.

We acknowledge that the land on which we meet, learn and share knowledge is a place of age old ceremonies of celebration, initiation and renewal and that the Traditional Owners' living culture and practices have a unique role in the life of this region.

To learn more, please contact the Moondani Balluk Academic Unit on +61 3 9919 2836 or Moondani.Balluk@vu.edu.au.



Welcome

The Student Leadership Conference is Victoria University's flagship student leadership event. This annual one-day event is an opportunity for you to develop your leadership skills and to grow your professional networks by hearing from inspirational keynote speakers, participating in interactive workshops and connecting with peers and community leaders.

Since 2010 the Student Leadership Conference has inspired and empowered VU students just like you to learn more about themselves, cultivate a growth mindset, seek out opportunities, take risks, learn and adapt and take on leadership roles within VU and beyond.

Our theme for this year's conference is **Leading Forward: Purpose, People and the Power to Adapt**. The conference aims to:

- ◆ strengthen students' ability to lead with purpose, by clarifying their values, building confidence and translating ideas into meaningful action
- ◆ help students understand and navigate current and future trends
- ◆ adapt and lead through complexity, by building resilience, navigating uncertainty and responding effectively to real-world challenges and change

This year's conference will explore leadership practices that put people first, and empower you to empower others.

Victoria University strives to support our students to shape not only their own futures but also the wider world in which they live. We have a deep and unwavering commitment to inclusion, respectful relationships and diversity. VU is a place where everyone is supported to realise their potential and aspirations.

Our 2026 Student Leadership Conference will help you to realise your leadership potential. There will be occasions to listen, reflect and learn by doing, as well as network, make friends and get outside your comfort zone.



Darrel Caulfield
Chief Student Officer



Order of Proceedings

Time	Program Component	Presenter
8.30AM	Registration & Breakfast	
9.30AM	Acknowledgement of Country & Welcome	Hoor Alagouz Student Leadership Assistant, Student Life & Leadership Stef Yixin Student Leadership Assistant, Student Life & Leadership
9.40AM	Opening Address	Cr Mohamed Semra Mayor of Maribyrnong
9.55AM	Networking session	
10.15AM	Group Photo & Transition to Workshops	
10:30AM	Morning Workshop Session (choose one)	
	'Find Your Voice: Show Up With Clarity in Networking, Applications and Interviews'	Annique Teycheney Careers Consultant, Victoria University
	'Think like an Entrepreneur - A Masterclass with Australia's Leading Gen Z CEO'	Jahin Tanvir CEO, Australian School of Entrepreneurship
	'Leading When It's Messy'	Helen Pitman MBA Practice Operations & Growth Leader (Healthcare)
12.10PM	Lunch LinkedIn professional headshot	

Order of proceedings continued on page 2.

Time	Program Component	Presenter
1.15PM	Afternoon Workshop Sessions (choose one)	
	‘15 Years of Getting Shit Done: What Building a Brand Taught Me About Life’	Adam Jelic Founder & Managing Director, MiGOALS
	‘Networking with Confidence’	Josh Farr Founder, Campus Consultancy #1 Amazon Best-Selling Author & 2x TEDx Speaker
	‘From Student to Changemaker’	Mahsa Nabizada Producer, ABC Education & Youth Advocate
2.45PM	Break	
3.05PM	Closing Keynote ‘The Courage to Begin Before You Feel Ready’	Akec Makur Chuot Former AFLW Player, Creator and Sports Commentator
3.50PM	Closing Remarks & Thank You	
4.00PM	Post Conference Networking Event Music, drinks, canapés & photo booth	
5.30PM	Event Concludes	

Your MCs



Hoor Alagouz

(she/her)

Student Leadership Assistant, Student Life & Leadership

An enthusiastic Leadership Assistant for 2026, Hoor brings a global perspective shaped by her experience as an international learner. Currently pursuing a Bachelor of Biomedical Science, she's developing not only professional expertise but also the skills to navigate the challenges and opportunities of the real world.

Driven by a passion for growth and collaboration, she is dedicated to supporting her peers in building confidence, exploring her potential, and strengthening their leadership capabilities. Her approach focuses on fostering an inclusive and engaging environment where students feel encouraged to step forward and make an impact.

Through her role, she aims to contribute to a vibrant and supportive community, creating meaningful experiences that inspire both personal and professional development. She looks forward to connecting with others, sharing ideas, and making the journey ahead both memorable and rewarding.



