A TOOLKIT FOR YOUTH ECO-ACTION

THE REGENERATIVE CITY LIVING LAB

Edited by Alison Baker, Jean Hopman and Amy Quayle

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY

STREAT

About

This book compiles a series of toolkits to support youth eco-action lived through the Regenerative City Living Lab—a collective of peopled and knowledge in Melbourne's West and surrounding areas.

A TOOLKIT FOR YOUTH ECO-ACTION

THE REGENERATIVE CITY LIVING LAB

Edited by
Alison Baker,
Jean Hopman and
Amy Quayle

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY

STREAT

Acknowledgements

These toolkits are based on work in collaboration with these people:

Victoria University
Associate Professor Debra Smith, Associate Professor Alison Baker, Karen Jackson, Dr Amy Quayle, Dr Daniel Ooi, Dr Jean Hopman, Laura Main, Dr Jora Broerse, Jaime Cuellar Sarmiento, Megan O'Shea, Thomas Denning & Ella White.

STREAT
Rebecca Scott OAM, Fiona Meighan MAPS & Dr Kate Barrelle

Footscray High School- The Farm
Jak Dunstan

Toolkit authors:

Regen Toolkit 01
Content: Associate Professor Alison Baker (VU), Dr Jean Hopman (VU), Dr Amy Quayle (VU)
Graphic Design: Associate Professor Alison Baker (VU), Dr Jean Hopman (VU), Dr Amy Quayle (VU)
Suggested reference:
Baker, A., Hopman, J. & Quayle, A. (2023). Regen Toolkit 01: Regenerative City Syllabus. In A. Baker, J. Hopman & A. Quayle (Eds), A Toolkit for Youth Eco-Action. Victoria University.

Regen Toolkit 02
Content: Associate Professor Ali Baker (VU)
Graphic design: Associate Professor Ali Baker
Suggested reference:
Baker, A. (2023). Regen Toolkit 02: Stories of Place, Stories of Us. In A. Baker, J. Hopman & A. Quayle (Eds), A Toolkit for Youth Eco-Action: The Regenerative City Living Lab. Victoria University.

Regen Toolkit 03
Content: Dr Jean Hopman (VU), with Fiona Meighan (STREAT)
Graphic design: Dr Jean Hopman
Suggested reference:
Hopman, J. with Meighan, F. (2023). Regen Toolkit 03: Regreening Campus. In A. Baker, J. Hopman & A. Quayle (Eds), A Toolkit for Youth Eco-Action: The Regenerative City Living Lab. Victoria University.

Regen Toolkit 04
Content: Fiona Meighan (STREAT)
Graphic design: Ella White (VU)
Suggested reference:
Meighan, F. (2023). Regen Toolkit 04: Waste as a Resource. In A. Baker, J. Hopman & A. Quayle (Eds), A Toolkit for Youth Eco-Action: The Regenerative City Living Lab. Victoria University.

Regen Toolkit 05
Content: Dr Amy Quayle (VU) & Associate Professor Ali Baker (VU)
Graphic design: Dr Amy Quayle
Suggested reference:
Quayle, A. & Baker, A. (2023). Regen Toolkit 05: Community Based Research. In A. Baker, J. Hopman & A. Quayle (Eds), A Toolkit for Youth Eco-Action: The Regenerative City Living Lab. Victoria University.

Regen Toolkit 06
Content: Thomas Denning (VU)
Graphic design: Thomas Denning
Suggested reference:
Denning, T. (2023). Regen Toolkit 06: Social Media for Action. In A. Baker, J. Hopman & A. Quayle (Eds), A Toolkit for Youth Eco-Action: The Regenerative City Living Lab. Victoria University.

Acknowledgment of Country

🎧 *Listen now*

Victoria University (VU) acknowledges, honours, recognises and respects the Ancestors, Elders and families of the Boonwurrung, Woiwurrung (Wurundjeri) and Wadawurrung (Wathaurung) people of the Kulin Nation on our Melbourne Campuses. These groups are the custodians of University land and have been for many centuries.

It is important that staff, students and visitors understand and respect the significance of recognising the traditional owners of University land. This is important because 'White Australia has a Black History' and Aboriginal people had a sophisticated set of laws and governance arrangements for many thousands of years before being invaded by the British. There were 500 language groups in Australia and each language group had and has a deep spiritual and physical connection to Country.

Country takes in everything within the landscape – landforms, waters, air, trees, rocks, plants, animals, foods, medicines, minerals, stories and special places. People have custodial responsibilities to care for their Country, to ensure that it continues in proper order and provides physical sustenance and spiritual nourishment. These custodial relationships may determine who can speak for particular Country.

(VU Acknowledgement of Country)

We (STREAT) respectfully acknowledge that every street we operate on is on the traditional lands of the Kulin Nation. We will continue to honour this, to pay our respects to their elders past and present and to tread gently on their land. We are allies in their fight for justice and reconciliation.

Table of Contents

01

Regen Toolkit 01:
Regenerative
City Syllabus

02

Regen Toolkit 02:
Stories of Place,
Stories of Us

03

Regen Toolkit 03:
Regreening
Campus

04

Regen Toolkit 04:
Waste as a
Resource

05

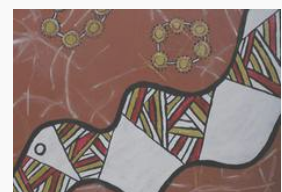Regen Toolkit 05:
Community
Based Research

06

Regen Toolkit 06:
Social Media for
Action

REGEN TOOLKIT

01

Regenerative City Syllabus

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY

STREAT

Regenerative City Syllabus

An introduction
to the
Regenerative
City Living Lab
Project and our
toolkits.

By Alison Baker, Jean Hopman & Amy Quayle

Table of Contents

01 About this toolkit

This toolkit introduces the Regenerative City Living Lab (RCLL) project and the toolkits that have been developed in association with this project and their purpose.

The RCLL project was led by Victoria University (VU) in 2021-2022 and in partnership with Social Enterprise STREAT. The project was funded by the Victorian State Government through the VU RISE (Recover, Innovate, Sustain and Evolve) initiative, which sought to conduct applied research in partnership with industry, community and government in the west of Melbourne to create solutions and deliver impact that will support our region to respond to the challenges of today's world.

The RCLL was one of the four Stronger Communities Innovation Hub programs. The overall aim of the Stronger Communities Innovation Hub was to improve health, wellbeing and resilience of socially disadvantaged communities in Melbourne's west.

The overall purpose of the RCLL was to leverage regenerative food systems to innovatively grow ways of belonging, nourishing, learning and thriving.

This toolkit is part of a larger toolkit family and is often linked to other components within the family. The following diagram represents the connection between the toolkits.

A syllabus - An invitation

A syllabus is a an outline, a course map — it provides you with a blueprint. Often given at the start of a learning journey, a syllabus serves as a guide and a resource, mapping out different elements. This toolkit aims to do the same. It seeks to provide you with background — what drove the RCLL and what values and frameworks underpin it. We cover the types of challenge areas and issues, the projects that grew from those and how this has informed the development of an eclectic collection of ideas, approaches, theory, case studies, examples, guides and resources that created a complex and dynamic learning eco-system. Like any good syllabus we have a reading list through the Insights Library and a Living Glossary that is constantly evolving.

Our hope is that you engage with these as you wish — whether that is from start to finish of each toolkit or jumping around as you trace the interwoven concepts, ideas and stories or perhaps you get lost in the interactive links, going down rabbit holes of knowledge, action and inspiration. Or you might just be here for the stories and that is OK too.

WHAT IS THE RCLL?

02

What is the Regenerative City Living Lab?
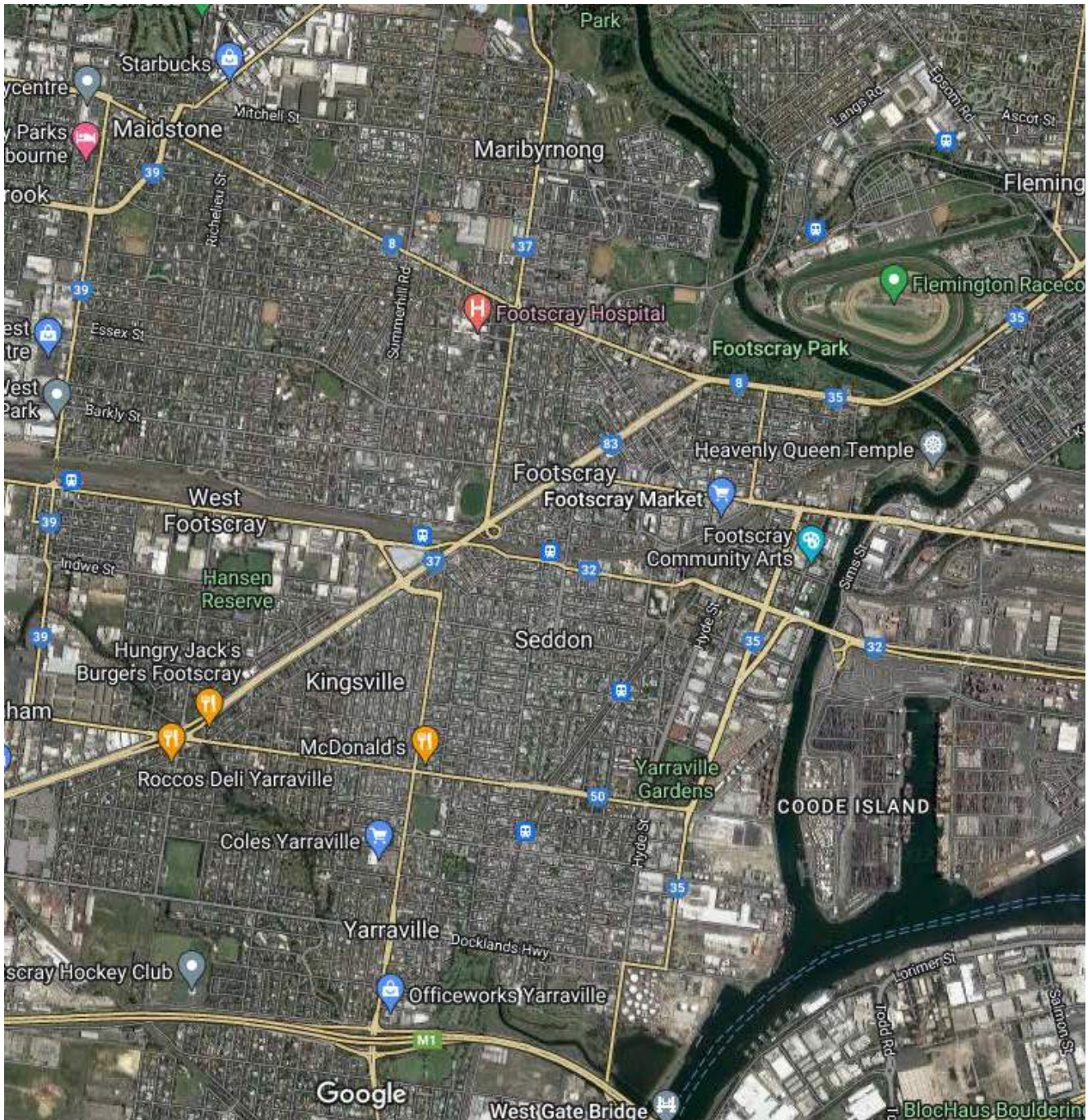
What is the RCLL?

The Regenerative City Living Lab is a dynamic knowledge eco-system that brings together researchers, community members, young people, business leaders and social innovators to address complex issues through applied and inclusive research and education practices. Central to this living lab is VU's commitment to Protecting Country and research focus on Planetary Health which involves recognition of the "interconnections between human health and environmental changes and enabling holistic thinking about overlapping challenges and integrated solutions for present and future generations" (Pongsiri et al., 2017, p. 402).

Anchored in the west of Melbourne, this living lab involves working alongside young people in social and environmental action for a regenerative and resilient city and using place-based research (and action) to ... **regenerate | renew | rebuild | revive.**
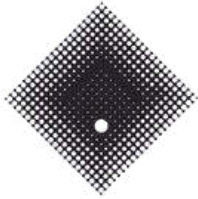

EMPOWERED TO TAKE ECO-ACTION

CONNECTING TO PLACE AND CULTURE

CARING FOR COUNTRY

ACTION RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

THE REGENERATIVE CITY LIVING LAB-COLLABORATORS

- **Associate Professor Debra Smith** – Industry Research Fellow, ISILC

- **Associate Professor Alison Baker** – in Youth and Community Studies, Research Fellow, ISILC

- **Karen Jackson** – Associate Provost Indigenous, Director of Moondani Balluk Indigenous Academic Unit

- **Dr Amy Quayle** – Lecturer Psychology, Research Fellow, IHeS

- **Dr Daniel Ooi** - Lecturer, Research Fellow, ISILC

- **Dr Jean Hopman** – Lecturer, Research Fellow, ISILC

- **Laura Main -** Project Officer

- **Dr Jora Broerse** - Research Fellow, ISILC

- **Jaime Cuellar Sarmiento -** Research Assistant, ISILC

- **VU Students** from Community Development; International Community Development; Youth Work; Psychology and Community Psychology and the VU Academy

- **Bec Scott** – STREAT Co-Founder & CEO

- **Fiona Meighan** – STREAT Chief Eco-Innovation Officer

- **Dr Kate Barrelle** – STREAT Co-Founder & Chief Impact Officer

An Introduction to the Regenerative City Living Lab

A SOUND PORTRAIT

Listen now

Throughout the project we sought to engage in creative modes of knowledge sharing. This soundscape was included as part of the induction material for students coming into the living lab.

The team introduces themselves and why they were excited about the project.

We invite you to listen to this while out walking.

It demonstrates how we sought to engage with storytelling throughout the project. Further examples are provided in Regen Toolkit 02.

REGENERATIVE CITY LIVING LAB

When you think abut the VU Regenerative City Living Lab, it's easy to picture the visible installations on campus, like the edible garden and the Hangar workshop space.

But there is so much more to it...

Illustration by MAKE Studios

REGENERATIVE CITY LIVING LAB

ACTIVISM EXPERIENCE + EXPERIMENTS

Seed library

The Hangar workshop space

VU students: Sprint participants

Planetary Health Design Sprint

ONLINE + HYBRID WAYS OF WORKING

MAKE Studios

Shared learning sessions

KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE

VU researchers

RCLL Insights Library

STREAT

Edible Garden

VU students: Placement

Open Sauce interviews & workshops

GROWING + HARVESTING FOOD

Open Sauce

LEARNING ABOUT SYSTEMS

CONNECTING PLACE + PEOPLE

The Farm at FHS

CARING FOR COUNTRY

Caring for country garden collaboration

Moondani Balluk

CENTRING INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE

VU students

Cooking on Country

Iramoo Native Nursery

Illustration by MAKE Studios

REGENERATIVE CITY LIVING LAB

Approaches

Anchored in Critical Indigenous Pedagogy of Place, Human Centred Design, Community based Participatory Research

Youth led and focused initiatives to create goodness for people and planet

Principles

Regenerative urban design is in symbiotic relationship with nature

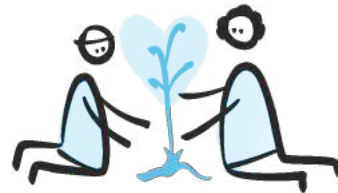Mobilise a systems approach to generate knowledge and change

Aims

Create spaces for intercultural dialogue

Grow ways of belonging, nourishing, learning and thriving

Create an ongoing, accessible archive of stories of regenerative action on Country

Use innovation to go 'deeper shades of green'; at VU and beyond

Illustration by MAKE Studios

WHAT WAS OUR AIM

03

What was our aim and approach?

WHY DID THIS PROJECT COME ABOUT?

This project was imagined and initiated at a time when young people face unprecedented challenges because of ongoing environmental destruction and the amplification of inequality through the COVID-19 pandemic.

In the wake of Black Saturday and ongoing effects of climate change in Australia, recent research has shown that young people feel underprepared for climate catastrophes.

Read more here.

78%

of young people aged 10-24 are concerned or extremely concerned about climate change.

World Vision Australia, 2020

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HEALING THE EARTH AND OUR INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE SELVES IS INTERTWINED

over 65%

of young people are taking individual action for sustainability in their everyday lives.

World Vision Australia, 2020

Within this precarious landscape, the Regenerative City *Living Lab* (Wirth et al., 2019) was conceptualised as an **experiment in systemic resilience** in which young people can build their individual and collective capacities and meaningfully connect through change efforts.

Ungar (2018) identifies important principles for systemic resilience that have emerged from recent evidence, and that resonate here.

- Resilience occurs in contexts of adversity
- Resilience is a process
- A resilient system:
    - is open, dynamic and complex
    - promotes connectivity
    - demonstrates experimentation and learning
    - includes diversity, redundancy, and participation

VU's commitment to Protecting Country

Protecting Country is about people, place and planet. It embraces the seasons, stories and creation spirits and connects First Nation peoples to place. Country is both a place of belonging and a way of believing. as well as contributing to the conservation of critical environmental and diverse cultural assets. It is a community-driven movement towards long-term social, cultural, physical and economic prosperity and sustainability. We honour this commitment.

(VU Strategic Plan 2022-2028, p. 6)

STREAT has a range of strategic goals in three key impact areas: *People, Planet and Performance.*

Outlined in STREAT's Planet Plan are a number of Planet initiatives the organisation undertakes to ensure they minimise their environmental footprint and work towards regeneration while trying to maximise their social footprint.

CREATING GOODNESS FOR PEOPLE AND PLANET

See: <u>STREAT's Planet Plan</u> (developed in collaboration with Melb Uni students)

"Inspired by the Wurrundjeri, the custodians of this land for the last 50,000 years, we determined to also tread lightly on this small patch of earth, and also the other places we inhabit now and into the future. We want to ensure that for decades to come STREAT creates goodness for People and the Planet".

Every choice we make has the potential to help the planet that we all share

The key impact areas--- the pillars of sustainability and regeneration. Anyone can adapt these principles in their own lives.

- Community and Connectedness
- Places
- Eco and food systems
- Water
- Materials and Products
- Energy
- Transport
- Waste

Our Aim

In developing the RCLL we sought to co-create **youth-led** and focussed inquiry through **experimental projects** that range from physical environmental regeneration, community education, services or technology and/or advocacy.

As Watkins and Shulman (2008) theorised, in systemic regenerative work anchored in place, these **small-changes** can create larger ones, and processes of indigenous regeneration are slow and steady relying on both the "regenerative capacities of nature" and local community members (p. 15).

These small efforts within a living lab are **seedlings** that can both begin to nourish existing regenerative actions and foster new relationships, communities and a shared understanding of the work that needs to be done.

Vision

1 Youth are engaged with and through Indigenous and cultural food practices.

2 Youth are empowered to take innovative social / eco action.

3 Youth are connected to place (the west, Footscray and other VU campuses)

4 Youth are involved in action research and knowledge generation

Our Approach

The living lab approach is defined as "user-centred, open innovation ecosystems based on a systematic user co-creation approach, integrating research and innovation processes in real life communities and settings"

– ALLiN

approaches

principles

aims

Community Based Participatory Research and Human-Centred Design

Anchored in Critical Indigenous Pedagogy of Place

Youth led and focused initiatives to create goodness for people and planet

Regenerative urban design is in symbiotic relationship with nature

Mobilise a systems approach to generate knowledge and change

Create spaces for intercultural dialogue

Grow ways of belonging, nourishing, learning and thriving

Create an archive of stories of regenerative action on Country, that university and community can engage with beyond the life of the project

Use innovation to go 'deeper shades of green' at VU and beyond

> **Knowledge emerges only through invention and re-invention, through the restless, impatient, continuing, hopeful inquiry human beings pursue in the world, with the world, and with each other.**
>
> (Freire, 1970, p. 72)

Human-Centred Design and Climate Change

In the Regenerative City Living Lab we drew on a range of understandings and approaches to innovation, primarily those linked to Human-Centred Design.

What is Human- Centred Design?

Watch this video developed by Ideo.

For more on Human-Centred Design see Regen Toolkit 05

Innovation is:

- Doing something new and collaborative to create value;

- drawing on a flexible toolkit of innovation methodologies;

- connected to place and Indigenous knowledges;

- with tangible / identifiable outcomes;

- tied to overarching purpose and impact goals;

- resulting in a landscape of innovative activities and outcomes.

WHAT DID WE DO

04

What did we do?

Recruitment

VU students were recruited for the various projects. Some activities were open to all VU Students such as the Divert and Convert Challenge (see Regen Toolkit 04) and specific projects sought students conducting a placement. Placement students were invited from Youth Work, Community Development and Criminal Justice. Furthermore, research students from Psychology and Community Psychology joined various teams. Many more students and staff contributed to the RCLL through participation in research and workshops.

17 — Placement students

02 — Students doing research

20 — VU students participating in student-led initiatives

192 — Students or staff have been involved in RCLL research

THE PROJECTS PRECEDING THE TOOLKITS

With students recruited and teams committed three projects were designed to address the aims of the Regenerative City Living Lab.

OPEN SAUCE: WASTE AS RESOURCE

Engage in open innovation activities to contribute to preventing and repurposing waste in impactful ways. Work with food technologists and food waste experts to create delicious circular economy products and engaging educational materials- turning waste into treasure.

REGREENING CAMPUS

Plan, plant and grow an urban edible garden, Conduct research to understand the needs of and engage with those who will use the gardens while helping STREAT stress test their "greenprinting" tool.
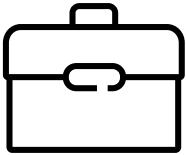
COMMUNITY TABLES

Create opportunities for meaningful social connection and dialogue through food. Use creative mediums to explore and express sense of place, identity, belonging and connection in the west of Melbourne.
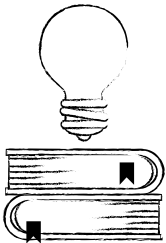
OVERARCHING RESOURCES FOR LEARNING

REGEN Toolkits

The knowledge and action toolkits provide resources, case studies and tools for eco-action.

Insights Library

The insights library is a place where we can engage with different types of knowledge. Readings form the foundation, but as we move forward data and our reflection on it, are also a key part of the library - informing our initiatives and contributing to solutions.

Interactive Glossary

We are a trans-disciplinary team, so we are creating a Glossary as we navigate our collaborative work in the Living Lab. This will be a living document that all members of the RCLL collective add to along the way.

REGEN Instragram

The Regen Instagram is a living toolkit that aims to provide images, video and content to educate, inspire and encourage regenerative action. The Instagram is the medium through which the Storybox is enacted.

Green Action Diary

The Green Action Diary is a way to take stock of a regreening or environmental journey. There are quizzes to give insight into current behaviour, attitudes and values and questions to prompt reflection over time.
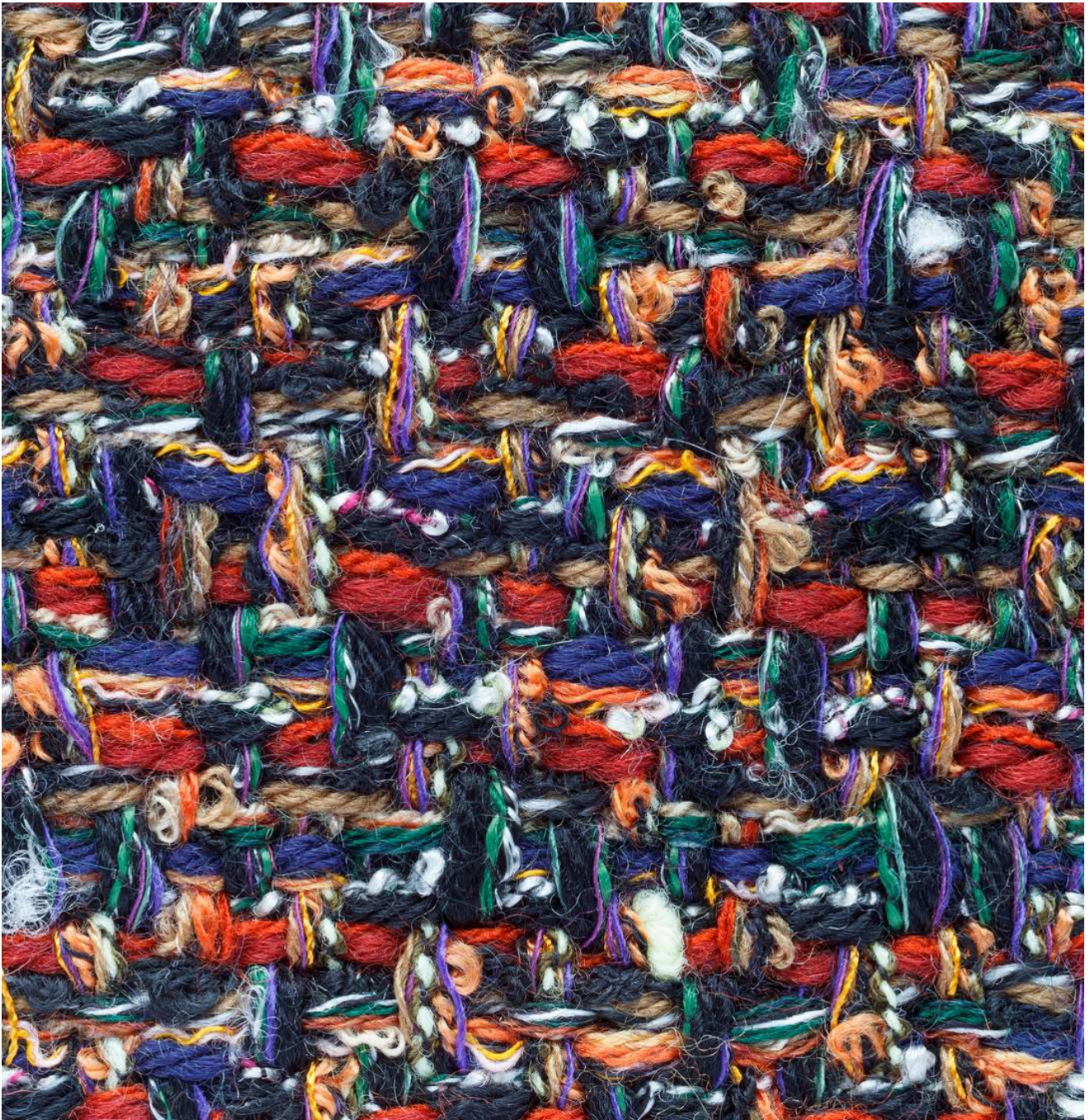
HOW TO

05

How to use these toolkits

ABOUT THE REGEN TOOLKITS

02
STORIES OF PLACE & US

A toolkit for connecting to place and others through story -— the building blocks of regenerative action.

03
REGREENING CAMPUS

The Regreening Campus toolkit will give an overview of the thinking and process required to regreen community spaces.

04
WASTE AS A RESOURCE

The Waste as a Resource toolkit reframes waste as useful and an essential element to addressing our climate crisis. It provides an example of two initiatives that could inspire others.

05
COMMUNITY BASED RESEARCH

A toolkit for using community based approaches to research for place based regenerative action.

06
SOCIAL MEDIA FOR ACTION

This toolkit contains the what, who and how of using social media to inspire action.

How to use these toolkits

Treat using these toolkits as a choose your own adventure experience. Once you have read through The Regenerative City Syllabus you should be armed with the information that you need to navigate any of the remaining toolkits. Each toolkit will reference other toolkits at various times. If you come to a section that introduces a new idea, activity or tool, you should be referred onto another toolkit where the idea should be unpacked more fully.

A LIST OF RESOURCES AND TOOLS

The following lists of resources and tools are scattered throughout the toolkits. We have housed them together here as a one-stop-shop in the event that you forget the location you discovered that nifty tool.

RESOURCES

- STREAT
- Moondani Balluk
- Iramoo
- Footscray High School Farm
- Moving Feast
- MAKE studios
- Pawa Catering
- Bunji Catering
- Indigenous Plant Use by Zena Cumpston
- AIATSIS Map of Indigenous Australia
- Warndu
- Footscray Community Art
- Biofilta
- The Little Book of Green Nudges

DIGITAL TOOLS

- Miro
- Instagram
- Airtable
- Trello
- CANVA
- Hindenburg
- SoundCloud
- Padlet
- Google Slides
- Zoom

References

Australian Living Lab Innovation Network (ALLiN)(n.d). About. Retrieved from: https://www.australianlivinglabs.com.au/about/

Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the oppressed.* Continuum.