Stef Yixin

(she/her)

Student Leadership Assistant, Student Life & Leadership

Stef Yixin Li is a Master of Education student at Victoria University, with a multifaceted background in teaching, marketing, and entrepreneurship. She comes from Chongqing – a dynamic city renowned for its fiery hotpot and vibrant urban culture.

Bringing a multidisciplinary perspective to leadership and learning, Stef is deeply passionate about lifelong education, personal growth, and building meaningful connections. She believes that everyone is both a teacher and a learner.

The LEAD Program at VU has played a pivotal role in her leadership journey – strengthening her confidence, broadening her perspective, and connecting her with a diverse and inspiring community. Through leadership, Stef aims to bridge cultures, ideas and people, transforming learning into action and collaboration into meaningful impact.

Outside of her studies, Stef enjoys outdoor activities, badminton, music, Zumba, travel, art galleries and exploring culture and history. She values quality time with family and friends and thrives on connecting with people from all walks of life.

Opening Address



Cr Mohamed Semra

(he/him)

Mayor of Maribyrnong

“From Refugee to Mayor: How values, representation and community shapes inclusive leadership”

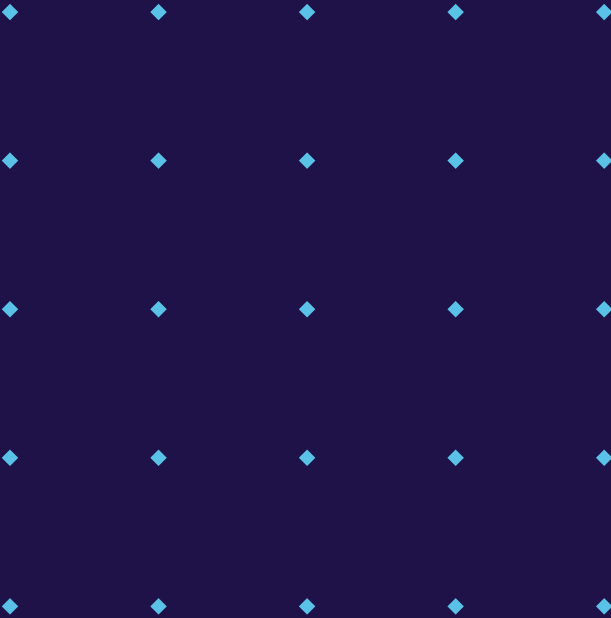
Cr Mohamed Semra was first elected to council in 2024, having built a strong reputation as a human rights advocate and social entrepreneur dedicated to building the leadership capacity of young people across Melbourne’s West. He was elected Mayor in November 2025; the first person of Sub-Saharan heritage to hold that title in Australia.

A Maidstone resident since early childhood, Mohamed is the Founder and CEO of Endeavour Youth Australia and embodies the organisation’s aim to diversify the next generation of Australian leaders. He is also Chair of Melbourne Sudanese Youth, a Victorian African Communities Committee board member, and a Humanitarian Affairs Asia peace advocate.

His previous advocacy roles include his membership of the Maribyrnong Youth Advisory Committee. In 2021, he received the Liberty Victoria Young Voltaire Human Rights Award and the Maribyrnong City Council Youth Leadership Award. In 2023, he received a nomination for Young Australian of the Year and in 2025 he was named Young Victorian of the Year.

Mohamed aims to build cultural diversity and youth representation in political leadership and improve community participation in local government decision-making. His favourite things about Maribyrnong are its people, community connectedness, parks, and the vibrancy of our small businesses.

Morning Workshops



Annique Teycheney *(she/her)*

Careers Consultant, Victoria University

Annique Teycheney is a Career Consultant at Victoria University, where she supports individuals to build self-awareness, confidence and job-readiness – including interviews and LinkedIn – so they can step into opportunities with clarity.

Having navigated her own non-linear career path, she brings both professional expertise and real-life insight, acting as a practical guide and personal cheerleader for those who feel stuck or unsure about their next step.



Workshop

‘Find Your Voice: Show Up With Clarity in Networking, Applications and Interviews’

This interactive session is a safe, supportive space to try things out, have real conversations, and build confidence without pressure. You’ll get clearer on your strengths, practise talking about yourself, and learn how to show up in networking, job applications and interviews without sounding generic. We’ll also update a LinkedIn profile together in real time so you can see how simple it can be. You’ll leave with practical steps you can use, and the confidence to take the next step, even if you don’t feel ready yet.