Ideo.org. (n.d). What is Human-Centered Design? Retrieved from: https://www.designkit.org/human-centered-design

Pongsiri, M. J., Gatzweiler, F. W., Bassi, A. M., Haines, A., & Demassieux, F. (2017). The need for a systems approach to planetary health. The Lancet Planetary health, 1(7), e257-e259.

Ungar, M. (2018). Systemic resilience. Ecology and Society, 23(4). https://www.jstor.org/stable/26796886

Watkins, M. & Shulma, H. (2008). Toward psychologies of liberation. Palgrave.

Wirth, T. V., Fuenfschilling, L., Frantzeskaki, N., & Coenen. (2019). Impacts of urban living labs on sustainability transitions: Mechanisms and strategies for systemic change through experimentation. European Planning Studies, 27(2), 229-257. https://doi.org/10.1080/09654313.2018.1504895

World Vision Australia. (2020). Going further than ever: Annual report 2020. Retrieved from: https://www.worldvision.com.au/docs/default-source/annual-reports/wv-annual-reports/annual-report-2020.pdf?sfvrsn=d4bbb23c_2

Victoria University. (2021). Strategic plan 2022-2028: Start well finish brilliantly. Retrieved from https://www.vu.edu.au/sites/default/files/2022-2028-vu-strategic-plan.pdf

REGEN TOOLKIT

02 *Stories of Place, Stories of Us*

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY

STREAT

Stories of Place, Stories of Us

A toolkit for connecting to place and others through story - the building blocks of regenerative action.

By Alison Baker

Table of Contents

01 About this toolkit

The Stories of Place, Stories of Us toolkit is about connecting to place and others through story - the building blocks of regenerative action.

The aim of this toolkit is to provide you with some of the key understandings we leant on in our work and to provide a range of examples, activities and tools that can be used if you are sowing the seeds of a regenerative movement.

So, in sharing our story, we hope that you, the reader, might be compelled to explore and express stories of your communities and places.

This toolkit is part of a larger toolkit family and is often linked to other components within the family. The following diagram represents the connection between the toolkits.

01
REGENERATIVE CITY SYLLABUS

02
STORIES OF PLACE & US

04
WASTE AS A RESOURCE

03
REGREENING CAMPUS

05
COMMUNITY BASED RESEARCH

06
SOCIAL MEDIA FOR ACTION

WHAT ARE *Stories of Place and Us?*

02

What are stories of place and us - and why does it matter?

Reinhabitation is...the art of restoring detailed knowledge of a place and restoring a sense of care and rootedness

(Trinidad, 2012, p. 5).

Introduction

Place and Story have been at the centre of our learning and regenerative action in the Living Lab. You can see more about this in our map of storytelling further along in this toolkit. Stories of and about place are so important, they plant the seeds of belonging and connect us to each other and land. When we forge a relationship with our places and people, we begin to care for it. At this moment, it is more important than ever to care for the environment around us as we are facing unprecedented climate catastrophe.

Our local places are also most often our sites of environmental and regenerative action. In bringing our collective together, we sought to use stories about place to build a community and common vision. The aim of this toolkit is to provide you with some of the key understandings we leant on in our work and to provide a range of examples, activities and tools that can be used if you are sowing the seeds of a regenerative movement.

1 An understanding of how stories and place can support learning and regenerative action

2 A snapshot of the approaches that informed our focus on place and stories

3 "Closer look" and practical examples we used

4 Facilitators Guides for some activities and links to templates

Why Place?

"Place is as requisite as the air we breathe, the ground on which we stand, the bodies we have. We are surrounded by places. We walk over and though them. We live in places, relate to others in them, die in them. Nothing we do is unplaced" (Casey, 1997, ix).

Places are culturally significant; they hold meaning, memories, and are important for our sense of belonging, security and stability.

Places teach us about how the world works.

Places also connect us to a past, present and future.

Research highlights how a strong sense of place is linked to stewardship action; that caring for place drives our regenerative practices.

Why Stories?

In a fractured age,
when cynicism is god,
here is a possibly heresy:
we live by stories
we also live in them.
One way or another we are also living the stories
planted in us early or along the way,
or we are also living the stories we planted-
knowingly or unknowingly- in ourselves
We live stories that either give our lives meaning
or negate it with meaninglessness.
If we can change the stories we live by,
Quite possibly we change our lives.

(Okri, 1997, p.46)

> ❝
>
> **I love walking at the Plenty gorge, there is so much to explore and it is especially pretty in the mornings.**
>
> Taylor, "Mapping Our Communities"
>
> ❞

WHAT WAS OUR AIM?

02

What was our aim and approach?

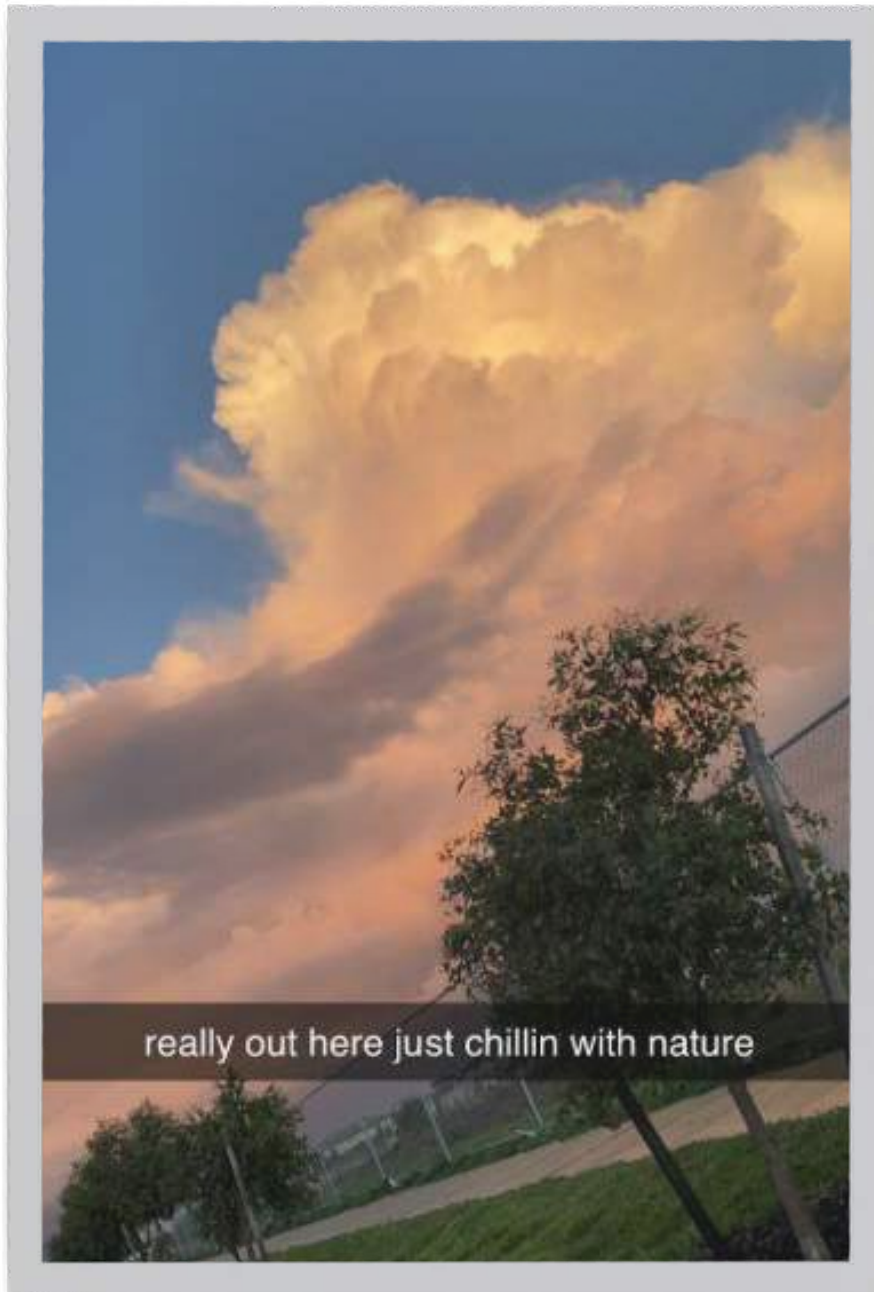really out here just chillin with nature

Image taken by student Aydin

Our Approach

PLACE CONSCIOUS LEARNING & PLACE BASED INQUIRY

The Regenerative City Living Lab was underpinned by a philosophy about place conscious learning (Greenwood, 2019) and critical place-based inquiry (Langran & DeWitt, 2020). Both of these approaches are underpinned by decolonising approaches, which centre on restoring our connections to land/nature/place in ways that empowers young people and those working alongside them to take action. There are descriptions below of these approaches to learning and some examples are provided in the next few pages. Whilst these examples are from the start of the project there were many other ways this was woven into our co-learning activities many of which are detailed throughout this toolkit such as the experiential learning at The Farm at Footscray High, visits and workshops at STREAT, learning about Indigenous land and food practices through the stories of Elders and Indigenous community members.

Place Conscious Learning

Within this project, Indigenous knowledge and practice is deliberately centred and anchored, encompassing an epistemological shift. The Living Lab provides an opportunity to engage in what Greenwood (2019) described as 'place conscious learning'. Writing about the 'decolonisation of the settler soul' through place conscious learning, Greenwood noted, "While we couldn't reverse the history of colonialism in all of its guises, we could learn to acknowledge it and, potentially, learn to reinhabit our shared spaces in more socially just and ecologically sensible ways" (p. 365).

Place-Based Inquiry

Langran and DeWitt (2020) proposed a model for critical place-based inquiry consisting of:

- Reading the world
- Understanding how place matters
- Leveraging technology and creativity (and we add - forms of social innovation)
- Telling Stories of place from multiple perspectives

Stories and their role in regeneration

Storytelling is among the oldest forms of communication and knowledge making. There is a significant amount of literature pointing to the importance of storytelling as a way to communicate information about climate change (Harris, 2020) and the central role it plays in our ability to collectively tackle the realities of climate change and regenerative action (Ghosh, 2016). Storytelling is also a way to navigate complex issues, that can be made more accessible, powerful and visceral (Gottschall, 2013).

Stories are also an important part of creating hope in the face of climate crisis, serving as a motivational force for pro-environmental action (Ojala, 2012). Very recent research has highlighted how creative storytelling as an approach can bring together Elders and young people to take climate adaptive action and engage in regenerative cultural food practices (Plummer et al., 2022). Our motivations in this project were to mobilise storytelling and stories to connect us, to better understand the world around us and to use stories to educate and inspire action. Both Human-Centred Design and narrative approaches in community based research and action hold stories at the heart of social change; they help us understand complex issues and how they impact us individually and collectively, but they also help us imagine "future stories'. In our project, students stories and storytelling was part of many of the learning sessions and activities, for example:

- In workshops with experts or community members
- In site visits to places in the community
- Student engagement activities (e.g. mapping, identity objects, stories of place)
- As part of students' reflective journals
- As part of students' social media posts
- The Green Action and Wellbeing Diary which captured students' reflections on wellbeing and environmental action through the duration of the project
- At the centre of the community-based projects they created (e.g., Tales from the Table)

Stories to restore hope and spark inspiration

During the first year in the Living Lab we sought to identify and locate local people in the community, organisations and others who had been taking regenerative action in various ways. In our local community and with our partner we organised seven different workshops in which we heard stories of collective action around reducing food waste, building community through the creation of an intercultural recipe book, stories of place and about how we could connect across cultures for peace building.

We also heard from Indigenous educators, academics and activists to learn about protecting Country and about plant knowledge and practice. These stories were powerful and supported learning across the different Regen projects.

Aseel Tayah's Workshop about home, food and identity

> ❝ Aseel's workshop was so engaging and interesting, and not only was I impressed with her cooking but her storytelling was also really lovely. ❞
>
> --Regen Student Reflection

LEARNING & STORIES

03

Learning and connecting through stories
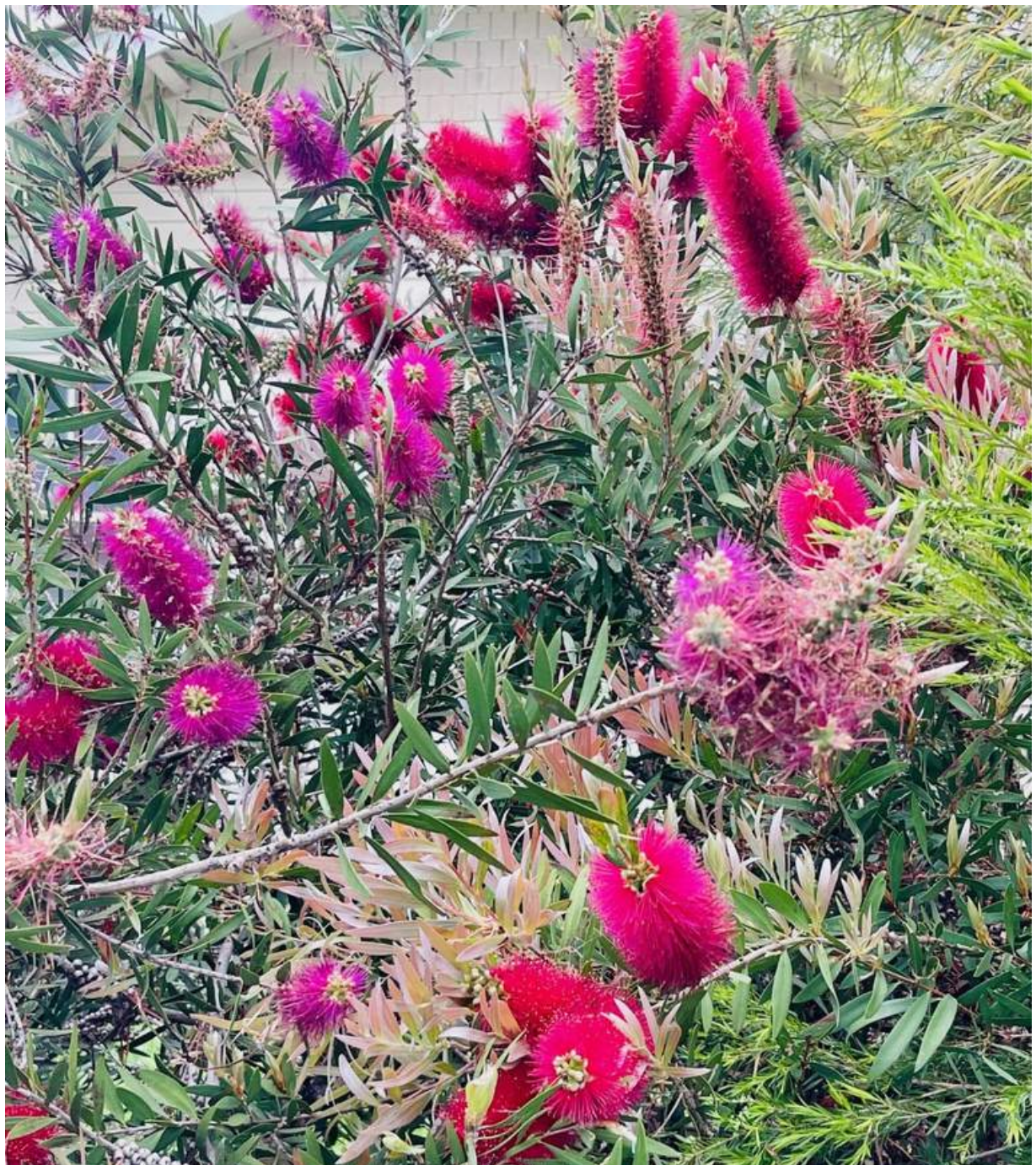
Our Approach *in action*

PLACE CONSCIOUS LEARNING & PLACE BASED INQUIRY

Orienting to Country

About: In our Induction Booklet, students in the Regenerative City Living Lab listened to an Acknowledgement of Country and learned about the Country they were on.

Tools: The AIATSIS Map of Indigenous Australia

An invitation to place conscious learning

About: An invitation to place conscious learning involved inviting students to reflect on positionality and asking students to set their intentions through the creation of an "I Will Statement" developed by the Red Cross.

Tools: We used Padlet to create a community board to share and reflect on these.

Placing the project

About: We created a sound story for our Induction Booklet for students to listen to hear from each project member and learn more about the project, our values and framework.

Tools: We created sound stories about our research project team members using our iPhones to record, Hindenburg to edit and SoundCloud to hold our stories.

Our Approach *in action*

PLACE CONSCIOUS LEARNING & PLACE BASED INQUIRY

Orienting to Country

An invitation to place conscious learning

Placing the project

LOCATING YOURSELF ON COUNTRY

A central aim of this project is to foster understandings and connections with place. An important starting point is acknowledging the Country on which you are on. There are many useful resources for learning about the Traditional custodians of this land, some of which are provided below.

Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung

Boon Wurrung

Wadawurrung

You can find out more about Aboriginal languages in Victoria here

See also: AIATSIS Map of Indigenous Australia

Source: Victoria Aboriginal Corporation for Languages, 2014

I WILL...

Here we draw on The Red Cross "I WILL..." statements, which call for each of us to identify some personal and practical steps for how each of us can contribute to reconciliation. Please reflect on and share some steps you will take during your involvement in the Living Lab project to contribute to reconciliation. Your "I Will" statement can be a written paragraph, audio-recorded or illustrated.

POST YOUR STATEMENT HERE

"For inspiration on what to write, think about ways you could connect with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, histories and cultures and move reconciliation from your head to your heart. How can you connect with others through reconciliation? And how can you help make your workplace and community culturally safe? Talk to your colleagues and your friends, share ideas and connect." (The Red Cross, p 2).

DID YOU KNOW?

Victoria has commenced a Truth and Justice process to "recognise historic wrongs and address ongoing injustices for Aboriginal Victorians"(Hobbs, 2021, para 1). Read more about this here.

See: Joint statement on Victoria's truth and justice process

A Sound Portrait

The previous section sought to orient you to place, and to invite you to engage in place conscious learning.

In this section, we aim to orient you to the Regen project. We do this, by introducing you to some of the team and why they are excited - but also by engaging in creative modes of knowledge sharing through **a soundscape**.

We invite you to listen to this while out walking.

Listen now

A Closer Look:

An invitation to place conscious learning

INSTRUCTIONS:

Write a short paragraph about some steps you will take during your involvement in the Living Lab project.

"For inspiration on what to write, think about ways you could connect with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, histories and cultures and move reconciliation from your head to your heart. How can you connect with others through reconciliation? And how can you help make your workplace and community culturally safe? Talk to your colleagues and your friends, share ideas and connect." (The Red Cross, p. 2).
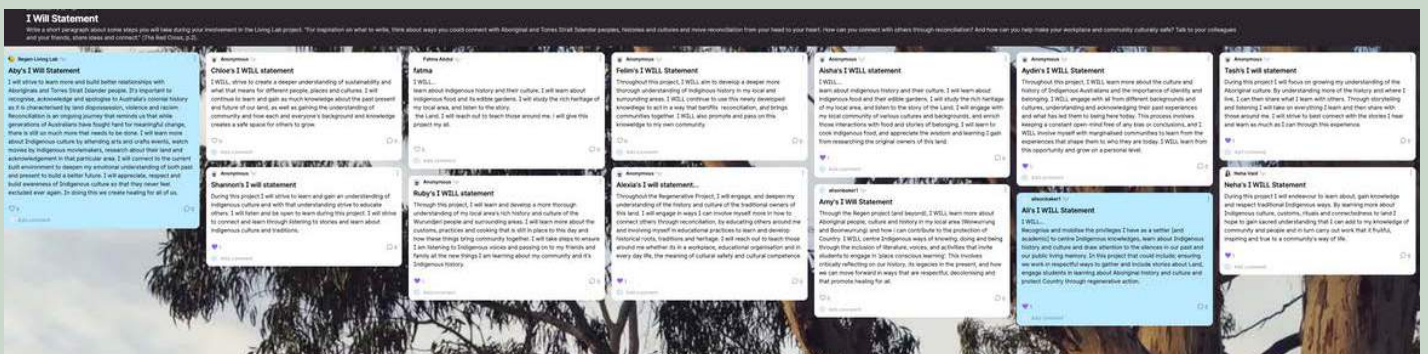
Image: Snapshot of student "I Will.. Statement"

Ruby's I WILL statement

Through this project, I will learn and develop a more thorough understanding of my local area's rich history and culture of the Wurundjeri people and surrounding areas. I will learn more about the customs, practices and cooking that is still in place to this day and how these things bring community together. I will take steps to ensure I am listening to Indigenous voices and passing on to my friends and family all the new things I am learning about my community and it's Indigenous history.

Aydin's I WILL Statement

Throughout this project, I WILL learn more about the culture and history of Indigenous Australians and the importance of identity and belonging. I WILL engage with all from different backgrounds and cultures, understanding and acknowledging their past experiences and what has led them to being here today. This process involves keeping a constant open-mind free of any bias or conclusions, and I WILL involve myself with marginalised communities to learn from the experiences that shape them to who they are today. I WILL learn from this opportunity and grow on a personal level.

A Closer Look:

Example of Storytelling Sessions

Origin Stories

In the first session together, students brought an image of food or a snack that was significant to them. We talked about the stories linked to the origin of those foods and what they mean in a given culture. In breakout rooms of 3-4, students and staff discussed their own personal experiences of the snack, often reflecting family traditions, culture that serve as social, psychological and physical nourishment.

Connecting Emotion and Place

In this workshop we worked though several steps to facilitate sharing, dialogue and reflection about the relationships between place, emotion and environmental issues.

This workshop involved students sharing stories of place and the connected emotion linked to their expectations of that place.

For example, one student talked about the expectation of her home community overseas always remaining the same, providing a sense of safety and familiarity. But recently as a result of climate change related impacts, she has witnessed rapid change, giving her a sense of sadness and loss.

In bringing stories back to the group and discussing the importance of emotions in activism and social change, students reflected on the need to find hope and joy through regenerative action, particularly in the wake of COVID-19.

COMMUNITY MAPPING

04

Community mapping: Bringing stories and place together

Community Mapping

Stories of Place, Stories of Us

Participatory maps are visual representations that involve community members coming together to identify socially and culturally significant spaces, and share knowledge and stories about those spaces/places. They are often used in Community-Based Participatory Research or in Community Development as inclusive approaches to knowledge-making and change. There are many different types of maps that can be created this way and a lot of interesting methodologies. The process is really important and requires attention to who is involved, power dynamics, and considering untold histories and communities. They are collective and multi-layered, incorporating stories of the past, present and future; they have geographic as well as sociocultural and psychological elements; they are a process and product that can be used to act on social and environmental justice issues in the local area.

Community or participatory mapping can be used for a number of purposes include:

-mapping the uses of different places in our geographic communities and their significance to us to determine how land, institutions and spaces are used.

-mapping the 'assets' and strengths of our communities, specifically the resources that can be mobilised for change

-understanding people's feelings and perceptions in a particular place

-a tool for organising people by bringing together common concerns and developing and implementing a plan of collective action

-facilitate a sense of place, belonging and community

-to create a local knowledge base or archive used for cultural and/or educational purposes

Methods and tools for
Community Mapping

Storytelling via in-place interviews)

Interviews that take place in a particular significant community location and use a narrative/documentary approach can provide rich data and material that can be useful to understanding the nuance of that place. This can shed light on the types of activities, people, histories and events that have taken place.

Workshops and Focus Group Discussions

A community walk of a neighbourhood or area can be an excellent way to collect information in place. Sound, video, images, notes/reflections and interviews can be methods.

Useful Visualisation and Mapping Tools

- Geographic Information Systems (GIS)
- Miro (online visual collaboration)
- Google Slides
- Collaboration with illustrators to craft local maps

Photo elicitation and Photovoice

Photovoice is a community-based research method in which community members take pictures to represent their issues and generate group discussion. In photovoice the goal is to create change, so it can be a powerful method for regenerative action. Photo elicitation involves using photos or other images to facilitate a conversation. It can be a good way to evoke multiple layers of meaning through memories and ideas.

Community Walks

A community walk of a neighbourhood or area can be an excellent way to collect information in place. Sound, video, images, notes/reflections and interviews can be methods

Historical and Archival Materials

Historical maps, stories and archives can all be sources that contribute to and layer in elements of a community map.

Community Mapping
in action

During the COVID-19 restrictions of 2021 we were confined to our immediate geographic communities and often only allowed to venture out for short windows of time. For so many of us we began to see our communities, the places and spaces around us, differently as we walked the streets, picnicked on ovals and tended to plants in our gardens, balconies or inside. We witnessed these changes and shared these stories in our activity **Mapping Our Communities** which aimed to build community and connection whilst we were stuck online. Related to the Regreening Campus (see Regen Toolkit 03) The **Place-Making Activity** allowed us to map our experiences, feelings and hopes for Footscray Park Campus in the wake of COVID.

However, many of our students had not ever been to campus and the cumulative impact of COVID left them feeling a sense of loss and disconnection. When restrictions eased and our communities opened up, we ventured back to our campuses for class and to connect with university life. The majority of the students in our project had never been to Footscray Park Campus, much less had a chance to experience and explore our local area of Footscray, or other VU Campuses and places of significance in the area. Any part of regenerative work must take into account the long and deep history of place, of Country and engage in understanding the rich traditions around Country and its stories of culture, food and nourishment. **The Place and Stories Map** was a participatory map created to bring together and honour the history of Aboriginal activism and knowledge of Country, the many different communities that have made home in Footscray and other stories of place.

Bringing together the stories of place allows us to begin the regenerative and recovery work of building connection - to our past, to each other, to Country - so that we can sow the seeds of a collective vision and act, together.

Stories of place and us - allow us to:

-take lessons from the past so that we imagine and plan for a better future.
-create connections and build common ground.
-learn about regenerative practices.

A Closer Look:

THE PLACE AND STORIES MAP

Community maps often involve people in the local area coming together to create a 'counter-map' showing spaces, meaning, routes, connections that are often not visualised or represented in 'offical' maps. As a place-based project, the Regenerative City Living Lab emphasised the importance of stories and mapping from the onset. Our initial workshops and idea-generation sessions were filled with conceptual maps filled with ideas, values, places, people, frameworks, statistics, antidotes, memories and emotions. These drove the work and fuelled the project. Mapping methods and activities have been so important in our learning and doing alongside students, to connecting to place when we were restricted to our 5km radius during COVID-19 lockdowns and for documenting, visualising and co-designing possibilities for re-greening campus and initiating 'green nudges'.

One of our project researchers Dr Daniel Ooi takes students on a walking tour of Footscray for his introductory sociology unit, providing students with an embodied experience that sheds light on historical, social and other dimensions of the suburb in which our main campus is located. We hoped to offer this tour to our students but restrictions and timetables made it challenging.

A Closer Look:
THE PLACE AND STORIES MAP

At the end of our project we revisited the walking tour, but wanted it to more deeply reflect local Indigenous knowledges of Country and bring in the stories of those places and people we built connection and community with during our projects - some of which were local and others not as geographically close. In adding these layers through sound and visual storytelling, our map includes stories about Aboriginal history, culture, place and activism; stories of native plant life and regeneration- adding a 'green map' layer; stories of Footscray's migrant histories and those of different public arts pieces; stories about STREAT our partner in this project. This map then can be used in so many ways, for example for high school students from our other partner organisation, as well as university students, to listen, see, consider and connect across time, culture and place. As an interactive map, stories can be heard as one sits behind a desk or in a classroom, but ideally, a sound walk where participants are in place listening is the best way to make use of this map.

What methods did we use to make this map?

-our own knowledge and publicly existing information

- storytelling interviews with Indigenous Elders and community members

We want to thank and acknowledge Ms. Karen Jackson, Ms. Annette Xiberras, Dr Daniel Ooi, Jak Dunstan and Tom Denning for sharing their knowledge, stories and voices in this project.
This map was illustrated by Natalie Atkins.

-analysing historical documents/archival material, particularly from community museums

Placeholder–landscape x 2 pages of final map

The Farm

Footscray Bowling Club

Regen Campus Garden

Victoria University Footscray Park

Kinnear's Rope Works

William Cooper House

Sally Russell Cooper House

Tom Bills Sculpture

Footscray Park

TITLE ADDED HERE?

Mirring Gnei-birr-nong River

Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church

9 KM

Trees

Rudimentary

Iramoo Nursery (St Albans)

STREAT

Little Saigon Market

10 KM

Wominjeka Tarnuk Yoorrm Public Arts Installation

Vietnamese Restaurants

Footscray Saigon Welcome Arch

Nicholson Street Little Africa & Ethopian Restaurants

Footscray Market

Iramoo Protected Native Grassland and Wildflower Reserve

Old Olympic Donut Site

Footscray Station

Footscray Community Arts Centre

Handwritten annotations:

appointed Harold Blair in 1967.

73 Southampton St, William Cooper House #2

Lynch Cooper House 92 Tarleignauer St, Yarraville.

13 Mackay St Sedda

Seddon - Gathering House

Theatre - Narweet.

Camp-Clan. Grimes Reserve Grand Honour Katty A61 Choir William Co

FARNSNORTH

KINNEAR ST

Mapping Our Communities Activity

About

Mapping Our Communities is an activity that involves using participatory photography and storytelling to connect participants to their local communities and to each other. It can be a great way to use creative and visual methods to map places of significance, people's connections to them and reveal patterns across the places we live in. This activity can also be used as a method of 'asset mapping,' identifying important institutions, places and resources that exist within communities.

Method

① We used this activity at the start of our project so people could get to know each other, what is important to them and how they connect with nature.

② Participants were asked to take pictures, video or sound that are detailed in the instructions on the next page.

③ Each participant had their own Google slide to put in images, files and a short text story. They were encouraged to decorate it and have some fun with it.

④ We used breakout rooms so that participants could share their stories of place and discuss their importance.

Tools

- Mobile phones as cameras
- Zoom to facilitate discussions
- Google Slides to create a community archive of images. Find the template you can download here

ACTIVITY: MAPPING OUR COMMUNITIES

Green spaces are so important

Our local hangout

We need to protect the environment. It gives us life.

Your task is to:

1. Take/share an image of 1-2 places within your community that are really important to you. What is it? What is its significance to you?
2. Take/share an image that shows how you have been connecting with nature during lockdown (within your 5km zone)
3. Take/share an image of any amazing gardens (edible or not) in your neighbourhood
4. Record a soundscape in your neighbourhood/ community (within your 5 km zone)

Note: Please do not include image/s of people for this task as we want to ensure we respect privacy. So you will have to get creative! Use symbolism, props or draw in something if you need to.

Upload these images to these google slides before the first session - this is going to be an important part of our work together. Please also include a brief explanation along with your image.

REGENERATIVE CITY LIVING LAB

Mapping Our Communities Activity: Student Examples

RUBY'S COMMUNITY IMAGES

This is a (blurry) photo of Footscray Park, which is one of the nicest local gardens to me and I love how well kept the flowerbeds and lawns always are. This is right near VU!

This is a place that is important/ special to me, it's a small lookout at a secluded spot at the Maribyrnong river in Footscray I walked to every day in lockdown at sunset last year

Also along the Maribyrnong, I come ride my bike on sunnier days. I love admiring/ being in the nature in this area

DIANA'S COMMUNITY IMAGES

1. Places important to me:
The first is a park close to home; I love to see trees changing colours during the stations. The second is my walk fluffy mate.

2. Connecting with Nature
During these two years of on and off lockdown, running has been my way to connect with the nature, exploring almost every place of my 5k radio.

3. Challenging my gardening skills: I got recently these new babies; my job now is to keep them alive. I am new at being a plant mom.

SHANNON'S COMMUNITY IMAGES

My veggie and herb garden at home (with puppy proof fence)

Wetlands- this place is significant to me because it is a place we have always taken our dogs and is a great place for both humans and dogs to get with nature

Also the wetlands where she likes to run around and we are in nature

Facilitators Guide
Placemaking on Campus

About

Placemaking on Campus was an activity led by STREAT's Rebecca Scott and Fiona Meighan. In this activity VU students and staff came together with an aim to create maps that reflected a regenerative, circular precinct around VU Campus in which people felt a sense of community and belonging. A hand-drawn map was used as the canvas for participants to move through a two-part activity that is detailed in this guide, to understand current and ideal future state connection to place. This type of mapping can be used to reflect people's sense of belonging and safety to given places; highlight special meaning and stories and ultimately become a tool for co-design of regenerative spaces, providing insights and guidance on where interventions and activations might have the most impact.

Method

① This activity was used mid-way through our project as a way to engage students and staff in place-making given their long absence from Footscray Park Campus. It informed the Regreening project, becoming a rich source of reflections that informed the garden design.

② This activity took place on Zoom, but is ideal for in-person workshops. A Miro board was used to place maps of the campus area; activity instructions and sticky notes and icons had been created for people to use. Two groups were created, each with 2 maps so that there was plenty of space for stories, reflections, a note or memory. One map prompted reflections about *today* and the other about *the future.*

③ After providing instructions on how to use Miro, participants responded to prompts across two parts- these are detailed in the instructions on the next page.

Tools

- Miro was used to facilitate participation in this activity. You can find a template at the bottom left side of this Miro - all you need is a map relevant to your project!

Placemaking on Campus

Regenerative City Living Lab

The map to your right is the area of our Regenerative City Living Lab. It includes VU Footscray Campus and the area surrounding it. We are interested in learning about your relationship with the area what it means to you and your dreams for what it could be like in the future as a regenerative, circular precinct where there is a sense of community and people feel they belong.
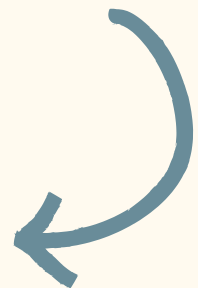
Instructions: Part 1

Think about your relationship with the area in the map including VU Footscray campus. Please use the icons and sticky notes to share your thoughts. This could take the form of:

- A quote
- A note
- A story
- A reflection
- A memory that stands out

Use the questions below to jumpstart your thinking about what these spaces mean to you. For each question, drag a postit from that section onto the map and tell us about that experience or association *(you can also drag postits to the "General" section at the bottom of the map)*:

Where do you like to go? 😊   Where would you avoid going? Why? ⚠️

Where do you feel you belong? 🐾   Where do you feel you don't belong? ⊜

Things being done well for our planet? 🍃   Where are we letting our planet down? 🔨

Followup your postits by dragging these icons onto the map:

Where do you like to go?   Where do you feel you belong?   Things being done well for our planet?

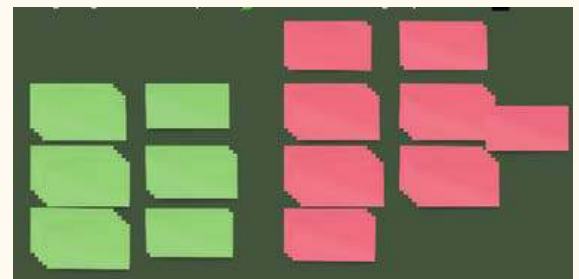Where would you avoid going?   Where do you feel you don't belong?   Where are we letting our planet down?

Next, enlist your five senses. What do you see, feel, hear, taste, smell in these locations? Drag these icons onto the map to mark your observations:

Participants used sticky notes and icons to represent different reflections/feelings/ memories

Instructions: Part 2 - The Future 💡

Imagine the area in this map in 5 years time that you've been able to create an ideal regenerative space that fosters community, belonging and looking after our planet.
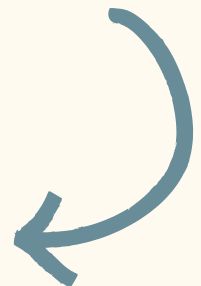
What would you create?
Where would you green parts of the map?
What would it look like?
How would you foster a sense of community?
Where and how could you create a sense of belonging?
What things could you take from today?
What things would you change?
How would you see things you are covering as part of the current project being embedded in this map?

Your notes could be:

· A quote
· A note
· A story
· A reflection

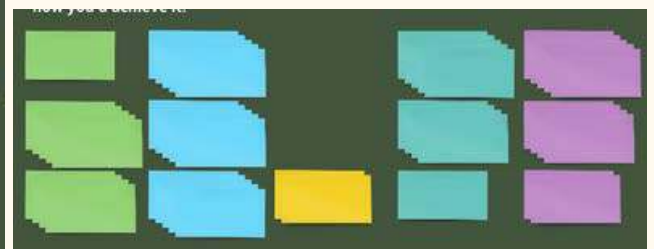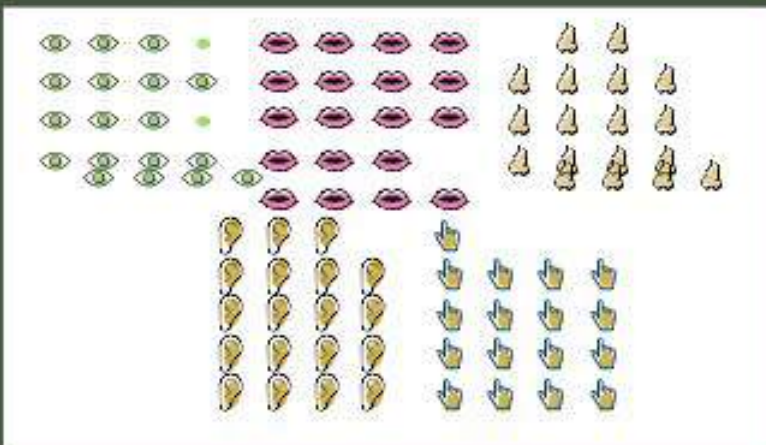Use these postits to tell us what this ideal regenerative space would look like and how you'd achieve it:

Then, use these icons to visually mark your regenerative notes:
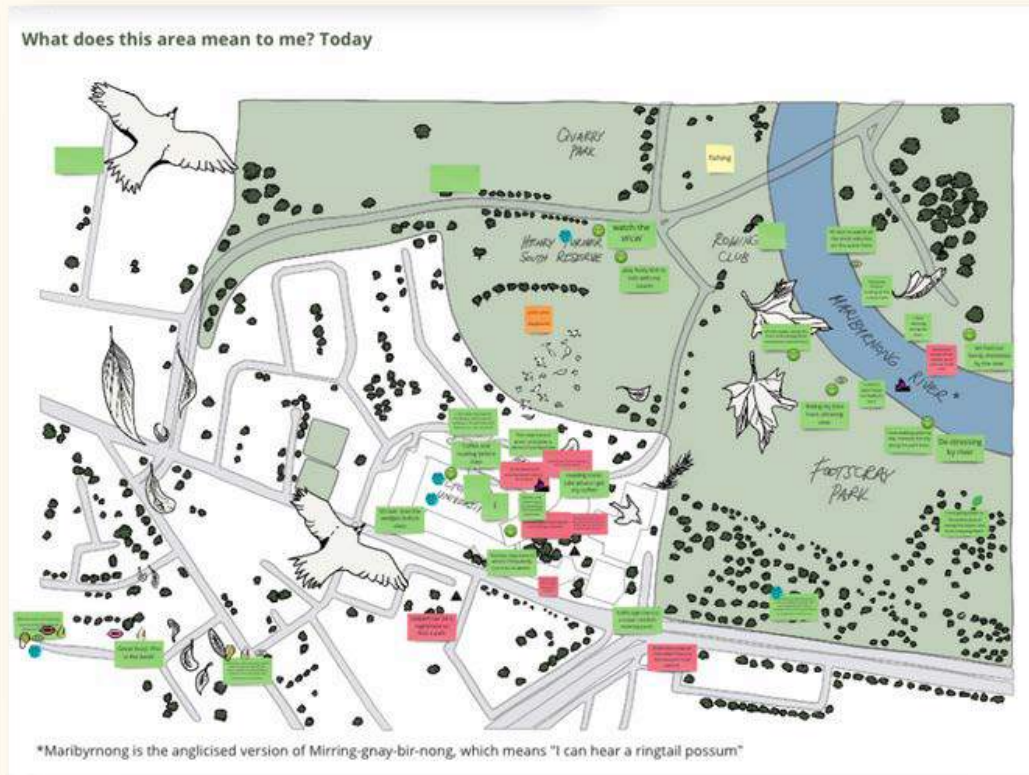
Enjoyable   Belonging   Greening

Enlist your senses again. What do you see, feel, hear, taste, smell in these locations after greening them? Drag these icons onto the map to mark the new experiences:
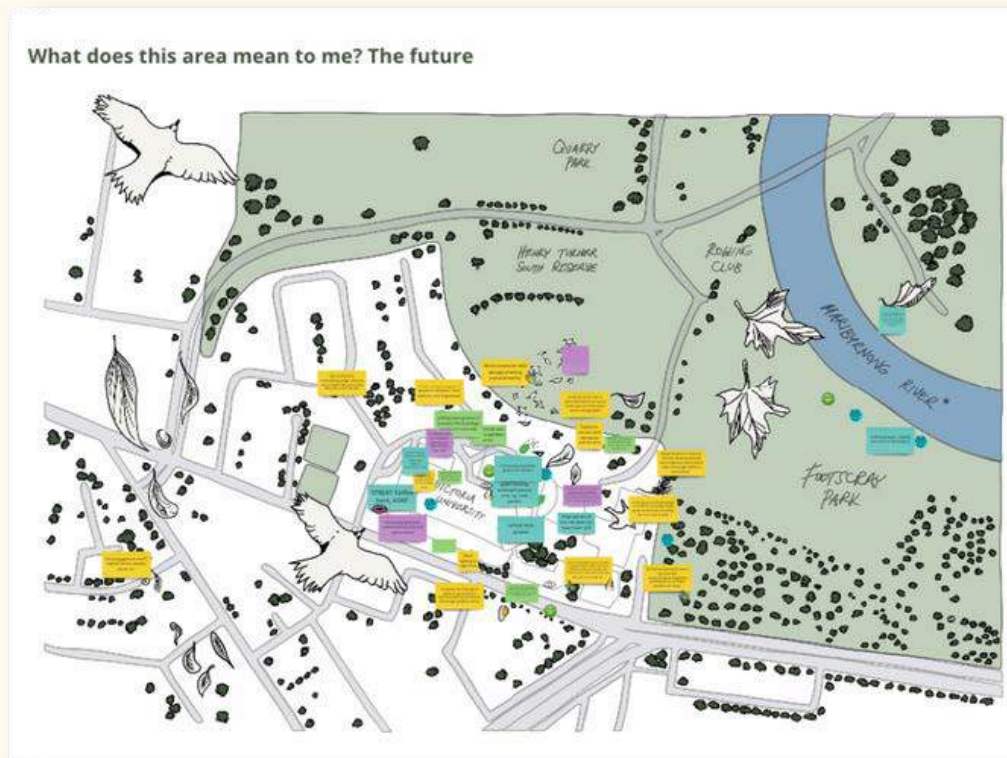
Participants used sticky notes and icons to represent different reflections/feelings/memories

Placemaking on Campus: Examples

Part 1

What does this area mean to me? Today

*Maribyrnong is the anglicised version of Mirring-gnay-bir-nong, which means "I can hear a ringtail possum"

Part 2

What does this area mean to me? The future

Placemaking on Campus: Examples close up

Part 1

Part 2

its nice to watch all the birds who live on the water here

MARIBYRNONG RIVER *

Favourite time is looking at the sunset here

I love running along the river.

picnics, walks- along the river, and a playground somewhere around here

Sometimes people throw rubbish and it ends up in the river

we had our family christmas by the river

I used to take Tokyo for walks in here

Riding my bike here, amazing view.

I love walking with my dog towards the city along the path here.

De-stressing by river

FOOTSCRAY

Tips on where to walk/walking paths and how long it might take you so you know you won't be late.

More connection with aboriginal history (cultural events)

Gardens for/by indigenous people to showcase food, medicine, and implements.

Could be cool to have a sport/activity here set up we could take out to the green spaces during breaks.

adding some green in between the buildings where it is concrete

Compost area for Students that are not able to have their own.

community and ry gardens at VU

A place to connect with the nature and the land

Outdoor classrooms on the hillside here take trees to create boundaries.

A more cultural diverse cafeteria. More food options (sustainable cafes)

Would be great to have the concrete spaces populated with indigenous plants which might encourage wildlife to visit campus.

More green spaces to enjoy the nature out on the grass

Community and edible gardens on campus

green bombing building M balcony area, e.g. herb gardens

STREAT Coffee here, ASAP

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY

If the space outside Building D could be a useable shady green space to go and enjoy lunch or read a book.

community pantry (to tackle food insecurity and reduce waste)

vertical herb gardens

Solar panels (if the Uni does not have them yet)

More lighting at night time

Cool to have edible gardens/edible indigenous plants with info if you wanted to enjoy on a break. You could pull off a leaf and smell it and learn about its properties.

Be cool to have some urban ag areas like compost/apiary/vegetable growing etc so us urban dwellers can enjoy.

A way we can share great places to go and eat in Footscray during our breaks. Encourage people to share.

How could this map be used?

We used this map again in-person at our campus planet festival day where we asked people to share their sense of place across campus and what they'd like to see.

- Inviting other community members and university partners to map assets, meaning, experiences and usage of the area.

- As part of classes to learn about community mapping for education, community development practice.

Share your story with us!

THE STORY BOX

**Stories connect us to place and each other.
We want to hear your stories about:**

✦ how your garden inspires joy

✦ how you connect to places in your local area

how food connects and sustains you

#REGENSTORYBOX
@REGENCITYVU

References

Casey, E. S. (1997). The Fate of Place: A philosophical history. University of California Press.

Harris, D. M. (2020). Telling stories about climate change. The Professional Geographer, 72(3), 309-316.

Ghosh, A. 2016. The great derangement: Climate change and the unthinkable. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Gottschall, J. 2013. The storytelling human: How stories make us human. New York: Mariner Books.

Greenwood, D. A. (2019). Place, land, and the decolonization of the settler soul. The *Journal of Environmental Education, 50*(4-6), 358-377.

Langran, E., & DeWitt, J. (2020). Navigating place-based learning. Springer International Publishing.

Ojala, M. (2012). Hope and climate change: The importance of hope for environmental engagement among young people. Environmental Education Research, 18(5), 625-642.

Okri, B. (2014). A way of being free. Head of Zeus.

Plummer, N., Wilson, M., Yaneva-Toraman, I., McKenzie, C., Mitchell, S., Northover, P., ... & Richards, A. (2022). Recipes for Resilience: Engaging Caribbean Youth in Climate Action and Food Heritage through Stories and Song. Sustainability, 14(14), 8717.

Trinidad, A. M.O. (2012). Critical Indigenous pedagogy of place: A framework to Indigenise a youth food justice movement. Journal of Indigenous Voices in Social Work, 1(1), 1-17. http://hdl.handle.net/10125/12528

REGEN TOOLKIT

03 Regreening Campus

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY

STREAT
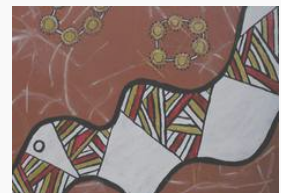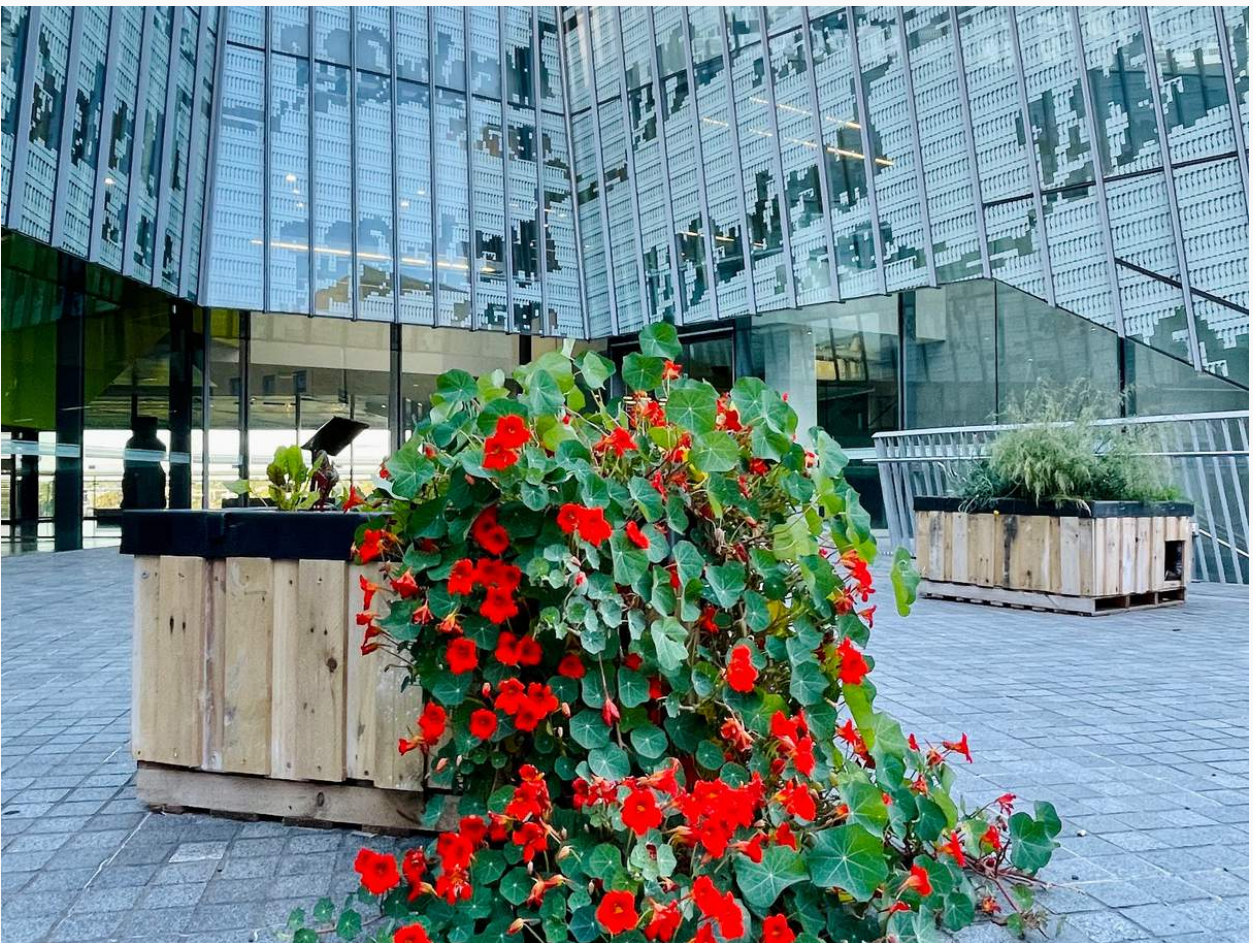
Regreening Campus

A toolkit for regreening a community place.

By Jean Hopman with Fiona Meighan

Table of Contents

01 About this toolkit

The Regreening Campus toolkit will give an overview of the thinking and process required to regreen community spaces. It narrates the journey of a student-led urban agriculture project at Victoria University (VU), Melbourne. The toolkit will cover what 'regreening' is and why it is essential for a community. It will also cover the practicalities of regreening and collaborative community work, including the aspects that worked well and some potential challenges. It is not strictly a 'how to' guide, as the context of any community work is central to its progress.

So, in sharing our story, we hope that you, the reader, might be compelled to perform 'green nudges' (see Small steps matter in What did we find?) and maybe start your own community greening project.

This toolkit is part of a larger toolkit family and is often linked to other components within the family. The following diagram represents the connection between the toolkits.

01
REGENERATIVE CITY SYLLABUS

02
STORIES OF PLACE & US

04
WASTE AS A RESOURCE

03
REGREENING CAMPUS

05
COMMUNITY BASED RESEARCH

06
SOCIAL MEDIA FOR ACTION

WHAT IS REGREENING

02

What is regreening and why does it matter?
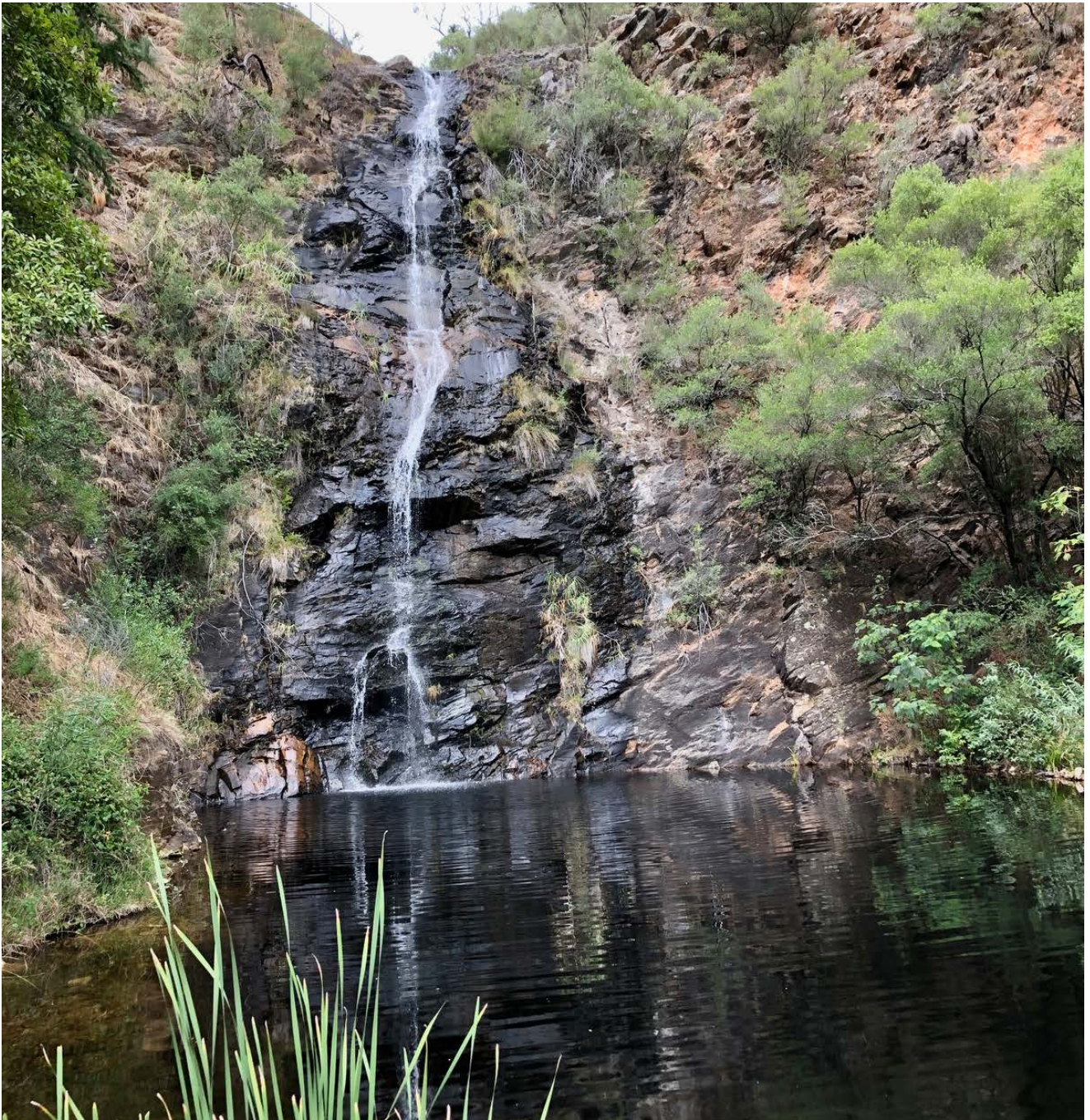
What is regreening and why does it matter?

The term 'green' is often used in reference to environmentally sustainable initiatives such as recycling, water protection, or organic cultivation. We use the word 'regreen' to also acknowledge that Indigenous green systems had existed on campus land for thousands of years before our university campus existed. As such, we regreen while paying respect to the age-old systems of Indigenous knowledge and protecting Country that foreground our collective work on campus. Organic plant cultivation, recycling and waste management have been important pillars of our regreening approach.

> ❝
> **Biophilia, as an individual and collective environmental virtue, contributes to human flourishing, while having care for live nature at its target.** ❞
>
> (Clowney, 2013, p.999)

The notion of greening stems from two main discipline areas—ecological science and architecture or urban design (Panlasigui et al., 2021). Ecological science mainly considers biodiversity, while architecture and urban design consider biophilia—the feelings that biodiversity evokes in humans. It seems that humans are drawn to nature because nature is giving of produce and pleasure. Given the environmental challenges we face due to climate change and the inequity exacerbated due to the COVID-19 pandemic, regreening plays a small step toward healing, healing by replenishing biodiversity, and healing by finding pleasure in a world of struggle. Most significantly, working toward healing a concealed history of sophisticated green systems that sustained Aboriginal people for tens of thousands of years.

WHAT WAS OUR AIM

03

What was our aim and approach?

What was our aim and approach?

AIM

At the beginning of this project, we asked how we might create urban agriculture environments that grow food for people facing food insecurity while also providing a rich opportunity for engagement through food.