Jahin Tanvir *(he/him)*

CEO, Australian School of Entrepreneurship

Jahin Tanvir is the CEO of the Australian School of Entrepreneurship, Australia's largest soft skills training provider. Jahin is a 3-time TEDx speaker, board director, and was named on the 40 under 40 Most Influential Asian-Australians for 2022, at the age of 21.



As an award-winning advocate for young people, and diversity and inclusion, Jahin was named a 2022 Young Australian of the Year finalist and was the 2021 Young Canberra Citizen of the Year in Individual Community Service. He was born in Dhaka, Bangladesh, and moved to Australia in 2003.

jahintanvir.com



[linkedin.com/in/jahintanvir](https://www.linkedin.com/in/jahintanvir)

Workshop

'Think Like an Entrepreneur - A Masterclass with Australia's Leading Gen Z CEO'

Forget boring leadership lectures! This is the real deal. In this energising, hands-on workshop, you will learn what it takes to lead in 2026 and beyond from one of Australia's youngest CEOs: a Gen Z leader who's been there, done that, and is helping thousands of young people do the same. We will dive into how to stay calm under pressure, lead through uncertainty, and bring people together with purpose. Whether you are managing a group project, leading a student club, or planning your future career, this session will give you practical tools, real talk, and the confidence to lead with impact.

Helen Pitman (*she/her*)

MBA

Practice Operations & Growth Leader (Healthcare)

Helen Pitman is a healthcare leader, facilitator and founder who works at the intersection of systems, people and real-world change. She has held Director-level roles within one of Australia's leading public health services, focusing on patient safety, consumer engagement and improving how services respond to lived experience.

Helen is the founder of Stagewares, a platform supporting the performing arts community, and co-founder of ARC, a women's underwear concept designed to support confidence in everyday movement.

Diagnosed with ADHD at 40, after completing her studies at Victoria University, Helen brings a practical, flexible approach to leadership – helping others navigate complexity, back their ideas and take action. She believes leadership isn't about having the answers, it's about having the courage to start.

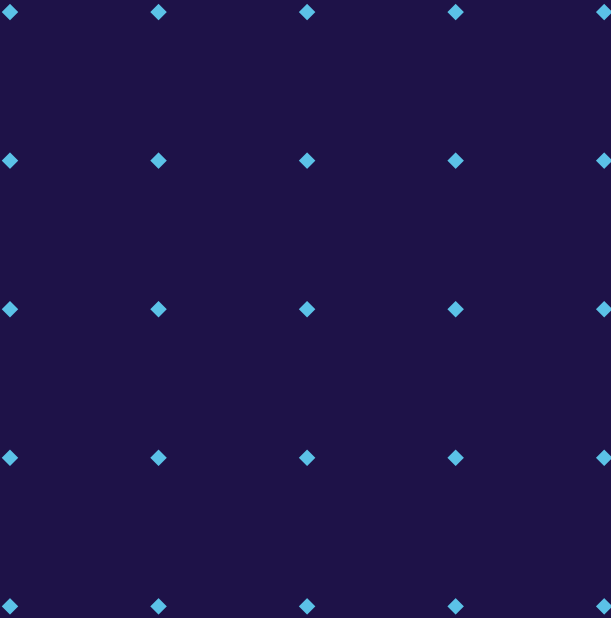


Workshop

‘Leading When It’s Messy’

In a world that often rewards conformity, thinking differently can be your greatest leadership asset. In this Interactive workshop, Helen Pitman, healthcare leader, entrepreneur and founder, shares how navigating complexity with an ADHD lens has shaped her approach to leadership, problem-solving and resilience. Through real-world insights and hands-on activities, participants will explore how to reframe challenges, back their ideas and lead with courage, even without having all the answers. Come ready to think differently, connect with your own leadership strengths, and discover how your unique perspective can drive meaningful change.

Afternoon Workshops



Adam Jelic *(he/him)*
Founder & Managing Director,
MiGOALS

Adam Jelic is the founder of MiGOALS, Australia’s leading empowering stationary brand. What started as one diary designed to help people find their purpose has grown over 15 years into a global brand stocked in 600+ stores worldwide, with a passionate community of “Goal Diggers” who use MiGOALS to get clear, take action, and Get Shit Done.



Adam’s mission is simple: empower everyday people to stop dreaming and start doing.