Victoria University as a microcosm of society

Industry partner STREAT has been working towards contributing to a future city that is rewilded and delicious, its rooftops, laneways and buildings swept up into a vast foodscape. A step in working towards this was to create an edible urban garden on the VU campus where people can come together as a community each season to celebrate the diversity and deliciousness the garden has to offer. All the while educating and inspiring community members to take their learnings and apply them at home.

... the VU Campus

In particular, this space intended to provide an opportunity to:

- Create a socially inclusive space where people can connect through food and urban agriculture
- Share and learn about regenerative practices
- Address issues of food insecurity on campus and beyond
- Create a biophilic environment to help people connect with nature
- Learn about Indigenous knowledge, culture and history through engaging with indigenous edible plants
- Learn about other cultures through growing different foods

An area at the heart of the VU Footscray campus, which was un-greened at the beginning of the project was selected as the site for our garden.

Our approach

We approached the work through Community Based Participatory Research, where VU students were invited to participate in the project. Community Based Participatory Research requires collaboration between various stakeholders and sees all participants as active researchers. In this sense, our industry partners STREAT, interested students and VU researchers all became a research collective. STREAT led an Earth-Centred and Human-Centred design approach to design and create and contributed a wealth of horticulture and greening knowledge and experience. The students were experts in engaging in community spaces in diverse locations, and the VU researchers were able to facilitate the collaboration.

Of vital importance was the recognition that all participants had unique perspectives and knowledge that would make the project richer.

Human-Centred design considers the needs, goals and wants of people using the space. For example, we considered growing diverse food appropriate to our diverse community or providing sensory spaces, especially during study times. We regarded how people might use the space. Human-Centred Design is a creative approach to problem-solving that firstly considers the people the design serves. The resulting design should be more effective because a deep understanding of people's needs, hopes and aspirations informs the solutions. When Human-Centred Design is paired with Earth-Centred Design, the Earth is also considered a stakeholder, so the Earth's needs, hopes and aspirations are also incorporated into the resulting design. It should be noted that while Human-Centred Design and Earth-Centred Design start from a place of *desirability* (what is desirable), there are other phases. To allow a generative design approach, further phases of the approach then look through the lenses of *viability* and *feasibility* and iterate ideas accordingly to optimise an outcome that is useful, usable and engaging as well as realistic and achievable.
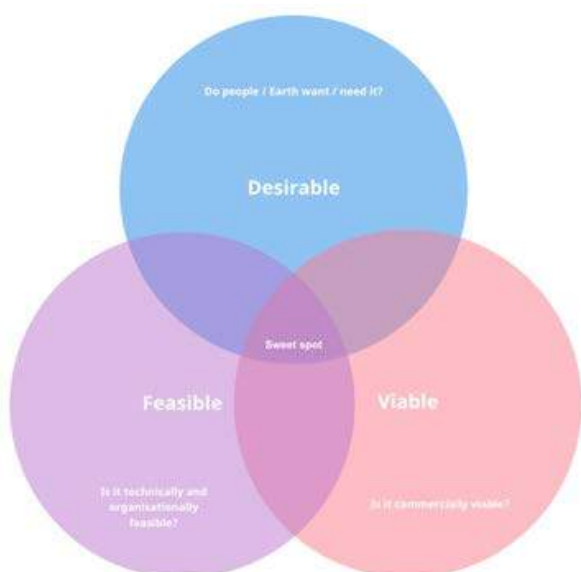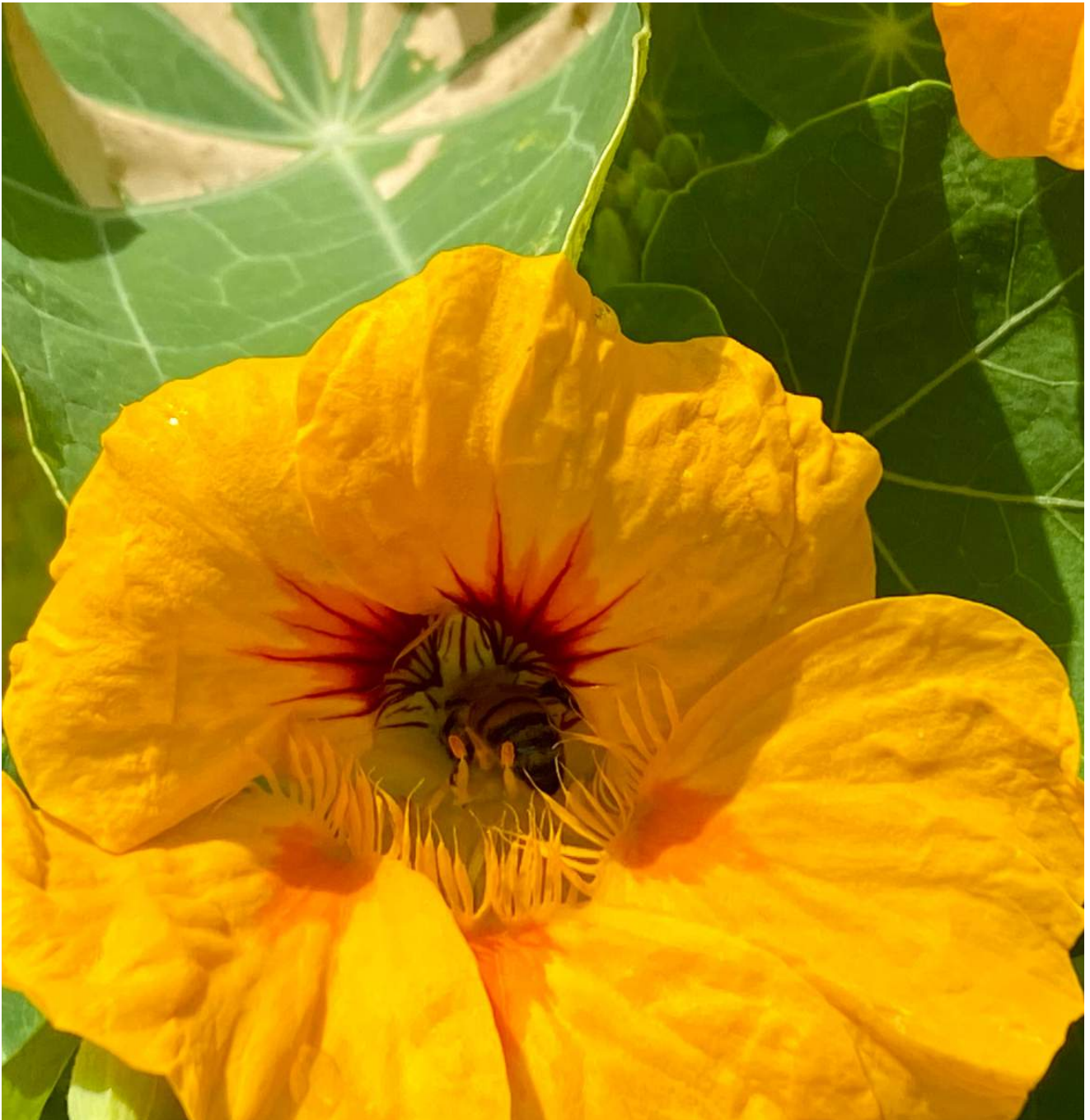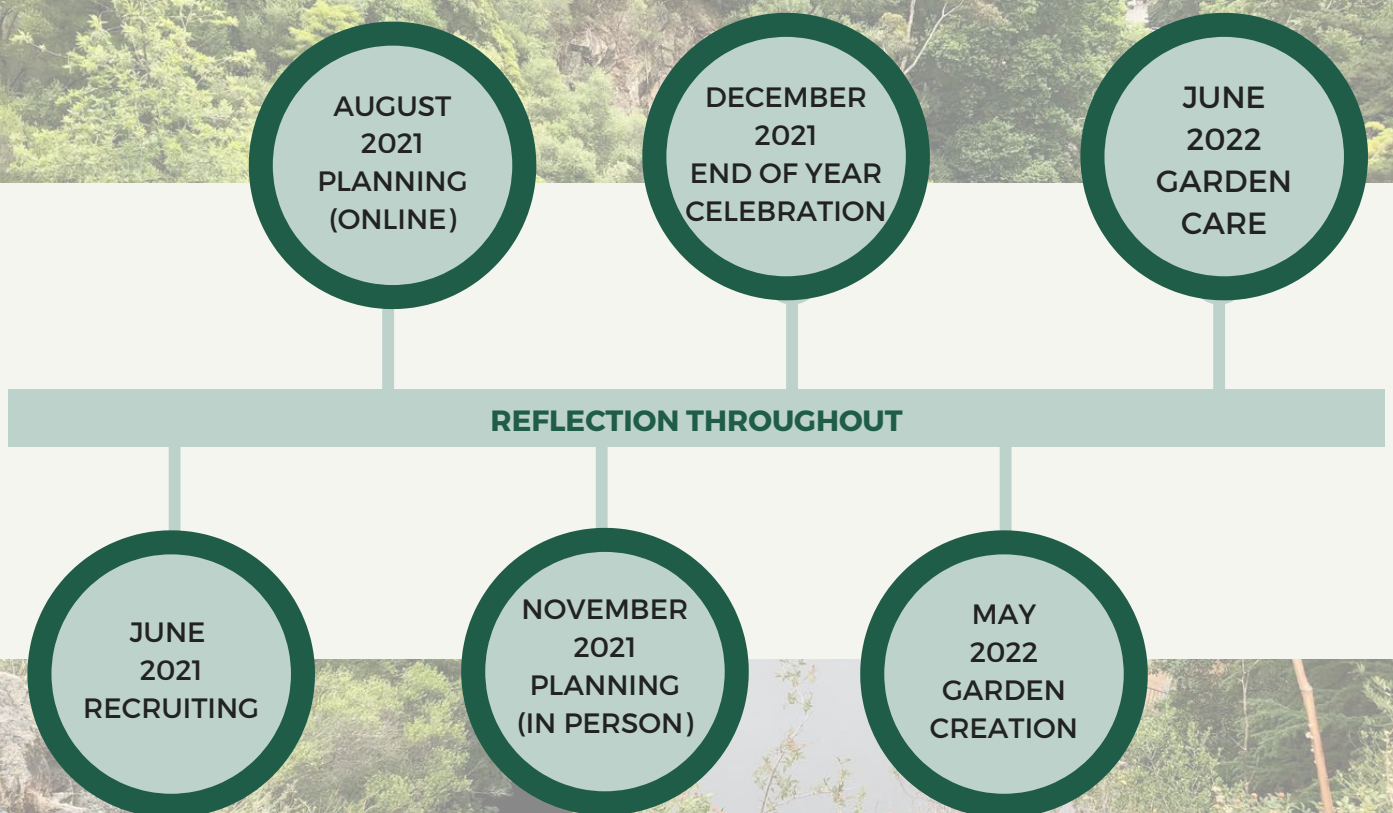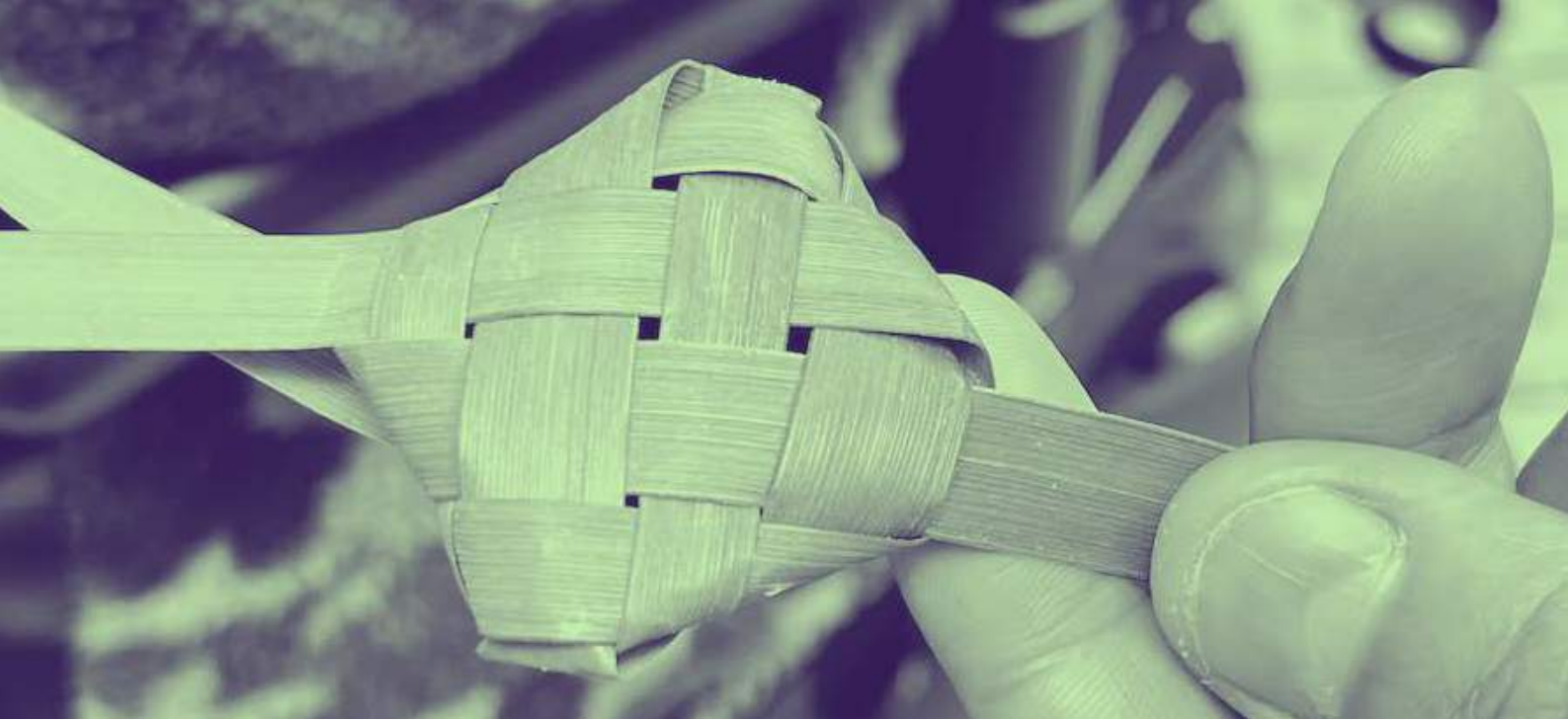
WHAT DID WE DO

04

What did we do?

What did we **do**?

THERE WERE SEVERAL STAGES TO THE REGREENING PROJECT:

1. Recruiting
2. Planning
3. Creation and care
4. Reflection
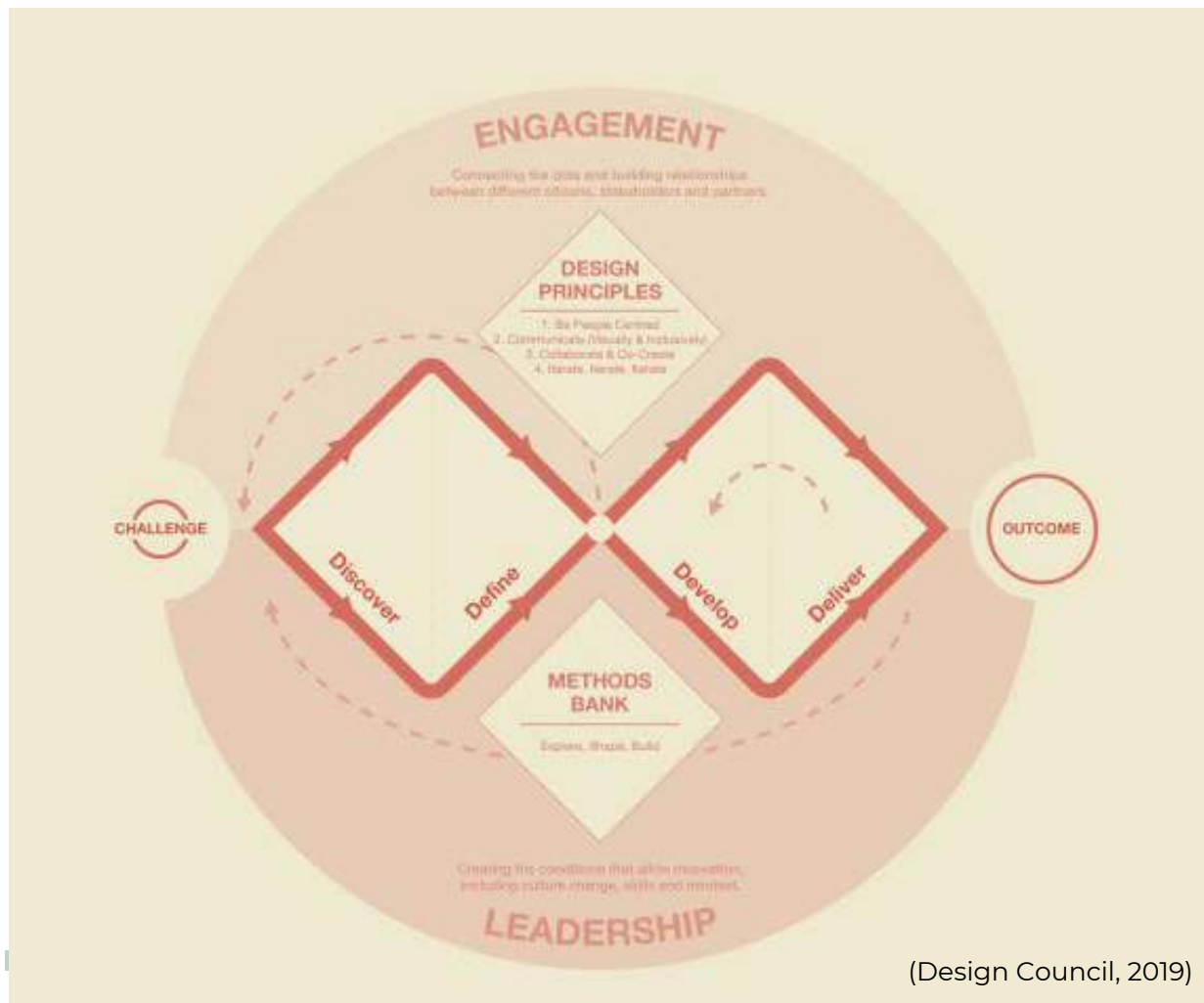
AUGUST 2021 PLANNING (ONLINE)

DECEMBER 2021 END OF YEAR CELEBRATION

JUNE 2022 GARDEN CARE

REFLECTION THROUGHOUT

JUNE 2021 RECRUITING

NOVEMBER 2021 PLANNING (IN PERSON)

MAY 2022 GARDEN CREATION

1. Recruitment

Forming and building a team is significant to the success and work of the team. Each member will bring their own unique skills and experience to a project, so the project's outcome is intimately tied to the insights and hopes of the members who are driving it. During the recruiting phase, students applying to be part of the VU Regenerative City Living Lab identified which projects they were interested in joining (see Toolkit 01 for more on recruitment). The Regreening Team included ten student members, four researchers and two STREAT staff members consistently present throughout the project. The STREAT horticulture team also contributed to many sessions providing expertise and know-how throughout the project, helping to physically create the garden. They are referred to distinctly throughout this toolkit.

2. Planning

ENGAGEMENT
Connecting the dots and building relationships between different citizens, stakeholders and partners

DESIGN PRINCIPLES
1. Be People Centred
2. Communicate Visually & Inclusively
3. Collaborate & Co-Create
4. Iterate, Iterate, Iterate

CHALLENGE

Discover · Define · Develop · Deliver

OUTCOME

METHODS BANK
Explore, Shape, Build

LEADERSHIP
Creating the conditions that allow innovation, including culture change, skills and mindset

(Design Council, 2019)

Part of the planning phase took place throughout the latter part of 2021 when Melbourne was living through its longest lockdown in response to COVID-19. All planning meetings took place on Zoom. STREAT team members of the Regreening Team facilitated all planning sessions. The Regreening Team also attended other sessions where all project participants would come together for discussion common among the projects.

For part of the planning phase the Regreening Team collaborated with a team of VU Built Environment students to assist with envisioning student plans. The collaboration is outlined more fully in the Co-design section below. A collaborative double-diamond approach underpinned the planning phase leading into the creation phase.

How Might We …

The initial questions posed to the team were framed as design "How Might We" questions. How Might We questions stem from a design perspective to stimulate brainstorming.

- How Might We create a garden?
- How Might We engage people to create and utilise a community garden?
- How Might We inspire people to learn about gardening or take a cutting to create other gardens?
- How Might We ensure the garden caters for the needs of those who study and work on campus?
- How Might We ensure the garden is flexible to meet evolving needs and is also maintained and evolved over the long term?

Our Approach IN ACTION

IN THIS SECTION

The following activities, tools and ideas were used to develop a sense of...

PLACE

- Ideation
- Mapping
- STREAT's Greenprinting tool
- Interviews
- Co-design
- Research

Facilitator's Guide
IDEATION

About

The initial design stage was a generative process of articulating ideas on using the space.

Method

- Gather inspiration from similar projects worldwide as well as identifying key stakeholders, hypothesising how they might use the space
- Take part in rapid ideation exercises elicited to help unlock the creative process (known as Crazy 8s and Design T's)
- Start to focus on single ideas and flesh them out

Tools

IDEATION TOOLS

For quantity: Crazy 8s

The aim is to generate as many ideas as possible within a short timeframe, focusing on quantity of ideas not quality. Grab an A3 piece of paper and fold it 3 times to copy this framework:

Draw your idea here

For more depth: Idea Ts

The Idea T is a simple template to get your idea onto paper. It can help you think through the details of your idea, and make your idea clear to your team. Grab an A4 piece of paper and copy this framework:

Name your idea

Draw your idea | Describe your idea (bullet points)

Do I really have to draw? Give it a try! You don't need to be an artist, in fact, stick figures, simple shapes, labels and arrows are often all you need.

IDEATION

The generated ideas connected to two major considerations in the planning phase:

1. PLACE
2. PEOPLE

It is easy to get caught up in the physical output of the garden, but remaining focused on the garden as a place intrinsically linked to people who will connect with it will ensure a balance between Earth and Human-Centred Design.

PLACE

The location of the regreening was explored and the dimensions of potential garden beds were pondered. Environmental factors were considered, such as sun, wind, and urban heat generation. Engineering factors also needed to be considered, like the weight of the garden beds, maintaining emergency vehicle access, and the design and construction of garden beds. Furthermore, the aesthetics and productivity of the regreening initiative had to align with the needs of the people the garden serves, with biophilic and mindfulness considerations through Human-Centred Design. All of these considerations helped to balance *desirability*, *viability* and *feasibility*.

MAPPING

About

After selecting a potential regreening site area, we used aerial photographs and plans to design the garden's layout. Decisions were made and constantly reviewed based on community and stakeholder feedback. The STREAT horticulture team translated requirements and a range of design ideas into a plan that was feasible and viable as well as desirable. When we were able to return to campus and had a plan of the garden bed layout, it was chalked out to scale in the actual location.

Method

The following process were followed:

- Draw a bird's eye view of the selected space (by hand or digitally)
- Create potential garden beds in a range of different shapes and sizes
- Position the garden beds in different layouts
- Capture each iteration and evaluate for pros and cons

Concept diagram of the proposed re-greened garden space created by the STREAT horticulture team

Tools

Miro
Canva
Paper
Scissors

STREAT's
Greenprinting tool
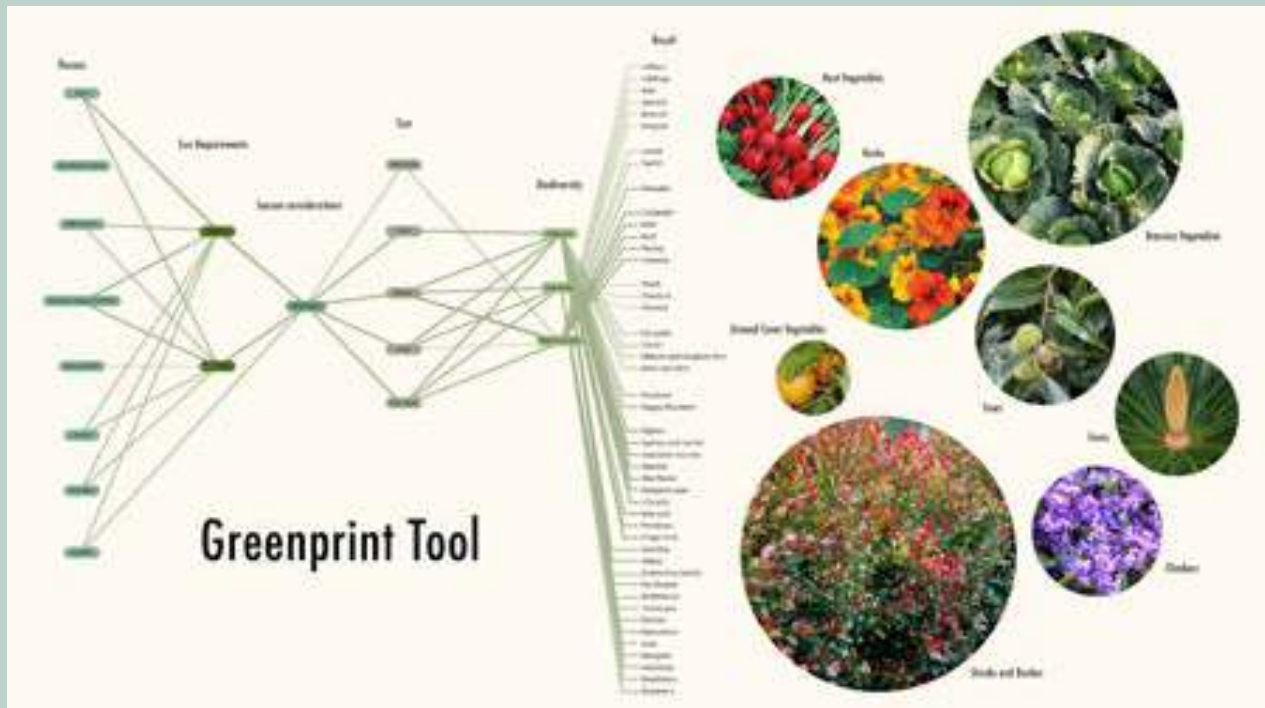
The STREAT horticulture and innovation teams leveraged a "GreenPrinting" tool created by a team of staff and skilled volunteers at STREAT. This tool helps design tailored urban agriculture gardens by leveraging a knowledge base of a huge range of urban garden design considerations. Design considerations span logistics, existing infrastructure, site needs, climate considerations, choreographing type of produce, functionality, sustainability, garden themes, footprint, compliance, aesthetics, intended experience and intended beneficiaries. Customised and optimal garden recommendations were provided, taking specific needs into account. The recommendations were then used to design the gardens.

Considerations included:

- Food security—what might grow easily and be harvested for those experiencing food insecurity? What produce might be easily used in cooking demonstrations with recipes to try at home?
- Growing diverse produce representative of the VU community (students and staff).
- Mindfulness—what might be useful to grow to create an enjoyable experience, stimulating a range of senses, including touch and smell, to create a sensory garden area, such as herbs and edible flowers?
- Education about our land and country through growing native plants, including native edibles
- Education on propagating and growing
- Creating a provocation; how might we grow a garden that inspires the VU community to consider climate change, regeneration and seed saving?

STUDENT-LED

Students from the Regreening team conducted interviews with STREAT's horticulture team to better understand the green potential in the garden beds. Planning a garden is not a linear process because many factors depend on each other. For example, where garden beds are specifically located in a specific season will influence the plants that may grow there. The interviews with the horticulture experts helped develop a notion of what was possible to grow; however, the consideration of 'people' would determine what was needed.

Co-Design

The VU Students in the Regreening Team collaborated with a team of VU Built Environment students to generate design plans for the regreening area. Both groups of students and members of the Regreening Team (including STREAT members) attended planning sessions that simulated a real-world design experience for the VU Built Environment students—the Regreening Campus team were the clients. In the end, the VU Built Environment students pitched their plans at a seminar, which received direct feedback from the client (The Regreening Team including STREAT representation).

Co-design

Another Co-design aspect of regreening the VU Campus was collaborating with a local secondary school, Footscray High School, which had a well-established and productive "farm". The Regreening Team entered into a knowledge and action exchange with the school, where the team would attend regular sessions at the school's farm to imagine how the campus garden might function. In return, the Regreening Team offered people-power to develop a Caring for Country garden and specialist knowledge from VU's Indigenous academics within Moondani Balluk and grasses expert from Iramoo nursery. A selection of native grass seeds were provided to fill the Caring for Country garden.

Such co-design opportunities afforded these teams to walk alongside each other in their regreening journeys. It also offered gateways to community buy-in, establishing a broader commitment even before installing the garden.

Images: Above, Iramoo grasses; Below, Footscray High School farm

Research

The Regreening Team researched independently and collectively the horticultural aspects of the potential garden; for example, researching specific plants and where to get them. Research was also conducted on the various garden bed construction. The STREAT horticulture team recommended <u>Biofilta</u> food cubes as they offered the most flexibility in meeting the needs of the community, including:

- **Ease of maintenance**. As the Biofilta food cubes are wicking beds, with a water reservoir built in, water slowly wicks up to the plant roots, and the gardens require infrequent watering. As a proof of concept, STREAT's flagship garden in Collingwood uses wicking beds that have proven to be very successful.
- **Flexibility**. The food cubes are 1m x 1m and have been designed to be movable with a forklift so configurations can be changed over time as needs evolve.
- **Sustainability**. The food cubes are made from recycled plastic. We also chose to use recycled food crates to create cladding.
- **Productivity**. Food cubes are estimated to produce approximately 25kg of produce per annum each.
- **Interlinking.** The food cubes can be linked to each other to create a watering system if desired in the future.

Our Approach IN ACTION

IN THIS SECTION

Drawing on Human-Centred Design principles and the virtue of biophilia, the garden plan was influenced by community consultation through a range of actions. The following activities, tools and ideas were used in considering...

PEOPLE

- Surveys
- Interviews
- Prototyping
- Research
- Connection

Surveys

The campus community was surveyed to inform the planning of the garden design. The survey was developed by 3rd year psychology student Aisha Syed Masood in collaboration with VU researchers and sent to the VU community (staff and students) to gauge interest in creating edible gardens on campus, the perceived benefits, and related activities. Additionally, the survey allowed the VU community to share insights, ideas, suggestions—like type of plants—and raise any concerns they might have. For more on conducting surveys see Regen Toolkit 05.

Number of survey responders

181

The survey asked questions about:

- connection to place and a sense of belonging
- whether COVID-19 restrictions had negatively impacted on a sense of belonging
- whether connecting with nature was important for health and wellbeing during the COVID-19 pandemic
- food insecurity
- the quality of green space on campus
- whether an edible community garden on campus would be beneficial
- perceptions of green spaces and their benefits to the environment
- whether green spaces on campus might strengthen students' sense of connection and belonging
- the importance of including indigenous plants
- the likelihood of contributing to various aspects of the garden
- the likelihood of participating in workshops related to Indigenous plants, Indigenous knowledges, protecting country, planetary health and sustainability
- the likelihood of contributing to activities responding to food insecurity or food waste.

What did the VU community say?

Of the 181 responses to the survey at least 135 provided comments to a number of questions. The snapshot below is representative of the comments.

PERCEIVED BENEFITS

A SPACE TO GATHER AND CONNECT WITH OTHERS

Socialise; Get out of the office for meetings; Bring people together- 'like minded', culturally diverse, staff and students

CREATING A SENSE OF COMMUNITY & BELONGING

Sense of connection and belonging on campus; Make VU a more inviting and welcoming space; Shared purpose

ACCESS TO FRESH, NUTRITIOUS FOOD

For lunches (e.g., add herbs); for the food insecure (with dignity); nutrition- for students surviving on 2 minute noodles etc.

ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS/AWARENESS

Reduce food waste and food miles; cleaner air; increased biodiversity; mitigate effects of urban heat island; awareness of where food comes from

A SPACE FOR LEARNING AND SHARING

Gardening skills; Indigenous plants and knowledge- Connection to Country; Cross-cultural- culinary knowledge, experience and food; Nutrition; Sustainability

FOSTER SENSE OF ACHIEVEMENT AND PRIDE

Sense of achievement in growing plants; instilling a sense of pride as a VU staff/student

VU VALUES REFLECTED IN A TANGIBLE WAY

Commitment to staff, student, community wellbeing and to Planetary Health and Protection of Country

CONNECTING WITH NATURE FOR WELLBEING

A calming place to relax or study- de-stress; gardening and green spaces as therapeutic; Connecting with Country/Place/Earth

INTERVIEWS

Interviews were conducted with various stakeholders such as executive staff at Victoria University to seek interest and support in the project as well as to prepare for the way forward. Victoria University is a large organisation with approximately 3100 staff members and 40,000 students across all campuses. There are many moving parts to have such a large organisation function and the Regreening Team sought to discover who the various internal stakeholders might be. For more on the interviewing process see Regen Toolkit 05.

> **It's really essential that we as humans, for our wellbeing, we connect and are surrounded by nature.**

INTERVIEWEE

Facilitator's Guide
PROTOTYPING

About

Using the chalk outline of the garden beds on campus (see Mapping activity in Place section) and props like cardboard boxes to represent future garden beds, the Regreening Team moved through the space to connect and experience it, in other words, step into their designs. The team were provided with a set of cards describing potential end-users to whom they had to embody, for example, a student seeking a calm place to de-stress after an exam. This kind of Bodystorming activity allowed team members to consider the combination of social, psychological and contextual factors within a space that would not be apparent by simply looking at a two-dimensional drawing. The team was able to derive detailed insights to help establish elements of the garden before it was implemented.

Method

- Pick a card and imagine, what was I doing before now? How might I be feeling? What might I be seeking?
- While walking through the garden space, consider what you would want from the garden? What plants would you like to see and why? How might you want the garden to look or feel?
- Write your ideas on the cardboard boxes or chalk them on the ground.
- Collect the data. What are the common themes among people's experiences?

Tools

Boxes
Markers
Chalk

... and inspiration

Using the Insights Library and various sources of research the Regreening Team studied Human-Centred design, co-design, biophilia, inclusive design and trauma-informed practice to ensure that the regreening taking place was in the interests of the community it seeks to serve. Also, researching other community garden initiatives were useful to imagine the end result. For more on research sources see Regen Toolkit 01.

LOCAL

- STREAT
- Footscray High School Farm
- Indigenous Plant Use by Zena Cumpston
- Regen Melbourne
- Future Food System
- Melbourne Food Forest
- Permaculture News
- The Cape
- Murundaka Co-Housing Community Garden

GLOBAL

- WHO—Urban green spaces: a brief for action
- Adam Purple and the Garden of Eden
- Singapore Urban Farms
- Cycloponics in Paris
- River Cottage

Connection

Coming together regularly is vitally important. Meetings were conducted weekly with a combination of students, researchers and STREAT staff always present. Every member of the team had competing priorities—students had study and part-time jobs, researchers had teaching or other research projects, and STREAT staff were running STREAT. That is the reality for most people, not to mention other priorities such as caring for family and other community commitments. It was not often that we were able to meet together across all projects. One important event was held at the end of 2021 when each project showcased their work. It was also the first time we had had a chance to meet each other face to face. Celebrating each other and our world at the Footscray Community Arts Centre was an excellent motivator for the project's next phase.

3. Creation and Care

The VU garden was created with the STREAT horticulture team overseeing the Biofilta bed positioning, bed preparation and plant provision. The Regreening Team discussed many options for cladding the Biofilta beds—metal, plastic or wood with a significant consideration toward repurposed materials. Repurposed wood from warehousing pallets became the final choice as they are fairly commonplace and leave a limited carbon footprint when it comes to construction.

For instance, wood from a warehousing pallet is easy enough to shape with people-power, a saw, hammer and nails. A metal construction would take electrical tools. Another option was repurposing plastic bottles into cladding for the garden beds through another VU Student initiative; however, the size of our project would have been too large, and the needs too specific. So, the more natural option was selected, and the garden beds were clad with reused warehousing pallets.

Our Approach IN ACTION

IN THIS SECTION

The following activities, tools and ideas resulted in garden ...

CREATION AND CARE

- **Plant selection**
- **Promoting the garden**
- **Workshops and training**
- **Setting up a garden club**
- **Seed library**

Plant selection

Based on the earlier research and collaboration, the STREAT horticulture team prepared an indicative plant list. The gardens were created in time for the summer planting. Check out the [Regenerative City Instagram](#) page to see the gardens, learn what was planted and how people engage with the garden. The site has been created and managed by student members of the Regreening Team to inform garden users about plant availability and to support engagement with the gardens. The interest from the garden users can also guide plant selection for future seasons; for instance, plenty of people enjoyed picking the lettuce leaves and bunches of rocket and nasturtium. For more on social media see Regen Toolkit 06.

Promoting the garden

Early on, we watched the plants thrive, and the garden beds turned into lush habitats of green and colour. One of the purposes of the gardens was to engage people to create and utilise a community garden. That purpose was soon imagined when people started harvesting the produce. There was one problem, some of the plants were becoming over-picked. We needed a way to manage the planting and picking to meet the needs of the garden users. Signs were created to communicate with and engage garden users for information and to invite participation.

Physical signs sit in the garden bed, but there is a lot of information to communicate. To avoid cluttering the garden beds with signs, QR codes are also available on the sides, linking to the Regenerative City Instagram page, with further guidance.

As well as having a social media presence, the Regreening Team actively promoted the garden as part of on-campus festivals and events such as VU Open Day. It was an opportunity for existing and future students to engage with the garden—physically by taste testing some nasturtium pesto and watermelon skewers—but also connecting to the purpose of the regreening project—to respond to the needs of the VU community, including the need to protect Country.

VU OPEN DAY

Workshops and training

The Regreening Campus project is about more than creating an edible garden that engages the people it intends to serve. It is also an instrument of education and shifting patterns of behaviour and thinking. For the garden to function in such a way, connection is key. At various events, the Regreening Team have run workshops, for example, on how to propagate plants or check out the video on the Regenerative City Instagram page on how to activate broccoli nodes. Importantly, the Regreening team have been learning and educating about native ingredients such as Davidson's plum, wattle seed and quandong, with ingredients supplied by Pawa.

WORKSHOPS
AND
TRAINING

PLANT PROPAGATION

About

Throughout the project, plant propagation became a challenge that many of the Regreening Team took on. Propagation is the process of reproducing a plant from a cutting of a parent plant. The Regreening Team propagated various herbs and other plants. Basil worked rather well and was an appreciated knack as store-bought herbs have become quite expensive.

Method

- Select the stem of the plant you wish to propagate. You will need about 10 to 20 cm of stem.
- Cut diagonally just below a node if you can locate one. A node is a little bump that looks like it is about to sprout something. A diagonal cut helps your plant drink water.
- Place the cutting in a glass jar with fresh water and change it every few days so it does not become stagnant.
- Place the cutting in similar conditions required by the parent plant.
- Allow the roots to grow to half the length of the original cutting and then transfer them into a small pot. Keep them in similar conditions. An old mug and recycled water bottle work well as pots.

Tools

Plant cutting, glass jar, potting mix, old mug and recycled plastic water bottle.

Setting up a garden club

Nearing the end of the project it was important to ensure that the garden and associated activities would be sustained beyond the project. Within VU, a reasonable response to the concern was to set up a student-led Garden Club as garden caretakers. In establishing the garden club, a Garden Club User Guide was created to ensure the mission of the VU community garden lived on. Other considerations in the user guide required for garden sustainability are:

- Committee roles and responsibilities
- Maintenance
  - Annual, weekly, fortnightly, monthly and seasonal seasonally schedules for planting and maintenance
  - Biofilta bed management
  - Disposal of waste (For more on waste management see Regen Toolkit 04)
  - Pests (maintaining organic responses to pests and disease)
  - Inventory and replacing
- Health, safety and welfare
  - Code of conduct
  - Complaints and conflict - internal and external
  - OH&S
  - Insurance/duty of care
- Funding
  - Processes for purchasing & planting schedule
  - Fundraising initiatives

THE CLUB MISSION

The club combines education and action with the aim of empowering students and staff to take action on regenerative systems and protecting country.

The club will grow a range of indigenous, culturally diverse, edible, sensory and ornamental plants as an instrument for empowerment. We will achieve this through inclusive and respectful community participation, knowledge sharing and inspiring collective action.

Food insecurity and declining wellbeing are growing contemporary concerns. We recognise that small nudges inspire bigger changes. The club seeks to motivate conversations around regenerative thinking, climate action and interventions..

TO COME

Setting up a seed library has been an aim of the Regreening Team from the outset. A seed library is effectively an allocated space where people can swap seeds. For instance, at the end of the rocket harvest, the seeds were collected. A seed library would provide opportunity for the rocket seeds to be shared by the community and for others to donate their excess seeds. There are several benefits to the seed library, such as connecting people to the garden and each other through seed stories. Also, the users of the garden are fairly local and would share seeds from plants that have successfully grown in similar environmental conditions, giving the seeds an edge from the outset.

REGEN

INNOVATE.EDUCATE.ACT

4. Reflection

The Green Action Diary was a way for the Regreening Team to take stock of their regreening or environmental journey at the start of the project and to keep track of the greening actions throughout the project. See Regen Toolkit 01 for further information.

"it was empowering to know what the community wants and how we can support in building that for them"

"I wasn't super aware of how plants can improve people's mental health"

STUDENT
REFLECTIONS

" it was just refreshing being around the plants and planting little seedlings"

"I understanding the strength of communities, and the disconnect that you can have from communities, and how they can still thrive, even with great obstacles"

WHAT DID WE FIND

05

What did we find?

Our Approach

IN REFLECTION

Collaboration is vital

Change takes time

Small steps matter

IN THIS SECTION

We unpack four key learnings from the project, each covering, strengths, opportunities and challenges.

Ethical progress is dependent on reflective practice

Collaboration is vital

Throughout the project collaboration was key. Cowley (2013) highlights that biophilia as a virtue needs to be both individual and collective. If in the collective there are "biophiles"—people who are moved emotionally and physically by and for nature in alignment with human flourishing—then the collective has a biophilic virtue, which can grow.

People's actions and emotions became contagious. When someone was excited by replanting and growing the root off-cuts of spring onions, it inspired others to do the same. The joy of watching those off-cuts, normally considered waste, grow into fully-fledged spring onions in their own right was shared, as was the satisfaction of eating them in a salad.

There were challenges in collaborating. The first half of the project took place under COVID-19 restrictions, which in Melbourne meant working from home between June to November in 2021. Our physical connection to place and each other was compromised. Ordinarily, there would have been many more opportunities to congregate at a place like the VU Campus or STREAT. We managed through mostly by meeting online and using tech tools like Miro.

All members of the Regreening Team had other roles and competing priorities (see Connection in the Planning phase). Finding time when everyone was available to meet was particularly tricky and often smaller groups were formed to work on particular aspects of the project. Even post-COVID-19 lockdowns, the tech tools were useful as a shared repository of knowledge and ideation.

Change takes time

the community

Of course, the creation of the garden, while important, is not the most significant outcome of the project. Rather, the creation of a biophilic collective was, which required attitudes to shift. Such endeavours take time, and all members of a collective move in their own unique way and pace. Time and connection were linked. People connect more deeply as time goes on. Ideally, having a firm timeframe on such a project might not happen, and instead, the project is allowed to unfold at its own pace like a seed into a great tree. However, we were time-limited, so some of the processes had to be compelled. Again COVID-19 lockdowns impacted on the project as everything seemed to move slower in an online environment. It became easier to make decisions when the place and people that the decisions were about were visible.

Such a scenario did give the students in the Regreening Team a taste of actual community development work. Through consultation, they gave voice to various stakeholders within the university, resulting in actions that serve the community.

the collective

One of the challenges was ensuring all voices were heard when there were so many voices to consider (3100 staff members and 40,000 students). Also, what happens when voices disagree? In such a situation, more time is needed to reach cohesion; however, considering the time limitations, the project needed progress. The Regreening Team prioritised student voices throughout the project while caring for the broader community.

The VU community

3100
staff

40,000
students

SMALL STEPS MATTER

The United Nations Environment Programme and GRID-Arendal and Behavioural Insights Team (2020) created the Little Book of Green Nudges, so our small steps were known as 'green nudges'. We often reminded ourselves of the metaphor that from small seeds, mighty trees grow and a ring on a tree takes time to mature. In other words, every little step counted and, over time, led to the eventual creation of the VU garden beds and the Garden Club collective. When things appeared not to be moving in the direction we liked or as fast as we liked, when we were faced with barriers, we had to hold onto the small steps. What the Regreening team did manage was to 'facilitate sustainable choices by making them more accessible' (p. 14)— the garden beds were purposefully located right in the middle of a natural point of congregation. They publicised 'the fact that many people are already adopting a green behaviour' (p. 22) through the Regenerative City Instagram page. We have made many small steps, and there are many more small steps to come.

Ethical progress is dependent on reflective practice

Decades ago, Rittel and Webber (1973) unpacked the notion of a wicked problem. A wicked problem is like a dilemma where there are pros and cons, whichever way you turn. It is also complicated as it is not often localised. A localised problem, like 'what should I do with my green waste?' has a fairly straightforward answer, keep a green waste bin. Global problems are more complicated as they involve many more stakeholders at various levels. For instance, how a nation responds to the climate emergency impacts all others. Rittel and Webber make the argument that as time goes on, most problems become wicked problems in an ever-growing global and technologically advanced community. Our immediate world is expanding quickly, so even though our project was local, many aspects made the project complicated, and the sheer number of stakeholders was one of them. Furthermore, navigating a myriad of policies and procedures not always designed for fast action. It is easy in such a circumstance to feel paralysed from even taking small steps. The only way to move forward is through reflective practice and ethical consideration.

change is an emotional journey

We started our journey together reflecting on a story told by Jonica Newby from Changing minds on climate change (Radio National 2021). Jonica recounts burgeoning grief at the realisation that the snow in Australia's alpine regions is under threat and maybe one day soon lost. We reflected emotionally. How did we feel about climate change? What might be lost for us? How do these realisations motivate action? Are we working toward action for ourselves or the collective good? Or both? How might others' experiences and perspectives differ from our own? There are no wrong answers to such questions, but they were important to ask along the way to ensure that we stayed aware of the, at times, wickedness we found ourselves in and to find hope for the future. We understood that together finding hope made the journey possible. For more on stories and reflection see Regen Toolkit 02.

Changing minds on climate change

Broadcast Wed 22 Dec 2021 at 6:05pm

LISTEN 53m

Gardening and horticulture have always been a big part of my life personally and professionally. However, participating in this project gave me the opportunity to witness how profound the effects of re-greening an area can be on the community that surrounds it.

Tom

Student reflection

References

Clowney, D. (2013). *Biophilia as an Environmental Virtue.* Journal of Agricultural and Environmental Ethics, 26, 999–1014. doi:10.1007/s10806-013-9437-z

Design Council (2019) *Framework for Innovation: Design Council's evolved Double Diamond*. Design Council. https://www.designcouncil.org.uk/our-work/skills-learning/tools-frameworks/framework-for-innovation-design-councils-evolved-double-diamond/

Radio National (2021, May 20). *Changing minds on climate change*. ABC. https://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/bigideas/changing-minds-on-climate-change/13310250

Rittel, H., & Webber, M. (1973). Dilemmas in a general theory of planning. Policy Sciences, 4, 155–169.

Panlasigui, S., Spotswood, E., Beller, E., & Grossinger, R. (2021). *Biophilia beyond the Building: Applying the Tools of Urban Biodiversity Planning to Create Biophilic Cities*. Sustainability, 13, 1–15. doi:10.3390/su13052450

United Nations Environment Programme, GRID- Arendal and Behavioural Insights Team (2020). *The Little Book of Green Nudges: 40 Nudges to Spark Sustainable Behaviour on Campus*. Nairobi and Arendal: UNEP and GRID-Arendal.

REGEN TOOLKIT

04 Waste as a Resource

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY

STREAT
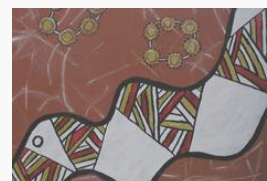
Waste as a Resource

A toolkit that reframes waste as useful and provides ideas for change.

By Fiona Meighan

Table of Contents

01 About this toolkit

This toolkit focuses on the core theme of reframing waste as a resource and should be read in conjunction with the other toolkits featured in the diagram below.

This toolkit shares:

- **The activities** VU students and staff took part in along with information about the various initiatives, what we did and what was achieved.
- **Background** about the importance of reframing waste in the food system as a resource.
- **Tools and templates** used as the basis of core activities. Note: some tools and templates referenced were created by industry partner STREAT and are thus housed at relevant online locations as indicated.

01 REGENERATIVE CITY SYLLABUS

02 STORIES OF PLACE & US

04 WASTE AS A RESOURCE

03 REGREENING CAMPUS

05 COMMUNITY BASED RESEARCH

06 SOCIAL MEDIA FOR ACTION

WHY FOOD WASTE

02

Why food and food waste matters

Why food and food waste presents a huge problem and opportunity

SOME UNSAVOURY FOOD WASTE FACTS

The food waste ecosystem is a fertile starting point for the Regenerative City Living Lab with the potential for high impact results. For context, it would be good to say here are some interesting facts to chew on but they are quite unpalatable. From the macro to the micro we have got huge problems with food waste.

Worldwide
- One third of the world's food is wasted.
- If food waste was a country, it would be the third largest greenhouse gas emitter, behind the USA and China.
- 25% of water used in agriculture is used to grow food that is wasted – throwing away one beef burger wastes the same amount of water as a 90-minute shower! While its vegetarian cousin is certainly better water-wise, chuck out an Impossible burger and it still equates to a 23-minute shower!
- Food waste produces 8% of global greenhouse gas emissions.
- Food in landfill converts to methane, one of the worst greenhouse gases.

... and in Australia

- 94% of food waste ends up in landfill

- 1 billion disposable coffee cups end up in landfill per annum

- The average person doesn't reliably know what goes into which recycling bin

- Despite plastics being recyclable the majority also need virgin plastic made from oil to be added to them to make into new products

■ Landfill   ■ Compost   ■ Food rescue (0.1%)

Waste in Australia

0   25   50   75   100
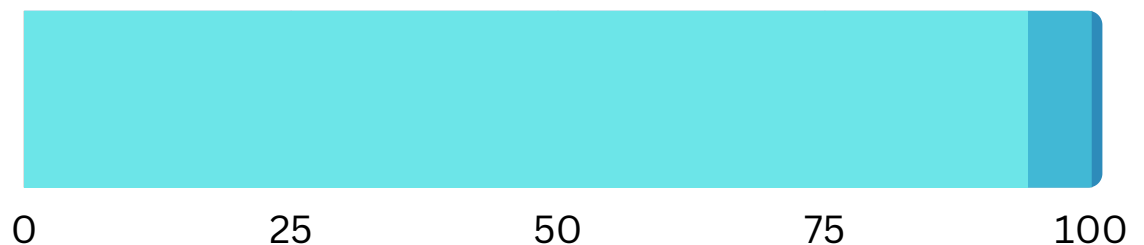
… in Melbourne

- The average City of Melbourne food business's landfill bin contains 34% food waste.
- Thrown out food from Melbourne's food businesses could be feeding over 70,000 people a year.

To add to these problems and figures, is the fact that most people are unaware of the enormity of our food waste problem

Sources of figures above: Sustainability Victoria, Fight food Waste Cooperative Research Centre, City of Melbourne, Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment and the World Economic Forum

WHAT WAS OUR AIM

03

What was our aim and approach?
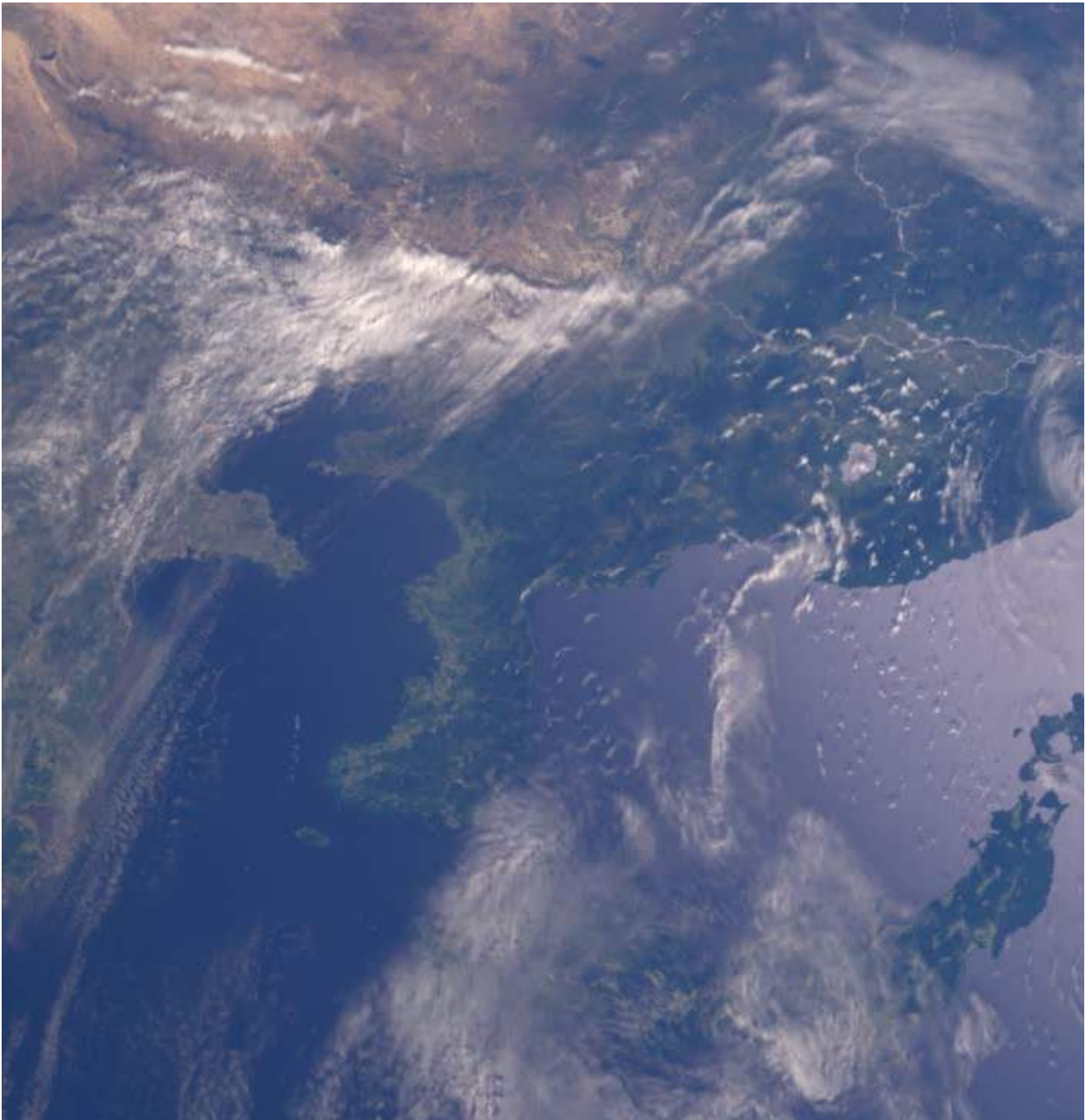
THE OPPORTUNITY TO DIVERT AND CONVERT
CIRCULAR DESIGN AND ZERO WASTE APPROACHES

Considering food waste and the current broken food system there are significant opportunities to:

- Eliminate or reduce food waste

- Divert food stream waste from landfill to be composted or used elsewhere

- Identify how food waste could be used at a higher value, for example, considering a plant like nettles in the following hierarchy: compost>plant fertilizer>human food>a saleable product that the profits can go to

- Shorten the food chain to reduce carbon footprints through growing and cooking locally

WHAT DID WE DO

04

What did we do?

STUDENTS WERE INVITED TO TAKE PART IN THE FOLLOWING INITIATIVES:

4-WEEK DESIGN THINKING SPRINT CHALLENGE

Students from Victoria University (VU) were invited to participate in the Design Sprint and 10 to 20 students took up the challenge at various stages. Students went through a guided four-week Design Thinking Sprint led by STREAT and partner MAKE Studios. For more on the recruitment process see Regen Toolkit 01.

The challenge was to **"Divert and Convert"** from landfill to creating a regenerative resource or "Zero waste food" – giving food scraps a new lease on life".

Students were asked to consider how they could help VU Footscray Campus community members take action to divert food waste from landfill and instead ensure it is used in regenerative ways such as placing it in compost.

OPEN SAUCE PROJECT

A project about creating circular food waste products led by STREAT and funded by Sustainability Victoria.