Workshop

‘15 Years of Getting Shit Done: What Building a Brand Taught Me About Life’

What does it really take to build something from nothing? MiGOALS founder Adam Jelic shares the real lessons from 15+ years of building a global brand, the setbacks, the breakthroughs, and the mindset shifts that made it all possible. In a world of AI, uncertainty, and endless noise, Adam shows students how to cut through the overwhelm, back themselves, and take meaningful action. You’ll walk away with clarity on your values and strengths, a practical framework for setting goals you’ll actually stick to, and real-world proof that ordinary people can build extraordinary things.



Josh Farr *(he/him)*

**Founder, Campus Consultancy | #1
Amazon Best-Selling Author & 2x
TEDx Speaker**

Josh Farr is the Founder of Campus Consultancy, a #1 Amazon Best-Selling Author, 2x TEDx Speaker, and recognised LinkedIn Top Voice in Leadership Development. Over the past 9 years, Josh has delivered 1,500+ workshops to more than 100,000 students across 40+ universities, equipping student leaders with the confidence, clarity, and skills to excel.

Beyond the stage, Josh is a podcast host of the #1 student leadership podcast in Australia called “Better Student Leaders”, interviewing CEOs, University Vice Chancellors, Olympians and leaders across all sectors to share wisdom, tips and tricks.

His mission is simple: to help you connect with confidence, lead with clarity, and create the future you deserve. New in 2026, he will commence his PhD endeavouring to prove - once and for all - that what university student leaders do outside the classroom is the key to university, career and life success.



Workshop

‘Networking With Confidence’

VU students and leaders create impact through conversations. In this highly practical workshop, you will learn how to confidently start, sustain and strengthen professional relationships, while practising in a safe, supportive environment with real-time feedback. Through structured activities, role plays and guided reflection, you will leave feeling clearer, calmer and more capable in any networking setting. Whether you are on campus, at an industry event, or stepping into your first job, this session will give you the tools and confidence to connect with purpose.

Mahsa Nabizada *(she/her)*

Producer, ABC | Education & Youth Advocate

Mahsa Nabizada is an Afghan-Australian based in Melbourne, passionate about education, storytelling, leadership and gender equity. With a background in psychology and a strong interest in human behaviour, she is driven by a commitment to creating spaces where young people feel heard and empowered.



She works in media with the ABC and with Embrace Education, a Melbourne-based not-for-profit supporting students. Mahsa also contributes to government and non-government advisory boards, bringing youth perspectives into decision-making spaces, and focuses on helping young people build confidence, explore their curiosity, and turn their experiences into meaningful change.

Workshop

‘From Student to Changemaker’

We all have the potential to create change, but how do we start? In this interactive session, Afghan-Australian storyteller and ABC producer Mahsa Nabizada takes you on a journey from student to changemaker. Through storytelling, communication and real-world insights, you will learn how to navigate opportunities, build networks, and turn your interests into impact. This session will encourage you to explore your curiosity, step into leadership, and take action in ways that feel authentic to you.



Keynote Presentation

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Akec Makur Chuot *(she/her)* Former AFLW Footballer & Human Rights Advocate

Akec Makur Chuot is a former AFLW player, media personality, speaker, and entrepreneur whose journey reflects resilience, identity, and impact. Born in South Sudan and raised in Kakuma Refugee Camp, she resettled in Australia and became the first African woman drafted into the AFLW. Across a six-season career, she played for Fremantle, Richmond, and Hawthorn.

Today, Akec is a commentator, content creator, and advocate for diversity and inclusion, using her platform to amplify underrepresented voices. Passionated about storytelling and empowerment, she continues to inspire the next generation to dream boldly and create their own opportunities.

This keynote empowers students to navigate uncertainty with confidence and purpose. Through a powerful personal journey from refugee camp to professional sport and leadership, the session explores resilience, mindset, identity, and the power of saying yes before you feel ready.

Students will gain practical tools to reframe fear, adapt to change, and step into leadership with authenticity, leaving with greater clarity, confidence, and a renewed belief in their ability to create opportunities, take action, and lead forward.



Closing Keynote

‘The Courage to Begin Before You Feel Ready’

This keynote empowers students to navigate uncertainty with confidence and purpose. Through a powerful personal journey from refugee camp to professional sport and leadership, the session explores resilience, mindset, identity, and the power of saying yes before you feel ready. Students will gain practical tools to reframe fear, adapt to change, and step into leadership with authenticity. Through reflection and interactive engagement, they will leave with greater clarity, confidence, and a renewed belief in their ability to create opportunities, take action, and lead forward in an ever-changing world.



Thank you for joining us!

To find out more about the Student Leadership Program, click the button below or visit vu.edu.au/student-leadership

FIND OUT MORE

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