Two VU students were invited to shadow the Open Sauce project team members to learn from an in-progress, leading-edge project dealing with food stream waste. Student engagement was across two topic areas:

Part A: Ground zero
Baselining the food waste stream and value chain—that is to take stock of the current circumstance—across participating food system social enterprises and identifying ways to potentially share resources across organisations.

Part B- Open sauce alchemy
Turning waste into treasure, ideating products that could be created from food stream waste materials—both food and non-food. For more on ideation , the process of generating ideas, see Regen Toolkit 03. Examples included exploring food products made from parts of the fruit or vegetable that would often be thrown away or products made from sturdy bulk food packaging that restaurants and cafes go through in high volumes or kits made from packaging or plastic milk containers such as lunchboxes.

DESIGN THINKING STUDENT PARTICIPATION AND ENGAGEMENT:

Convert and Divert

IN THIS SECTION

The following section will outline the tools and ideas supporting **Design Sprinting.**

- REFLECTING ON THE CHALLENGE AREA
- IDENTIFYING TARGET USER GROUPS
- LANDSCAPE REVIEW
- IDEATING AND PROTOTYPING
- CONDUCTING RESEARCH
- SYNTHESIS OF RESEARCH FINDINGS
- THE PITCH

Convert and Divert

Image: The Miro board used for session 1 of the Design sprint

VU students were invited to take part in a four-week Design Thinking design sprint to tackle challenge areas related to planetary health, led by STREAT, MAKE Studios and VU. Initially planned to be a face-to-face one-day hackathon, COVID lockdowns prevented an in-person event to be possible.
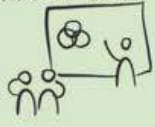
Instead, a four-week guided online sprint was carried out. Students self-selected into teams of 2-4 according to the challenge area they were interested in. All sessions were carried out online using Zoom (including breakout rooms to be able to work in smaller and larger groups as appropriate) and online digital whiteboard, Miro.

SPRINT PLAN

Week 1
9 August
PROJECT SETUP

Session outcomes: Choose a challenge and form a team

Homework (4 hrs)

Choose audience and develop an empathy map

Team planning: how and when you'll work together

Decide on the area of your challenge you'll explore; research existing ideas in this space

Week 2
16 August
IDEATION

Session outcomes: Lots of ideas generated, and one idea chosen to take into testing

Homework (4 hrs)

You'll receive a testing workbook with tools for testing your idea

Conduct testing and document your findings. This is formative testing - testing to learn.

Week 3
23 August
ITERATION + DEVELOPMENT

Session outcomes: Concpet canvas with MPV concept and potential outcomes

Homework (4 hrs)

Prepare your pitch and supporting materials to communicate your concept.

Week 4
30 August
THE BIG PITCH!

Session outcomes: Projects pitched and prizes awarded

Ongoing: Project storytelling

Each week, participants will be asked to respond to a prompt question, either in text or by contributing to a virtual 'video booth.'

These responses will help to shape the storytelling element of the sprint.

Design sprint

Students were given an introduction to Design Thinking and guided through an innovation process comprising:

- Reflecting on the challenge area
- Identifying target user groups
- Landscape review
- Ideating and prototyping
- Conducting research
- Synthesis of research findings
- The pitch

Identifying target user groups

The students had to identify the target user groups they would like to solve for by creating stakeholder maps. The example provided is of one team's stakeholder map for their target user group

Landscape review

Students gathered inspiration and gained knowledge from relevant academic and grey literature and online sources and sharing back. For more on conducting research see Regen Toolkit 03.

Ideating and prototyping

Starting with simple rapid ideation activities such as Crazy 8s and Design Ts and then designing more tangible prototypes to be tested. For more on ideation and prototyping see Regen Toolkit 03 or below in the Open Sauce project.

Images: Above, example of early stage prototypes; Below, later stage prototype.

5. PROTOTYPE

Little Pantry at VU

VU + STREAT

CREATING A RESEARCH PLAN AND CONDUCTING RESEARCH

Activities students engaged in ranged from conducting surveys and interviews to observations and learning more about VU campus infrastructure to understand how viable and feasible their ideas were as well as how desirable they might be. This also included testing prototypes. For more on conducting research see Regen Toolkit 05.

Synthesis

Students synthesised the research findings and iterative ideas. Synthesis is the act of pulling together a range of components to create a whole. The below image is an example of synthesising in Miro.

The pitch

The four week sprint culminated in a pitch session where teams pitched their ideas to guest judges.

Example challenge ideas prototyped included:
- A community pantry
- An online "divert and convert" community
- Zero waste online interactive resources
- A sustainability / regeneration club – the winning idea that has now been taken forward and implemented

	Green Bean	Tribal contributor	Collective Impactor	Change Creator
Intended outcome	At the end of Green Bean badge you will understand human and planetary health issues that emerge from excess waste; and have applied this understanding to influence change in your own waste reducing behavior.	At the end of Tribal Contributor badge you will be able to identify social and community-based opportunities to contribute to waste reduction and have engaged with others in the VU community improving our planetary health.	On completing Collective Impactor Badge you will be able to recognise problems and opportunities to reduce waste in a range of contexts; and have actively engaged others to do the same.	You lead by example and drive the development of waste reducing innovations in personal, community and professional life.
Activities	☐ Complete 2 online modules ☐ Minimise waste I produce - Evidence waste audit and reduction ☐ Keeping materials in use ☐ Participate in one of; ☐ Clean up Australia Day ☐ Zero-Waste Cooking Class	☐ Complete 2 online modules ☐ Reducing my consumption of energy ☐ Regenerate our natural systems - Evidence of energy consumption audit and reduction ☐ Participate in one of; ☐ Seeds to Success ☐ Composting Workshop ☐ SLUGG Volunteer	☐ Complete online modules ☐ Support circular economies ☐ Developing Regenerative Community Education Resources Module ☐ Participate in one of; ☐ Circular economies workshop	☐ Complete Student-Led project ☐ Provide leadership in community regenerative activities
Time Req.	10 hours	10 hours	10 hours	10 hours
Graduate Attributes	*Graduate Attributes* (1b, 1d, 2a, 2c, 2d, 3a, 3b, 3c, 3d)	*Graduate Attributes* (1a, 1d, 2c, 2d, 3b, 3c, 3d)	*Graduate Attributes* (1b, 1c, 2b, 2c, 2d, 3b, 3c, 3d)	This program supports the development of students through transformative processes to be; Adaptable and capable 21st century citizens who can communicate effectively, work collaboratively, think critically and solve complex problems

Spotlight: The winning idea, the Victoria University Regenerative Collective (VURC)

The VURC began developing the program by reverse engineering from the capabilities they wanted participating students to gain from completing the course.

Initially a survey was sent out to over 100 staff and students to ascertain a general level of understanding on regenerative practices and eco action. The VURC hoped that the survey responses would give them a baseline to begin building their lessons. The survey results showed a great interest from the VU community to become more enlightened on what personal actions they could make towards a more regenerative future. There was also a desire for the course to be officially recognised on student participant's academic transcript, which would also hopefully lead to a greater commitment in completion from the participants.

The team built a detailed framework which broke down the outcomes, activities and measurement of each level and topic in the course. A great addition to the framework was the concept of a feedback loop where participants had to demonstrate that they had passed on learnings to their wider personal, work or university communities. This addition was hoped to become a hurdle requirement.

When the development of individual teaching plans began the time constraints on the team was felt more keenly. Two-thirds of the VURC consisted of mature age students with considerable external work and family commitments. The ability to meet consistently became more and more challenging and when met with the realisation of how much more commitment the running of the classes would require the group disbanded.

The Design Sprints were a terrific short, and sharp inititative to raise awareness of the Regenerative City Living Lab project across the VU community. It was also a great program to get the necessary conversations and initiatives started. A great deal of foundational work was conducted and there is an opportunity for other VU students to pick up where they left off and complete the vision of a Regenerative Collective.

Could you briefly describe your regenerative project?

Virginia and Al: The VU Sustainability Collective (VUSC) is a student-led project that is creating a transformative sustainability development program for VU Students. The program is designed to develop VU graduates with an understanding of sustainable and regenerative practises, equip and enable them with resources and tools to take individual action and contribute to positive collective impact.

In alignment with the VU Strategic Plan 2022-2028, this program aims to enact Victoria University's commitment to improve the health and wellbeing of our local and global communities, and the planet that we share. VUCS is anticipated to be a free, interactive and engaging sustainability program for current VU students commencing Semester One, Block 1 2022. Once students have completed the requirements, the Sustainable Graduate Program will be included on a student's VU Extra Transcript.

What motivates you to be part of the RCLL?

Virginia: the opportunity to partake in evidence-based collaborative design thinking processes as well as gaining a sense of belonging to a group devoted to social and ecological change.

Al: Make the change we want to see in the world. We are privileged. And I think this means that if we can recognise issues, we also have a responsibility to give back to the world. And how to do that? Truth, I'm learning. Engaging in different groups and opportunities gives insight to know how to apply our own skills in more effective ways. And then we can take action in doing what we can, even just a step (or a stumble) in a direction that enriches the world around us.

What inspired you most during the 4-week course to take action?

Virgina: The chance to contribute to a group that is genuinely committed to creating lasting systemic resilience in the local and VU community inspired me to take action.

Al: I was inspired by learning more about how to make change, and how people can come together to create change collectively. What can be done and what can I contribute to that process? Sustainable living is so important; we have been conditioned to live at a pace that consumes. In the course we took time to have a good old look at that honestly.

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND LEARNING IN A REAL-WORLD CIRCULAR PROJECT:

Open Sauce

IN THIS SECTION

The following section will outline the tools and ideas behind the **Open Sauce** project.

- INTERVIEWS
- WASTE AUDIT
- DEEP SYNTHESIS
- IDEATION
- GLUTWATCH
- MELBOURNE KNOWLEDGE WEEK

OPEN SAUCE

Students were presented with an opportunity to shadow and learn from a multi-disciplinary team in an exciting circular project, Open Sauce.

In response to an inequitable food system, and catalysed by the COVID pandemic, a group of food social enterprises formed to create a collective with the goal to build a fair, regenerative and connected food system. The formation of this collective, Moving Feast, kickstarted a number of initiatives from providing food relief to training young people facing disadvantage. Please see the Moving Feast website for more information.

One of Moving Feast's most exciting projects is Open Sauce. Supported by the Victorian Government's Recycling Victoria Innovation Fund as part of the Circular Economy Business Innovation Centre (CEBIC) and working with 12 Moving Feast collective partners, the Open Sauce project spans: auditing and mapping – supply & value chains, waste, assets, skills; creating new circular product ideas; creating retail opportunities; and open innovation with workshops and student engagement. The two subsequent pages outline the project topic areas.

TOPIC AREA 1:
Open Sauce ground zero - baselining waste and designing for impact

Contribution: waste audit, open innovation behaviour change, community engagement

Pictured: STREAT summer intern students who conducted STREAT's first waste audit that became the foundation of our first Planet Plan published in 2018

BACKGROUND

Topic areas 1 and 2 are part of a project called "Open Sauce"

Open Sauce is an open innovation project run across a network of Victoria's leading food social enterprises to ensure precious produce and by-products are tasted not wasted. The project will map supply chains and waste streams across the network and invite VU students and members of the public to work alongside environmentalists, chefs and product developers to create a delicious range of new circular products for retail in Victoria. This project is at the nexus of People and Planet and will engage the public around food waste, train and employ some of the state's most marginalised communities in food development and production, and also help local food social enterprises achieve zero organics to landfill.

Topic areas 1 and 2 are of particular importance because:

- 1/3 of the world's food is wasted and produces 8% of global greenhouse gas emissions.
- If food waste was a country, it would be the third largest greenhouse gas emitter, behind the USA and China.
- Closer to home, more than one third of the average garbage bin from food businesses and households is food waste.
- Our food system social enterprises have a huge opportunity to create beacon proof points on how we can re-think and reframe waste as a powerful, regenerative resource.
- VU students have an opportunity to contribute directly to this project and also to take what they learn back to the Regenerative City project and VU.

HOW MIGHT WE...

Work to support a baseline waste audit and supply chain mapping and then identify and test areas of impact that will help the Open Sauce system and Vic Uni go "deeper shades of green"

TOPIC AREA 1 focusses on baselining waste streams and identifying opportunities to consider and test ways to eliminate, reduce and reuse waste. There will be opportunities for VU placement students to:

- Work with STREAT and their partners to support conducting a food and beverage waste audit and map supply chains and waste from farms, markets, kitchens and production facilities (over 100 tonnes of waste)
- Identify areas of priority impact in the audit. This could include:
  - identifying "waste" that could be given a new lease of life
  - supply chain interventions
  - a range of behavioural interventions tested with project participants to reduce food waste at home and work.
  - considering demand driven growing to reduce over-production of food
- Take part in open innovation activities to help eliminate waste across the whole system
- Identify how a mapping/auditing process and behaviour interventions could be adapted and used at VU's Footscray campus and beyond

Open Sauce Alchemy - turning waste into treasure

Contribution: open innovation participation, contribution to product development, education materials and workshop development

BACKGROUND

As described earlier (see pg 3), Topics 1 and 2 are part of Open Sauce, an open innovation project run across a network of Victoria's leading food social enterprises to ensure precious produce and by-products are tasted not wasted. The focus for Topic 1 is setting the foundations by measuring and auditing waste streams then identifying priority areas to reduce and repurpose waste. In contrast, Topic 2 focuses on working alongside environmentalists, chefs, product developers and content designers to contribute to creating a delicious range of new circular products as well as educational materials and workshops to engage the community including VU students and young people in the west.

The food and beverage waste from social enterprise farms, markets and kitchens and production facilities amounts to over 100 tonnes of waste including:

- By-products of food and beverage production processes - including coffee grounds and husks, bakery goods, kitchen food scraps.
- Unsold farmers market produce & B grade produce destined for composting.
- B grade produce from social enterprise farms and gardens.

While food technologists and product designers will take the lead in converting waste into delicious new products, you will help them by taking part in open innovation activities that seek to understand prospective end customers, what their needs are aAnd how the new products can be packaged in a meaningful way that inspires behaviour change. You may also work towards community engagement and education (for customers, hospitality staff, universities) creating workshops and learning materials.

HOW MIGHT WE...

Contribute to create delicious circular economy products and engaging educational materials that support a circular economy and engage a range of people connected to our industry partner and young people in the west

Topic Area 2 focusses on opportunities for VU placement students to:

- Work with STREAT and our partners in an open innovation process to identify who the beneficiaries of zero waste produce could be, and what their needs are.
- Contribute to creating edible products from jams and preserves to dog biscuits from food scraps through supporting food technologists testing products with target user groups.
- Be involved in the marketing process.
- Embed storytelling, education and behaviour change into new products.
- Develop a range of resources and workshops for eliminating household, university precinct and cafe food waste, to take climate action and to have agency in fighting climate change.
- Contribute to creating an "atomic design" knowledge base of open source educational content - from labels to activism workshops.

Open Sauce
Activity Map
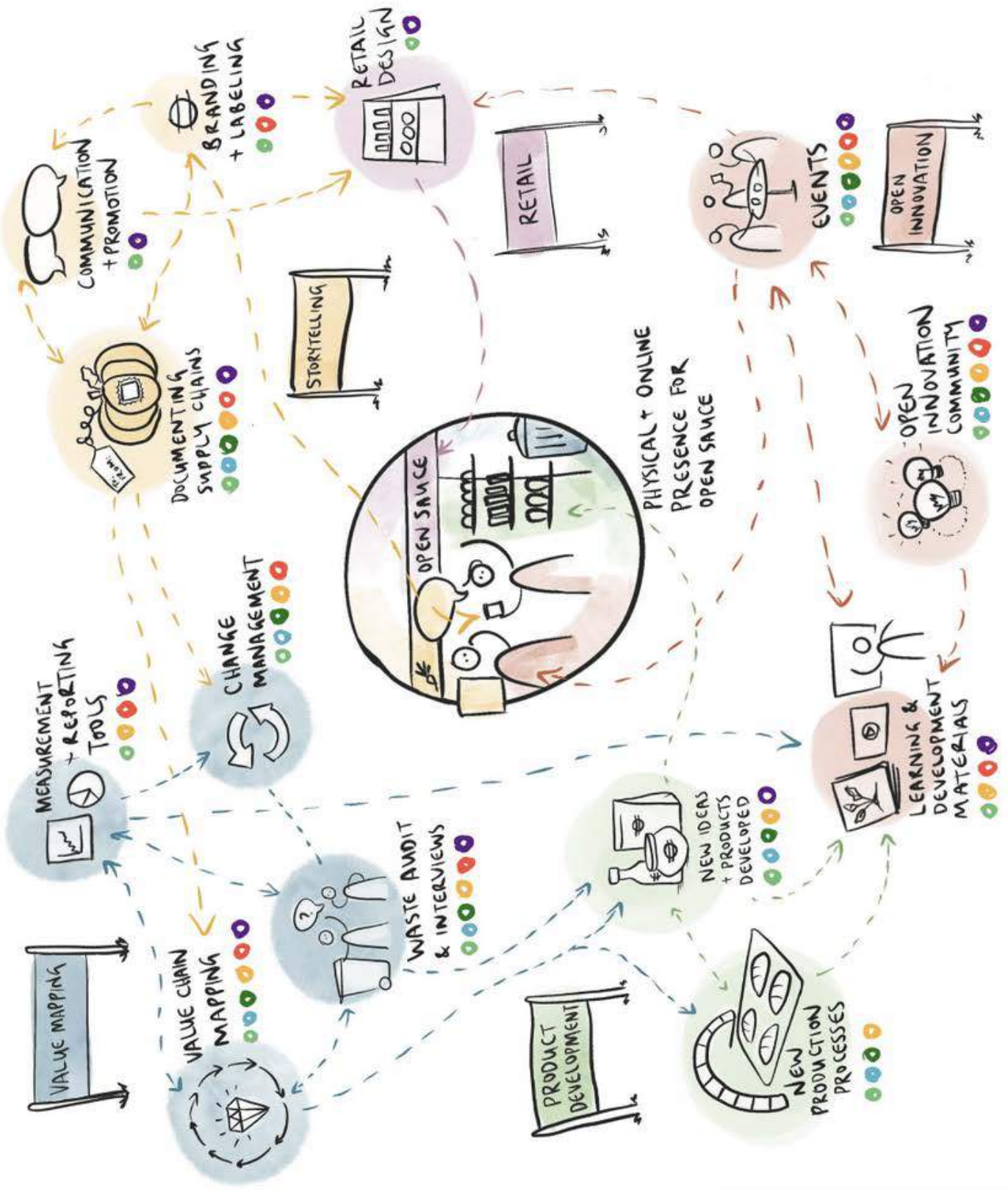
PARTNERS AND TEAMS

- STREAT
- Corner Store Network
- Melbourne Farmers Markets
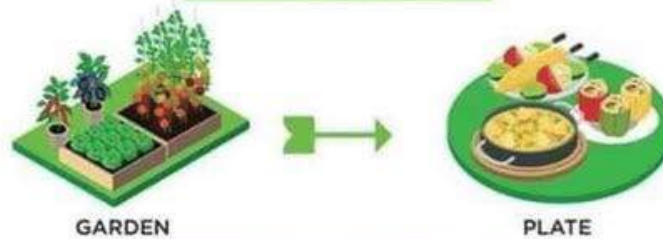- Cultivating Community
- MAKE Studios
- VU Students

Value Mapping

Measurement + Reporting Tools

Value Chain Mapping

Waste Audit & Interviews

Change Management

Documenting Supply Chains

Storytelling

Communication + Promotion

Branding + Labeling

Retail Design

Retail

Open Sauce

Physical + Online Presence for Open Sauce

Events

Open Innovation

Open Innovation Community

Learning & Development Materials

New Ideas + Products Developed

New Production Processes

Product Development

IN DEPTH INTERVIEWS

To get the project rolling, students conducted interviews with eight food-system social enterprises taking part in the Open Sauce project to understand logistics, waste estimates and "why" various items were in the food waste streams, elements of each partner's supply chain, resources and logistics.

For more on interviews see Regen Toolkit 05.

SHORTEN YOUR FOOD CHAIN

HOME GARDEN
GARDEN → PLATE

FARMER'S MARKET
FARM → TRANSPORTATION → MARKET → PLATE

SUPERMARKET
FARM → TRANSPORTATION → PACKAGING + DISTRIBUTION → STORE → PLATE
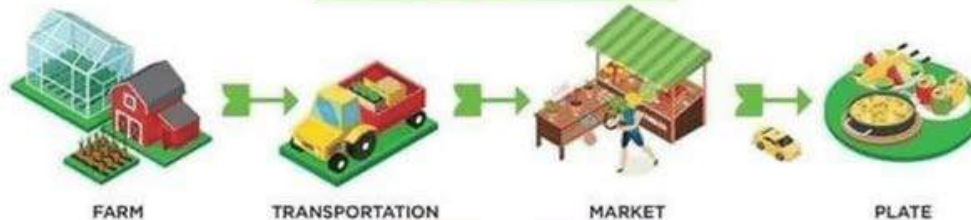
FOOD DELIVERY SERVICE
FARM → TRANSPORTATION → DISTRIBUTION → PACKAGING → DELIVERY → PLATE
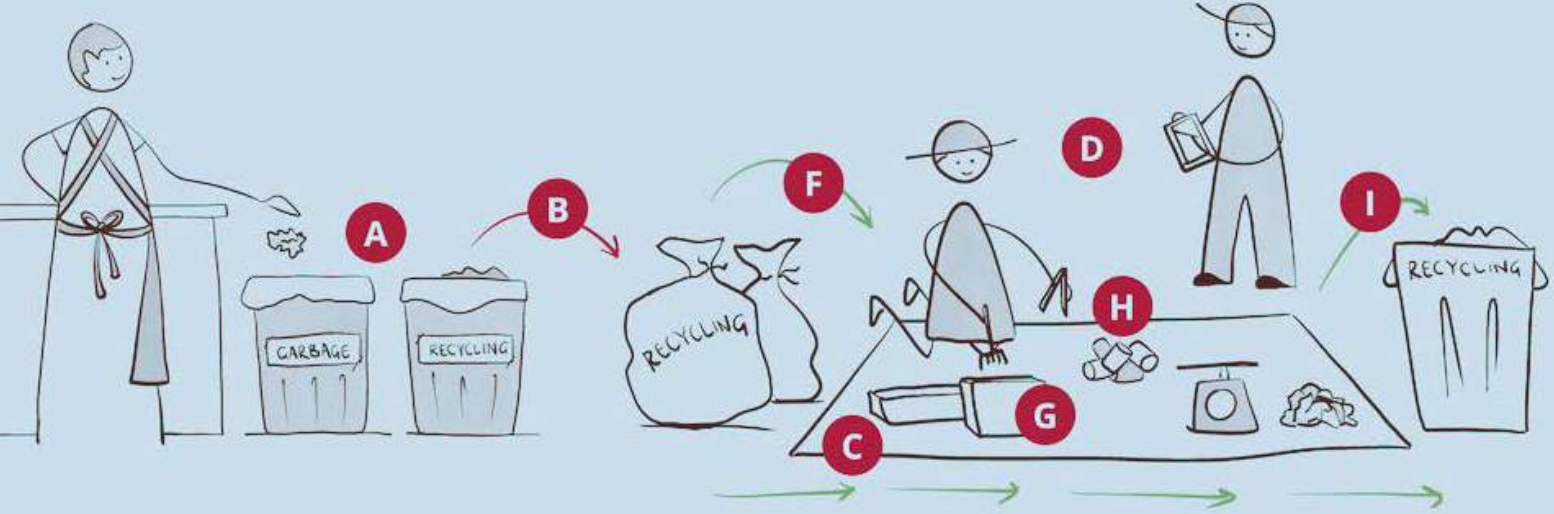
WASTE AUDIT

[Cultivating Community](), a community organisation, led the formulation of a robust and detailed waste audit process that involved emptying waste bins (general waste, recycling etc.), sorting, weighing and recording waste stream items. They also led waste audits at partner sites which were hampered by lockdowns but ultimately achieved.

Students were able to experience waste audits and were involved in team meetings where the waste audit details were discussed and decided. MAKE Studios then created a simplified and visually engaging version of the waste audit and an accompanying guide that is available for use by food system businesses and members of the public. This resource can be accessed at the [Moving Feast]() website.

Ideation

Ideation and contribution to a database of circular product ideas that could potentially be created from waste products at partner sites, More can be found at the Moving Feast, Open Sauce website. For more on ideation see Regen Toolkit 03.

Deep synthesis sessions, led by MAKE Studios and STREAT. This involved a ground up, affinity diagramming approach to identify common themes across partners and their operations including opportunities to share, upcycle and re-use waste as a circular product. An overview of how a synthesis process works can be found here.
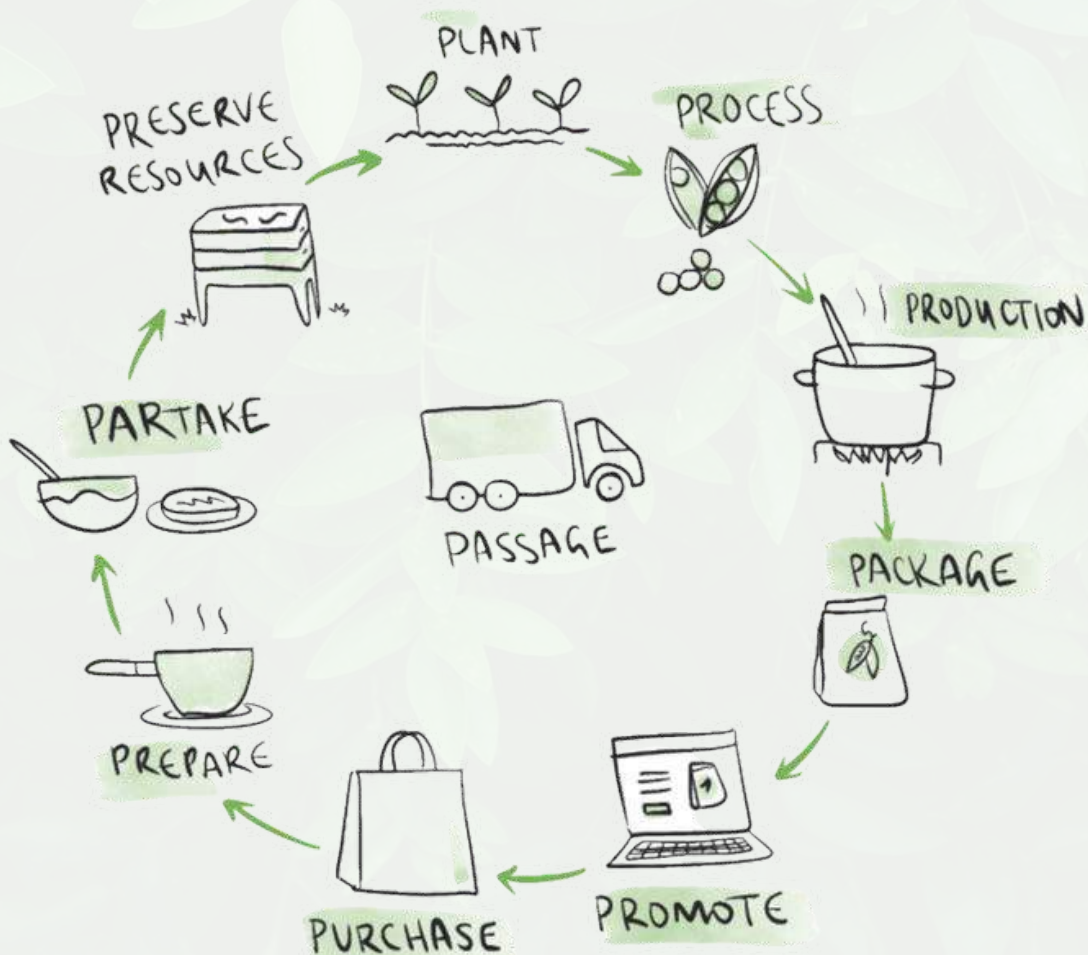
Deep Synthesis

Deep synthesis sessions, led by MAKE Studios and STREAT. This involved a ground up, affinity diagramming approach to identify common themes across partners and their operations including opportunities to share, upcycle and re-use waste as a circular product. An overview of how a synthesis process works can be found [here](#).

MAKING SENSE OF WHAT YOU LEARNT!

Use this tool when you feel like you have gathered enough information about your customers based on what you set to learn

MAKE CLUSTERS

What you planned to learn	Approach you used

Step 1
Gather all the things you have learnt.
Put each item or learning on a separate card or post-it note

Place all the notes onto a wall of large surface so you can see them all

Start reading through the notes

Does anything stand out for?

Do you similar ideas or differences in things you have heard or noticed?
Can you see patterns in any

One learning per post-it

SERVE DECAF   WE LOVE THE MUSIC

You can also use a card

STREAT   Powered by MAKE
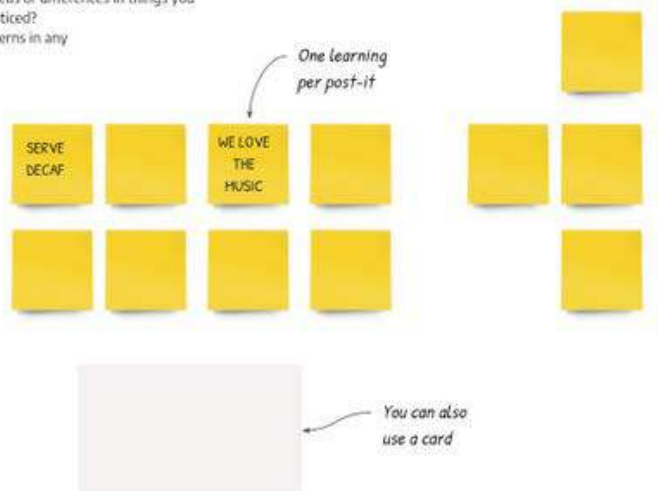
GlutWatch and Melbourne Knowledge Week

Glutwatch Events

Glutwatch involved participation in two events. These events are engagement activities that tell a story of food waste or how to use products in excess or plentiful, including carving pineapples instead of pumpkins for Halloween when pineapples were in a glut in 2021. For more ideas see the Moving Feast, Open Sauce website.

Winter pickle workshop

Join us for a hands-on introduction to pickling, and make the most of in-season produce while it's plentiful.

7:30pm Tuesday 9 August
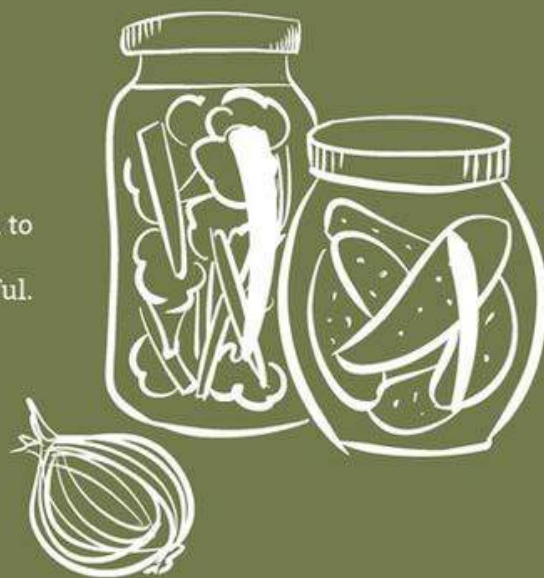
Melbourne Knowledge Week

Participants took part in STREAT and MAKE Studios Melbourne Knowledge Week circular design event where participants ideated, created and tested circular product prototypes from non-food elements of the waste stream at STREAT.

WHAT DID WE FIND

05

What did we find?

Reflections

Each person has a part to play. The people who engaged in the above projects chose to participate, and through their participation, change followed. Small changes are not to be dismissed as it is sometimes the unplanned that can lead to an amazing change. For instance, for how many other people have the above projects left a mark? When we think of the challenges the planet faces, they might seem insurmountable to overcome. Such problems are too large for one person to solve. The current climate crisis is too much for even a group of people to solve, just ask the United Nations, but if everyone participates in addressing the problem in their place (see Regen Toolkit 02), we can meet the challenge. These projects engage people to better understand the current ecological and social challenges of today, prepare them to take action, and lead the way for others.

REGEN TOOLKIT

05 Community Based Research
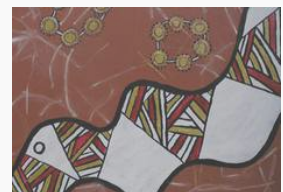
VICTORIA UNIVERSITY

STREAT

Community Based Research

A toolkit for using community based approaches to research for place based regenerative action.

By Amy Quayle & Alison Baker

Table of Contents

01 About this Toolkit

This toolkit provides information about community based participatory approaches to research, the research process, research methods, and ethics and reflexivity in research. Throughout the Regenerative City Living Lab (RCLL) project, students engaged with and through research in the design, development and implementation of place based initiatives for a regenerative and resilient city. This toolkit also provides and/or links to examples of how these approaches to research and specific research methods were used within the RCLL. Also included are links to further information and resources that may be useful in other community based research and action projects including those involving young people.

This toolkit is part of a larger toolkit family and is often linked to other components within the family. The following diagram represents the connection between the toolkits.

01 REGENERATIVE CITY SYLLABUS

02 STORIES OF PLACE & US

04 WASTE AS A RESOURCE

03 REGREENING CAMPUS

05 COMMUNITY BASED RESEARCH

06 SOCIAL MEDIA FOR ACTION

INTRODUCTION OUR AIM AND APPROACH

02

Our aim and approach

Introduction

COMMUNITY BASED RESEARCH AND ACTION WITHIN THE REGENERATIVE CITY LIVING LAB

The Regenerative City Living Lab was a **place-based** *(VU, Footscray and Melbourne's west)* **action research** initiative bringing together researchers, community members, young people, business leaders and social innovators to address complex issues through applied and inclusive research and education practices.

Anchored in the west of Melbourne, the project involved working alongside young people in social and environmental action for a regenerative and resilient city using human centred design and place-based action oriented research to **regenerate, renew, rebuild, revive**. Research was central not only to documenting the process and outcomes of the living lab but was also central to students engagement and learning in the living lab.

Chronicles: Telling the Story of the Living Lab

Research is central to telling the story of the living lab. Through research, specifically a case study research design emphasising the important role of stories and narrative (see Regen Toolkit 02), we sought to document these efforts — the new relationships, communities, and collective hope created. Archiving this knowledge and telling the story of these efforts was recognised as providing a rich source of education for young people, community, and educators within and beyond the university.

Research Embedded Within the Activities of the Living Lab

Research also informed the activities of the lab in a number of ways. For example, student led research played a central role in the discovery phase of the **Regreening Campus project** (see Regen Toolkit 03). In the **Community Tables** initiative, students were invited to develop their own creative, community based action research projects. This aspect of the initiative was all about co-creating settings, resources, opportunities to share stories of place, identity, food, culture and environmental action for place conscious learning (Greenwood, 2019) to create goodness for people and planet.

VU COMMUNITY INTEREST-GARDENS ON CAMPUS

Key Results from Quantitative Data

- Over **70%** of respondents indicated that COVID related restrictions have negatively impacted their sense of belonging at VU.

- **98%** of respondents indicated that it was important to create more green spaces on VU campus/es (85.4 strong agreement)

- **90%** agreed that they would like to see an edible community garden on campus (70.2% strong agreement)

- **66.1%** strongly agreed (& 17.5% somewhat agreed) that it is important that the garden includes a focus on Indigenous plants

Image: Slide from a student presentation of survey results for Planetary Health Huddle.

Human Centred Design and Community Based Participatory Research: Synergies

Within the project, business leaders and social innovators (i.e., STREAT) and researchers/academics (VU) came together with the goal of empowering young people for social and environmental action through applied and inclusive research and education practices. We came together with different knowledge, skills, and ways of thinking about and enacting change, and the shared desire to support young people to build their individual and collective capacities and meaningfully connect through change efforts. For more information on recruitment see Regen Toolkit 01.

The work of STREAT innovators has been largely informed by Human-Centered Design (HCD). HCD is described as a creative approach to problem-solving that puts real people at the center of the development process to ensure that what is produced is tailored to the audience's needs. It involves the phases of Inspiration, Ideation, and Implementation (Ideo).

"*Human-centered design is all about building a deep empathy with the people you're designing for; generating tons of ideas; building a bunch of prototypes; sharing what you've made with the people you're designing for; and eventually putting your innovative new solution out in the world*" (Ideo).

On the other hand, VU researchers/academics conceptualised the project through the lens of Community Base Participatory Research (CBPR). Through our collaboration we came to recognise the synergies between Human-Centred design principles and CBPR, with both approaches centring partnership between community members and academic researchers. Key similarities and differences as outlined by Chen et al. (2019) between the two approaches are outlined on the following page.

HCD and CBPR:
Key Similarities and Differences

Dimension	HCD	Both	CBPR
Values	• Empathy • Creativity • Delight	• Co-creation	• Relationship building • Shifting power dynamics
Purpose	• Generating action • Scalable Solutions	• Engages users/partners in all stages • Provides a benefit to intdended stakeholders	• Generating research for future action • Localised, contextual solutions
Process	• Short timeline • Rapid iteration cycles with low fidelity prototypes • Focus on individual extreme users • Transdisciplinary team	• Systematic • Flexible/adaptable • Generalisable • iterative • requires training to execute • Clients/partners sustain efforts at project conclusion	• Long timeline • focus on communities • Interdisciplinary team
Outcome	• Product/service • Sole ownership of product/service	• Bi-directional knowledge exchange	• Research/knowledge • Co-ownership of research/knowledge • Capacity building

Source: Table adapted from Chen et al. (2019, p. 41)

Chen et al (2019) provide a useful overview of the key similarities and differences in emphasis between HCD and CBPR in terms of values, purpose, process and outcome, as displayed in the table above. In the context of public health, they recommended the adoption of HCD as an instrumental strategy into CBPR projects. As noted by Chen et al, "it is not the findings or outcomes of these projects that generalize to other settings, but rather the process itself that can be applied to new challenges" (p. 41).

ABOUT COMMUNITY BASED APPROACHES TO RESEARCH

03

Community Based Approaches to Research

Community Based Approaches to Research

There are many different approaches to doing research. The RCLL was an **applied, place based research and action initiative** imagined and initiated at a time when young people face unprecedented challenges because of ongoing environmental destruction as well as the impacts of COVID-19. The project was developed from the recognition that as we move forward we will need to create spaces to come together to understand complex issues linked with planetary health, with a focus on the local. It was informed by both Community Based Participatory Research and Human Centred Design approaches (see Regen Toolkit 03 and 04 for examples of HCD activities and processes).

What is Community Based Participatory Research?

Social research involves a systematic use of research methods and interpretation to understand society and people's experiences. It examines attitudes, assumptions, beliefs, trends, social categories and rules. Community-based participatory research is a bit different from dominant research because it is **action-oriented and collaborative**. This means researchers and community members work together to examine a particular social issue and develop solutions to put into action. Within this project, VU researchers, STREAT, and VU students were brought together to imagine and co-create place based initiatives for a regenerative and resilient city.

Elements of Community-based Research (Stringer, 1999)

Democratic — involves community participation.

Equitable — values each person's skills and knowledge.

Liberating — works against oppression and exclusion.

Life enhancing — benefits individuals and community.

No research without action, no action without research

Kurt Lewin, 1944

Community Based Participatory Research

Various names have been used to describe community based and collaborative approaches to research, including **Community Based Participatory Research** and **Participatory Action Research** (and its variations, e.g., Youth PAR, Critical PAR). CBPR can be understood as a type of PAR that involves collaboration between researchers and community members. For a useful overview of different participatory approaches see <u>Vaughn and Jacquez (2020).</u>

<u>Israel et al (1998)</u> define **community-based participatory research (CBPR)** as:

- a **partnership approach** to research that equitably involves community members, organizational representatives, and academic researchers in all aspects of the research process.

- It enables all partners to contribute their expertise, with **shared responsibility and ownership**;

- it **enhances the understanding** of a given phenomenon;

- and, it **integrates the knowledge gained with action** to improve the health and well-being of community members, such as through interventions and policy change. (para 1)

Rather than being a specific method or research design, CBPR is an approach to research. It can therefore involve a number of different qualitative or quantitative research methods; whatever works to answer the research questions. Different examples of methods will be outlined in Section 5 of this Toolkit (and are also exemplified in Regen Toolkit 02: Stories of Place and Us).
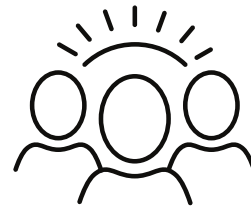
Find out more about key principles of CBPR <u>here</u>.
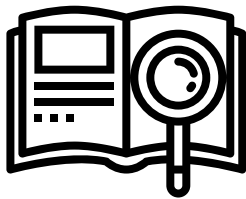
COMMUNITY BASED PARTICIPATORY ACTION
TOOLS & RESOURCES
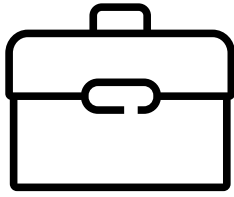
The Community Toolkit
This is an amazing resource for all things related to community change and social justice (Centre for Community Health and Development).
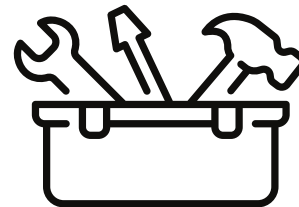
CBPR Principles
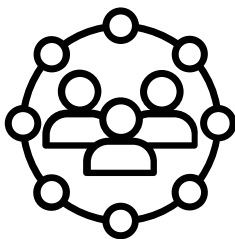The Detroit Urban Research Centre outlines the key principles of CBPR.

Community Research Toolkit
This toolkit is designed to support community groups through the research process (ARVAC).

Community Research Toolbox
Healthy City, a community based tool, including links to Community Based Participatory Action Research Toolkits.

Participatory Research Methods
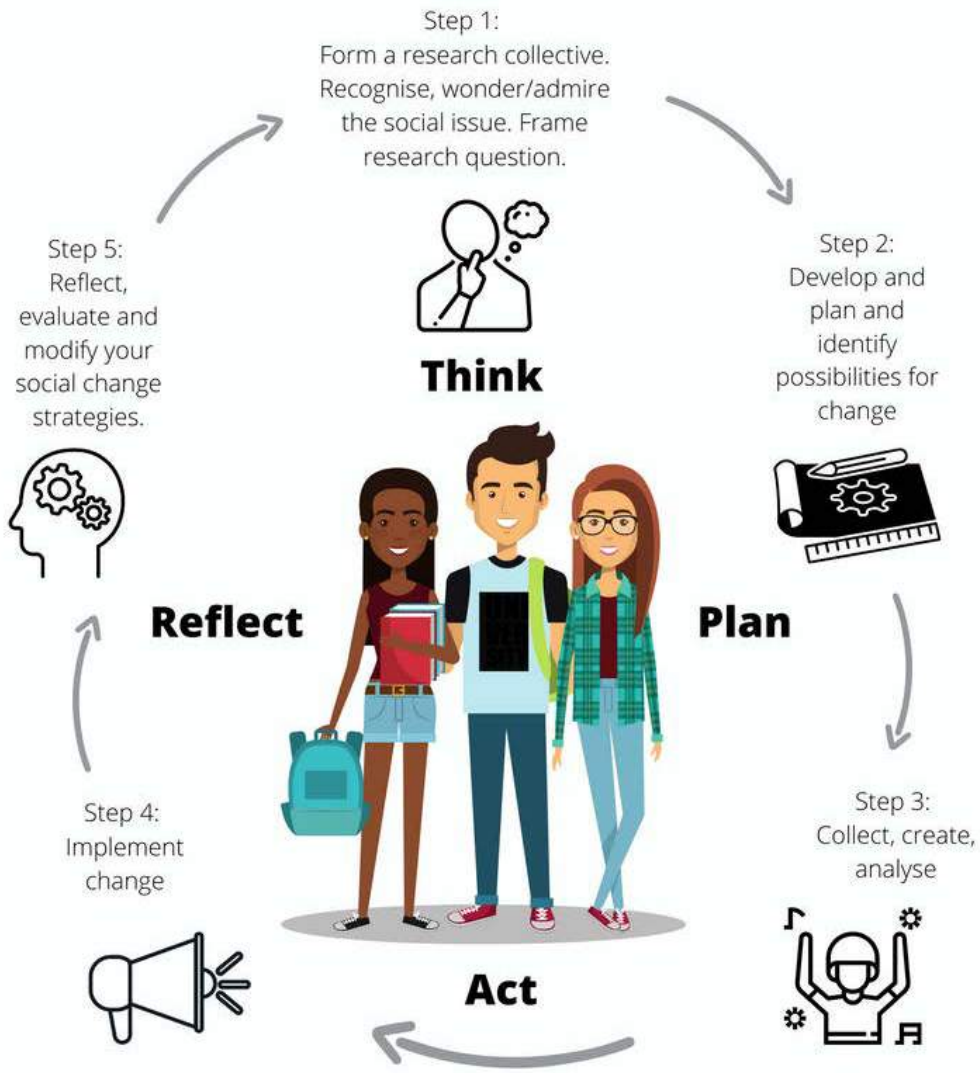Vaughn and Jacquez (2020) provide a useful overview of different participatory approaches to research.

Critical Participatory Action Research
The entry from McTaggert et al. (2016)(free download) provides an overview of what Critical PAR is.

Youth as Action Researchers

As noted, there are various participatory approaches to research. Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR) involves young people, as community action-researchers, forming a collective alongside adults to bring about positive change. Steps involved in the PAR cycle are outlined in the figure below.

Step 1:
Form a research collective.
Recognise, wonder/admire
the social issue. Frame
research question.

Think

Step 5:
Reflect,
evaluate and
modify your
social change
strategies.

Step 2:
Develop and
plan and
identify
possibilities for
change

Reflect

Plan

Step 4:
Implement
change

Step 3:
Collect, create,
analyse

Act

**Youth Participatory Action
Research Cycle**

The YPAR Process

Figuring out the **problem** together - we each see and experience problems differently.

Getting more **information** about the problem **as a group** — we get a more accurate picture when we bring our unique perspectives and include other information we find.

We put the information **together** and discuss and judge it to see if it makes sense.

We decide **where** we can **make a difference** (specific individuals, families, schools, Universities, policy).

We **use** information to **create positive change** — advocacy works better in a group. A chorus of voices is better than one shouting alone.

(these steps are very similar to the phases of Human-Centred design of inspiration, ideation and implementation).

A key aim of this project was to empower young people through opportunities for collaboration and **co-design of place based initiatives for regenerative action**. Therefore, the methodology of YPAR has particular resonance.

The process involved in the Regreening Campus project (see Regen Toolkit 03) highlights the way students engaged in and with research to inform the design, development and implementation of urban gardens on campus (even if through Human-Centered Design language). While the provocation for the development of urban gardens on campus was used to engage students in the living lab with many of the students participation occurring as part of Work Integrated Learning, they contributed to the design, development and implementation of the initiative along the way. Through this they developed knowledge, skills and a sense of ownership in the project.
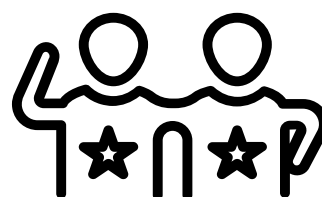
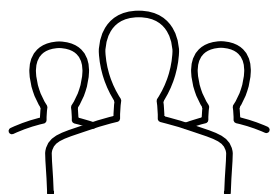# PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH WITH YOUNG PEOPLE
TOOLS & RESOURCES

YouthREX Research and Evaluation eXchange
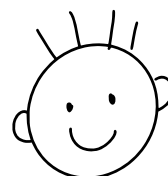This knowledge hub has youth-specific research tools and resources.

My Peer Toolkit
This toolkit is a resource aimed at supporting agencies to implement and evaluate peer-based programs for young people.

Yerp (YacVic)
A toolkit to support youth voice and action.

Child and Youth Friendly PAR toolkit
This toolkit provides useful tools to support PAR process with children and young people (ChildFund International).

YPAR Hub
YPAR Hub is devoted bringing YPAR and related approaches to community members everywhere (Berkeley).

YPAR Curriculum
A tool to support the authentic engagement of young people in decision making processes (The Institute for Community Research).

Our Approach IN ACTION

Community Tables

One of the initiatives within the Regenerative City Living Lab was Community Tables, which invited students, alongside VU researchers, to develop a creative, participatory action research project that would create opportunities to explore and express sense of place, identity, belonging and connection in the west of Melbourne and for meaningful social connection and dialogue — all through the medium of food.

In developing the Community Tables stream of work, we were interested in exploring:

- how, through engaging with knowledge of Indigenous and cultural food practices and creating meaningful experiences through food, a renewed awareness and connection to place can be cultivated, and
- how through this renewed connection to place, communities might be empowered to take social action for a sustainable future in ways that support planetary health.
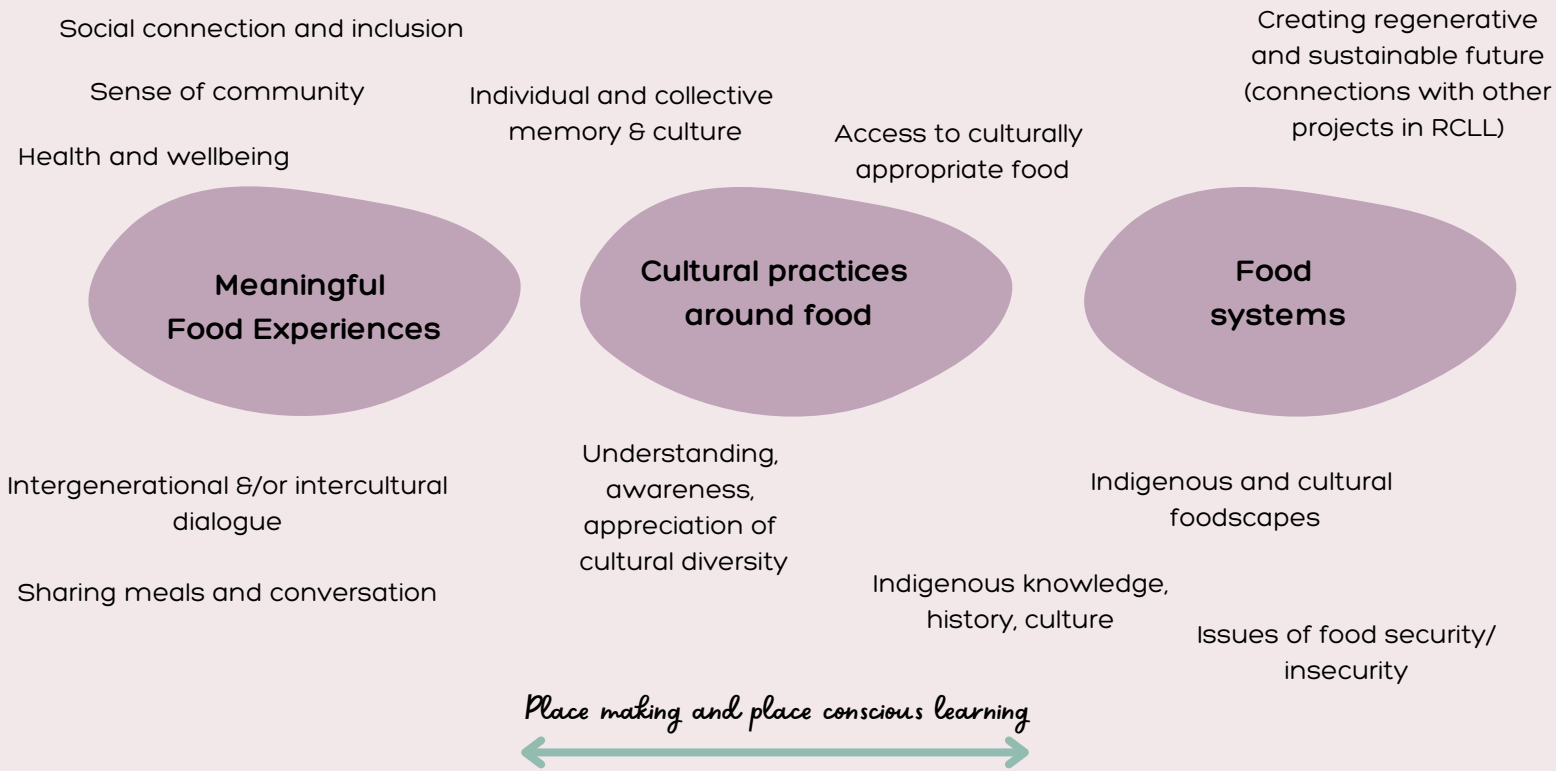
The invitation to students

Weaving together food, story, and place, as part of this collective you will develop/create meaningful food experiences/resources/events that:

- celebrate the diversity of Melbourne's West, promote intercultural and/or intergenerational connection and dialogue, and
- foster peoples' critical reflection on, understanding of and connection to place.
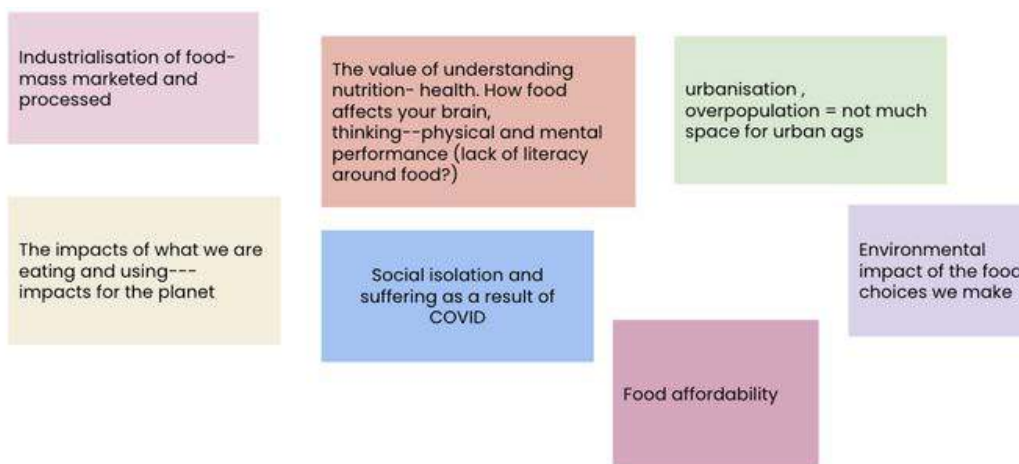
All through the medium of food, practices around food and knowledge of food systems.

Developing a Community Tables project

Social connection and inclusion

Creating regenerative and sustainable future (connections with other projects in RCLL)

Sense of community

Individual and collective memory & culture

Access to culturally appropriate food

Health and wellbeing

Meaningful Food Experiences

Cultural practices around food

Food systems

Intergenerational &/or intercultural dialogue

Understanding, awareness, appreciation of cultural diversity

Indigenous and cultural foodscapes

Sharing meals and conversation

Indigenous knowledge, history, culture

Issues of food security/ insecurity

Place making and place conscious learning

The Community Tables stream of work within the Regenerative City Living Lab project was informed by a creative, Youth Participatory Action Research and narrative approaches. Within Community Tables, students were invited to develop a project around the broad theme of food (e.g., meaningful food experience, cultural practices around food or food systems) in response to an issue of importance to them. As shown in the slide above, this broad theme, opens up a number of options for exploration, and also linked in with the other streams of work within the living lab (i.e., Regreening Campus; Open Sauce).

Community Tables sessions were delivered online (given COVID-19) restrictions and involved working with the students to flesh out ideas and possibilities. The sessions also sought to provide inspiration with a number of invited speakers presenting to students about their work (as highlighted in Regen Toolkit 02). The images on this page are from shared google slides used during initial workshops to get students thinking about possible projects. Below are some of the issues identified by students that they wanted their projects to respond to (in response to the broad theme).

Industrialisation of food- mass marketed and processed

The value of understanding nutrition- health. How food affects your brain, thinking--physical and mental performance (lack of literacy around food?)

urbanisation , overpopulation = not much space for urban ags

The impacts of what we are eating and using--- impacts for the planet

Social isolation and suffering as a result of COVID

Environmental impact of the food choices we make

Food affordability

What are some of the most important issues you're seeing at the moment? (that you would like your Community Tables project to respond to)?

Name: STUDENT NAMES

Issue/topic:
-

Key actors/community members/groups to consider:
-

Target audience:
-

HMW question:

- How might we...create a sense of belonging on campus- First Year Students
- How might we strengthen students engagement with Indigenous knowledge, history, culture?
- Aboriginal history and political movements----connect with that...

Workshops on campus, VIRTUAL?, cooking classes. Cooking classes- Aboriginal history, plants, culinary experience...

What community change do you want to see?

Community Engagement / Action Research Methods:
(also consider here - are you trying to educate/ raise awareness; connect; advocate for)

Students worked in groups to come up with project ideas and were supported through the process of conceptualising, planning and implementing their projects. In the initial planning stages, students were asked to brainstorm using the prompts above.

The different projects that were developed as part of Community Tables are captured in the image below and on the following pages.

As part of the Community Tables workshop activities students were introduced to creative and participatory approaches to research, the research process (see section 4), and a number of different methods for research and action (see section 5), and utilised different methods when undertaking their projects (e.g., podcasts, interviews, storytelling).

ABY'S BEE KEEPING

- A YouTube channel about bee keeping, making honey, and facts on healthy bees = healthy planet.

TALES FROM THE TABLE

- Gathering VU students stories about food that connects and food that sustains (during the pandemic).

COOKING ON COUNTRY

- Bringing students together to learn about Indigenous plants, cooking and connection to Country.

AYDIN'S FOOD STORIES

- A 3 episode podcast about healthy eating, stories and intergenerational connection through food.

A snapshot

COMMUNITY TABLES- STUDENT PROJECTS

TALES FROM THE TABLE

LOVE- MEMORY- IDENTITY- CONNECTION- UNDERSTANDING CREATION- JOY

VU students are invited to share stories or memories of food. In particular, we want to hear stories of:

Food that connects.

food that connects you with your home countries, towns or cities- places and people

Food that sustains.

of how food (planting, growing, cooking, eating) helped you get through lockdown.

Please share your stories, recipes, images, photos.

You can respond to one or both of the themes as separate contributions or together in a single story.

Your story will be anonymous unless you choose to include your name along with your story. We will be creating a Zine and event bringing together these stories!

SUBMIT YOUR STORY

Food Stories with Aydin

A project by VU student Aydin as part of the RCLL Community Tables Initiative

The Episodes

EPISODE 1
For the Love of Food

EPISODE 2
My Story

EPISODE 3
Food and Family

This looks incredible thanks for sharing Aydin. I am also salivating as we speak hahaha. ~ REGEN LIVING LAB

ABee's Bees

WHY ARE BEES BENEFICIAL FOR THE ENVIRONMENT?

A snapshot

Cooking on Country

PROGRAM ELEMENTS

SELF REFLECTION AND LEARNING

-Reading
-Warndu Workshop on food, place and culture

ONLINE AND IN-PERSON WORKSHOPS

-Learning about Indigenous plants
-KJ's Campus tour

COOKING WITH INDIGENOUS INGREDIENTS

-Learning about and using Indigenous ingredients

PADLET TO KEEP CONNECTED

-Posting recipes, resources and reflections.
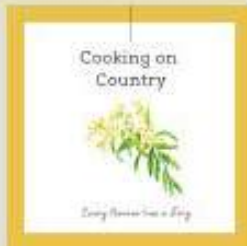
ABOUT THE RESEARCH PROCESS

04

The Research Process

The Research Process

1 - Identify the issue and develop a question

What is the focus of our research? What change do we want to see?

This is the plan for **how** you will do the research. **Who** is affected by this issue and who will participate in the research? Will you use a quantitative, qualitative or mixed methods approach?

2 - Design the methodology and methods

3 - Collect the data

This is where you put your plan into action and decide what specific processes you will use to gather data (i.e., interviews online; an anonymous survey, or using arts-based methods like drawing, photographs or a community mural)

Here we bring together the data and systematically examine it for patterns, important stories and narratives and work together to connect the dots.

4 - Analyse the data

In this step we write up or develop the representation of our data. We consider the audience and action we want to take.

5 - Develop the research narrative

6. Create change and take action.

Exploring the Issue

IDENTIFY THE ISSUE

LOOK FOR THE CAUSES

BRING TOGETHER EVIDENCE

CRAFT YOUR QUESTION AND PLAN FOR ACTION
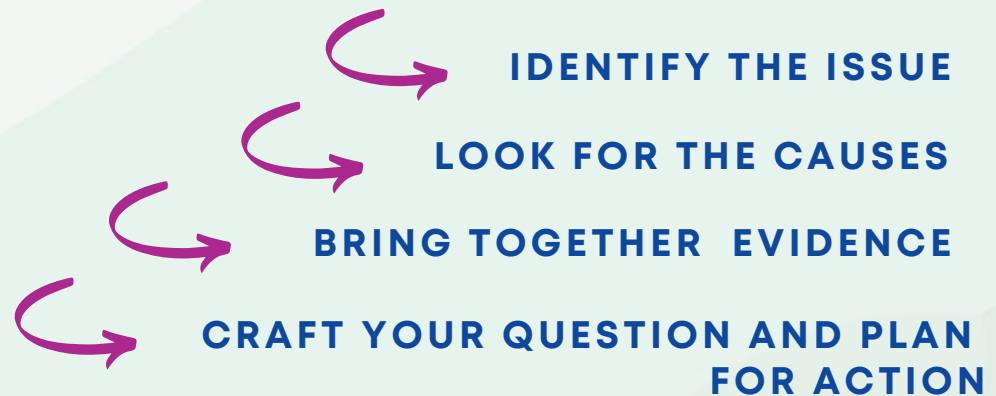
Source: Adapted from YPAR Curriculum

So, you have identified a social issue, either through your own experience or perhaps you and your friends have observed something in your local community you wish to change. In community-based and action research, it is important to bring together the collective or group and work together to move from a big issue to a narrower research question and plan for action.

Pictured above are some steps that help move through this process in a systematic way. By unpacking social issues we can start to identify what some causes are, what we can learn from other evidence about this issue and what change is needed or possible.

CRITICAL QUESTIONS

- What is the issue?

- Why is it an issue?

- Who are the people and/or groups affected by this issue?

- Why do you think this issue is important enough to research?

- What could be some problems that arise in doing research on this issue?

- What could be some benefits of doing this research?

WHAT MIGHT EVIDENCE LOOK LIKE?

- You and your peers' experiences and knowledge

- Publicly available local data

- Academic research articles

- Grey literature (unpublished research reports)

- Archival data (e.g., newspaper articles, annual reports)

Crafting your research question ???

In order to start narrowing your question you must have identified a general topic area or particular issue in the community. Then your task will be to break down the issue into a very focused question (or questions). As you do this with your co-researchers and other community members it is important to:

- define the concepts you are using

- consider the scope of the issue

- gauge how important this question is for community members

- consider previous evidence on the issue and solutions

- contemplate feasibility (is it doable?)

- narrow the focus into a set of questions or aims.

WHAT MAKES A GOOD RESEARCH QUESTION?

Is clear and specific in focus

Begins with 'How' or 'What,' or 'Where'

Indicates purpose: "discover," "generate,"explore," "identify," or "describe"

Identifies an affected group or community

Asking questions of your question/s

?

What do you think the question is asking?

Do you understand all the words/ phrases?

What kind of change can we create in asking this question?

Does the question only look at one issue, topic or idea?

How important is this question to my community?

Is the question about a specific group or community?

A key part of the Regreening Campus discovery phase was researching the wants and needs of the VU community in relation to urban gardens on campus and regreening the campus more generally. As part of this, one student developed a survey with the support of VU staff. The student was supported through the process of asking questions of their question to ensure it was as clear as possible. This example is captured below.

An example from regreening campus

Clarity of the Research Question:

Clear, simple (no jargon)

What does the VU community perceive as the key benefits of urban gardens on campus?

Change we can create: Information gained can inform the design and development of the urban argriculture on campus project.

Clear issue, topic or idea: Urban gardens on campus

Importance of question: Connected with strategic plan; context of COVID recovery; establish perceived importance.

Specific group or community: The VU community, staff and students.

05

Research Methods
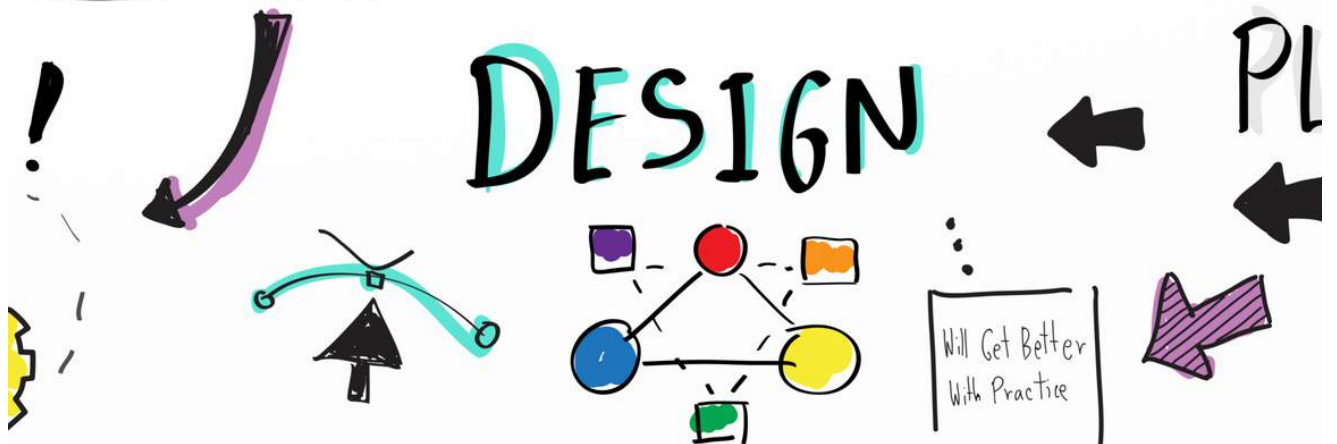
Methodology and Methods: The How of Research

Research methodology is the "*how*" of a research project. It tells us the design of a study highlighting:

- **What** kinds of data will be collected (like people's attitudes or responses, maps, news media articles).

- **Who** it will be collected from, also referred to as *participants* (or what the source will be - i.e. 'X' newspaper).

- **How** data will be *collected/gathered* (i.e., through a survey, interview or arts-based methods).

- **How** we will *analyse* and *interpret* the data (e.g., thematic analysis, narrative, statistical techniques)

Whilst **Methodology** refers to the broad overall approach (including the values and assumptions behind the approach, the **Methods are the specific techniques and processes used to gather data** (like video diaries or interviews).

So CBPR or PAR can be understood as methodological approaches that may involve a number of different research methods used to collect or analyse information. In the following pages are examples of different research methods some of which were used within the RCLL.

At a glance: Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations are something that all researchers should begin with and they will guide the design of your methodology for your project. Here are some key ethical principles (to be explored more in Section 5).

- Do no harm
- Informed consent
- Protect anonymity and confidentiality
- Avoid deception
- Right to withdraw
- Providing accurate research findings
- Promotion of social justice and ensuring benefit to the greater community

QUALITATIVE, QUANTITATIVE AND MIXED METHODS

Quantitative:

- primarily uses numeric data to explore patterns, differences and relationships.
- can provide insights about large groups of people's attitudes, experiences and behaviours (think surveys)
- or to determine cause and effect (i.e., does community gardening lead to lower stress levels?)

Qualitative:

- primarily uses words and a range of sensory data (i.e., visual, sound) to explore depth
- to understand **how or why** (i.e., how do young people create a sense of belonging?)
- to describe process, experience and the connections between different things (e.g., what processes support youth empowerment?)
- describe and understand aspects of culture and society
- gain understanding about hard to reach groups

Mixed Methods:

- Qualitative and quantitative research can be combined in order to best address the research question.

Common methods

- surveys
- community or population-level datasets (like the ABS)
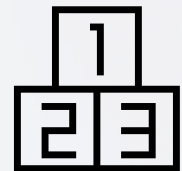
- interviews
- focus group interviews
- photo-methods
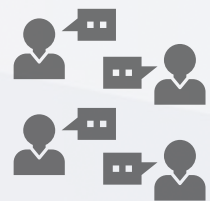
- a combination of methods from above
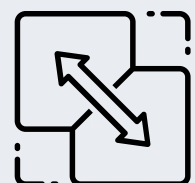
THE METHODS MAP

There are many different types of knowledge that we need to consider in community-based research. Sometimes in collaborative research individuals, groups or communities want to use creative approaches or draw on cultural tradition because they feel it is how they know, understand and communicate best. Other times, traditional research methods like a survey or interview suits the group and provides the best data to answer your research question. The map below does not include every type of methodology and method, but it can get you thinking about the many, many different ways that knowledge can be created alongside community.

Some of the creative methods for community collaboration and engagement are captured in Regen Toolkit 02.

Observations

Cultural knowledges and practices

Content analysis

COMMON QUANTITATIVE & OTHER METHODS

COMMUNITY ARTS & CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

Cultural dance, music

Murals and public art

Questionnaires

Spoken word

Policy analysis

TRADITIONAL

RESEARCH METHODS

CREATIVE /ARTS-BASED & CULTURAL PRACTICE

Discursive/ Discourse analysis

Drawing and painting

Performance & participatory theatre

Participant Observation

COMMON QUALITATIVE APPROACHES/ METHODS

ARTS-RELATED & PARTICIPATORY ARTS

Creative writing, poetry

Surveys

Focus Group Interviews

Narrative interviews

Digital ethnography

Interviews

NARRATIVE & DOCUMENTARY ARTS APPROACHES

Film, Animation

Sound - podcasting, radio, sound art

Storytelling circles

Photovoice, photoelicitation & visual arts methods

Surveys

Surveys are quantitative methods that aim to:
- Find answers from large populations
- Discover a range of views, beliefs, attitudes
- Provide breadth on the topic or issue, not depth

Pro tips:
- Understand your target group, what mode will work best?
- Use youth-friendly language
- One idea per question
- Keep the survey relatively short
- Define key concepts and ideas
- Ensure you have a consent statement at the start

Can be collected through:
- online questionnaires
- mail-in surveys
- in-person interviews
- over the phone
- group-administered (like in a classroom)
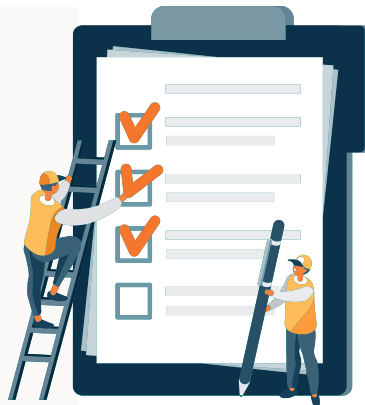
Types of information

Knowledge
Questions that are used to test what someone knows.

Behaviour
Asks about things the individual has participated in or plans to do.

Demographics
Personal and identity info

Attitude
Asks for the individual's opinion on a topic.

Beliefs
Asks whether the individual believes that something should happen.

Includes different types of questions:
Open-ended questions
Close-ended
Likert Scale (Agree, Strongly Agree)
Ranking
Demographic

?!

Can be analysed to:
- Provide a description through numbers (percentages, frequencies)
- Explore relationships between concepts (Is peer interviewing related to increased confidence?)
- Be used to explore change at two different time points (Does knowledge about research increase after this program?)

Read more about surveys here:
- The Harvard University - Program on Survey Research Tip Sheet

Designing a Survey: Types of information

Multiple Choice

In these items there are 4 or 5 predetermined answers to choose from.

Example: Are you involved in the Regenerative City Living Lab project?

1. Yes   2. No, but I have heard about it   3. No, and I have not heard about it

Dichotomous

Two opposite answers are provided in this type of question

Example: There is a need for more green spaces on VU campus ___YES   ___NO

Likert & Frequency Scales

A range of options (typically 5) is provided. The range is least to most.

Example: I feel a sense of connection with the VU campus iIattend for work or study.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

Rating & Ranking

In rating survey items you use a scale on a continuum. In ranking items you ask participants to rank something of importance in order.

Example (Rating): Please indicate the likelihood of participating in the following activities (1- Very unlikely to 5- highly likely).

Example (Ranking): Rank the following social issues in the order of importance for young people in your area with 1 being *the most important* and 5 the *least important*.

__Mental health __Unemployment __Climate change
__Drugs __Discrimination

Open-ended (short/long answer)

These questions are open questions that participants need to write a short or long response to.

What would be the key benefits of creating an edible, community garden on campus from your perspective?

IN FOCUS:

INTERVIEWS

Interviews are qualitative methods that allow us to:
- enter into the other person's perspective
- gain participants' perspectives, insight into feelings, thoughts and intentions

Can be:
- unstructured, semi-structured or structured
- individual or group

Collect different kinds of information:
- Experiences or behaviours
- Opinions or values
- Feelings
- Knowledge
- Sensory questions
- Background/demographic

Can be analysed to:
- Provide a detailed, non-numerical description
- Identify key **themes** (thematic analysis), **narratives** (narrative analysis), or **discourses** (discourse analysis)

Pro tips-

Questions to avoid

- Leading questions
- Multiple questions (in one)
- Closed ended questions
- Questions with jargon

In the Interview

- Establish rapport/
  - 'be real'
- Don't rush
- Use probes and prompts
- Pay attention to non-verbal communication
- One question at a time
- Be comfortable with pauses

Watch this video: What makes a good qualitative interview?

Read more about qualitative interviews here:

- The Harvard University - Strategies for Qualitative Interviews Tip Sheet
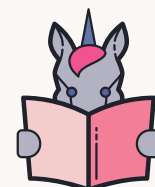
TYPES OF INTERVIEWS

Interviews range in the level of structure from structured to unstructured interviews. Focus groups can be thought of as a particular type of group interview.

Within the RCLL students interviewed key stakeholders as part of the discovery phase of the Regreening Campus project. In depth interviews were also used in the Open Sauce project. The information provided within these pages was used to support students to develop necessary interviewing skills central to the HCD process. Interviews (and focus groups) with participants of the RCLL was also a key source of data collection used by VU researchers to explore and tell the story of the living lab.

STRUCTURED
- Set of questions that are repeated with each person
- Questions pursue specific areas of the researchers' focus
- Interviewer maintains an objective role – directing process without directing responses
- Enable a direct comparison of peoples responses

SEMI-STRUCTURED
- Questions start the conversation but can enable researcher to follow up or explore interesting tangents
- Interviewer is engaged in the conversation and considers how they may influence or shape it
- Can be difficult to compare responses but can access richer data and important responses that may be missed in a more structured approach

UNSTRUCTURED/ IN DEPTH
- Topic probes rather than set questions
- Limited direction from interviewer
- The interview will flow more like a conversation
- Can be difficult to compare responses but can access richer data and important responses that may be missed in a more structured approach

FOCUS GROUPS

- "a group interview that uses the interaction among participants as a source of data" (Willig, 2013, p. 34).
- The researcher takes on the role of moderator, which involves the following tasks:
  - introducing the group members to one another
  - ensuring a set of ground rules are adopted by the group (as a focus group can produce difficult group dynamics).
  - introducing the focus of the group (e.g., question or stimulus) and,
  - gently 'steering' the discussion

- "The strength of the focus group...lies in its ability to mobilize participants to respond to and comment on one another's contributions....statements are challenged, extended, developed or qualified in ways that generate rich data" (p. 35).

INTERVIEWS: TYPES OF QUESTIONS

Closed questions

Closed questions are ones that result in a one word or short response (i.e., yes or no). Some examples include:

- Did you enjoy participating in the divert and convert waste challenge?
- Is waste reduction something you want to learn more about?

Open-ended questions

Open questions encourage longer responses where participants can use their own words to articulate their experience.

- Tell me about your motivations for joining the RCLL project?
- What did you learn through the project?
- What did you most enjoy about the project?

Spradley (1979) identified different types of questions (outlined below). Also of importance is the sequence of your questions. It is best to start with some easy and engaging questions to ease into the interview.

1 - DESCRIPTIVE
These questions get the interviewee to tell you what and how something happened.

Can you tell me how you came to be involved in the Regenerative City Living Lab project?

2 - STRUCTURAL
These are questions about how the interviewee organises knowledge.

What does it mean to be a young person in Australia at the moment?

3 - CONTRAST
These questions allow the participant to make comparisons between events and experience.

Do you prefer to participate in online or in-person activities?

4 - EVALUATIVE
These questions aim to explore the interviewee's feelings toward someone or something.

How did you feel when you presented the design developed by the Regreening Campus team to VU facilities?
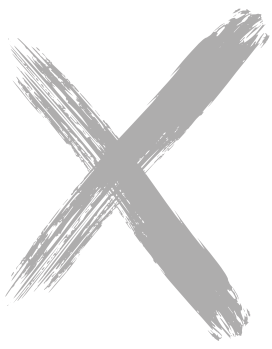
Interview questions should not...

BE DOUBLE BARRELLED	"How did you enjoy the regreening campus and caring for country garden project?"
INCLUDE COMPLEX WORDS (JARGON)	"Can you tell me how the living lab contributed to systemic resilence"?
BE LEADING	"Did the experience make you empowered". Better to ask, "How did it make you feel?"
INCLUDE DOUBLE NEGATIVES	"Do you think now that not many people would not understand the term eco-consciousness?"
ACT AS CATCH ALLS	"Tell me about everything you know about the Green movement and how it has influenced you?"

Preparing for Interviews:
Pro Tips

PREPARE IN ADVANCE

Interviews do not usually take very long, typically they can be 30 to 90 minutes depending on the participant, topic and questions (and approach). Most of your time will be spent brainstorming different questions, the sequence of questions, considering how they are worded and if they get the information needed.

*Practice the interview agenda with a friend first to see how it flows.

ENSURING YOUR INTERVIEW QUESTIONS REFLECT YOUR RESEARCH QUESTION

Ensure your interview questions reflect the aims and objectives of the project. Consider whether or not the questions you ask will provide responses that can answer research question. Try mapping some of the key concepts and brainstorming questions.

DON'T HAVE TOO MANY QUESTIONS

Remember not to have too many questions in your interview agenda. It will prevent your participant from going deeper into the topic and you won't likely get through all the questions.

READ, REFLECT, DESIGN

Reading literature about the topic will help you see how others have defined it. It will also help you break down the topic in order to develop questions.

You might also need to read more about doing research with the particular participant group (e.g., children and young people).

HAVE A PLAN FOR THE UNEXPECTED

Regardless of the topic or participant — sometimes the unexpected happens. People can bring up sensitive issues, get upset or decide they want to withdraw their participation. It is crucial that you have a plan and are prepared to ensure that person is supported.

CONSIDER POWER DYNAMICS

As you design your questions and consider where and how you will do the interview, also think about the power dynamics. For some people, a one-on-one interview can be confronting and out them on the spot. Consider how you will create conditions for others to feel comfortable and safe.

READ MORE »

Narrative Approaches

> Narrative inquiry is a way to study experience. In studying and understanding experience narratively, researchers recognize the centrality of relationships among participants and researchers studied through, and over, time and in unique places and multilayered contexts. Amidst these relationships, participants tell and live through stories that speak of, and to, their experiences of living. (Clandinin & Caine, 2008, p. 542)

Narrative approaches focus on the stories people tell about their daily lives and the people, places and other aspects of their social worlds. Stories are one of the main ways that people make sense of the world around them. Getting insights into the stories people tell can be done with a number of different methods. Whilst interviews are one of the main methods used, storytelling can also be done using other method/s involving an individual or group:

LIFE HISTORY INTERVIEWS

Memorabilia – photos, personal objects, newspaper articles

Community arts (theatre, murals)

Diaries

As highlighted in Regen Toolkits 02 and 06, we sought to engage students in journal writing and the development of social media posts as part of capturing their experience and engagement in the Regenerative City Living Lab. We also sought to elicit stories from people as part of the various activities of the living lab. Student projects (e.g., Tales from the Table) also sought to encourage the sharing of stories.

IN FOCUS:

Photovoice

Photovoice is a Community-Based Research (CBPR) approach in which participants use photography to document aspects of their lives and community.

Photovoice aims to:

- Record and reflect community strengths and concerns
- Promote critical dialogue and knowledge through discussion of photos
- Reach policy makers and those in power.

When might you use photovoice?

- to change people's opinions about themselves and their environments
- to publicise a group's situation or a problem
- to assess a community (e.g., resources, strengths)
- to hold policy makers or others accountable
- to document a site, an event, or a way of life that is threatened...

WANG'S (2006) STEPS FOR PHOTOVOICE WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

1 Select and recruit a target audience of policy makers or community leaders.

2 Recruit a group of photovoice participants.

3 Introduce the photovoice methodology to participants, and facilitate a group discussion about cameras, power and ethics.

4 Obtain informed consent.

5 Pose initial themes for taking pictures.

6 Distribute cameras to participants and review how to use them and/or go over aesthetics and symbolism.

7 Provide time for participants to take pictures.

8 Meet to discuss photographs and identify themes.

9 Plan with participants a format to share photographs and stories with policy makers, community leaders or other young people.

READ MORE »

We sought to incorporate visual methodologies including Photovoice into research and engagement activities of the Regenerative City Living Lab. This is best captured in Regen Toolkit 02.

Visual Documentation

<u>The Institute for Community Research</u> (ICR) (2014) discusses visual documentation as a valuable method young people can use to collect information about their community.

Through the use of still and moving images, visual documentation as a research method can enable young people to look closely at their surroundings and in different ways, observing them more systematically and critically (p. 70).

Visual images can be use to:
- collect and present data
- describe context
- convey messages
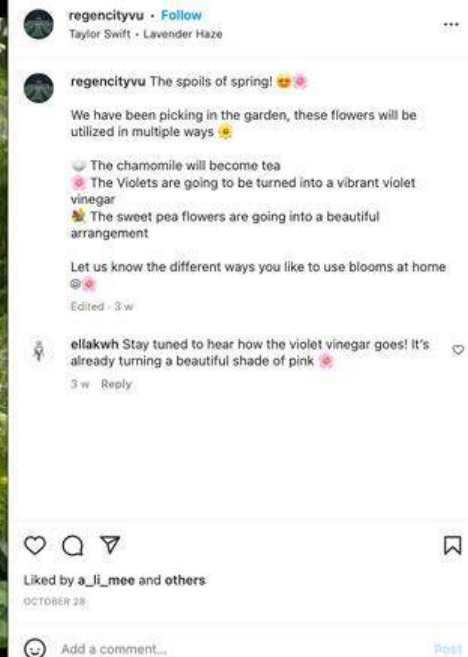
Mapping

The ICR (2014) describes **Geographic or spatial mapping** as:

"a useful tool for exploring the relationship between designated geographical areas and the objects, persons and sites located within them" (p. 167).

Through geo-mapping, young people can explore:
- how they understand, use and conceptualise their local area with a focus on the physical dimensions (e.g., a neighbourhood, park or school)
- how their environment shapes their behaviour (enables or constrains)
- the relationships between areas, objects and people.

Mapping can be used to:

- generate research questions or hypotheses about the location of persons, items, or sites in space
- to present data in a visually interesting way.

ACTIVITY: MAPPING OUR COMMUNITIES

Your task is to:

1. Take/share an image of 1-2 places within your community that are really important to you. What is it? What is its significance to you?
2. Take/share an image that shows how you have been connecting with nature during lockdown (within your 5km zone)
3. Take/share an image of any amazing gardens (edible or not) in your neighbourhood
4. Record a soundscape in your neighbourhood/ community (within your 5 km zone)

Note: Please do not include image/s of people for this task as we want to ensure we respect privacy. So you will have to get creative! Use symbolism, props or draw in something if you need to.

Upload these images to these <u>google slides</u> before the first session - this is going to be an important part of our work together. Please also include a brief explanation along with your image.

CHOOSING THE RIGHT METHODS

DATA COLLECTION METHOD	USES	RCLL EXAMPLE	PROS	CONS
SURVEY	Good for providing a broad view of attitudes, beliefs or behaviours. Can include a large number of participants.	A VU wide survey to gauge interest and explore the perceived benefits of an edible urban garden on campus (as well as suggestions, concerns).	They are cheap and you can gather a lot of data in a short amount of time. Surveys also protect privacy and confidentiality, so they work well for sensitive topics and hard to reach groups.	This method doesn't build connections or allow for participants to explore or expand. It takes time to develop a good survey and needs some knowledge of statistics.
INTERVIEWS	Provides an in-depth perspective about people's experiences of and feelings about a particular issue or topic.	Interviews with key stakeholders regarding the creation of an urban garden on campus. Open sauce Interviews with participants re. RCLL experience.	Provides a very deep picture into the issue/ phenomena or someone's experience. Can generate new understandings and theories.	Can create a a lot of data and it is time consuming to analyse it. The risks for distress are higher and confidentiality is harder to maintain.
FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS	Like an interview, this can provide in-depth perspective about experiences, feelings and understandings. In a group, participants can bounce off each other's contributions.	Focus group with Design Sprint facilitators reflecting on the experience and perceived success of the event.	Allows for interesting data particularly for participants who are discussing shared experiences or concerns. Participants can connect and learn from each other.	Can produce a lot of data that takes significant time to analyse. Cannot protect confidentiality within a group setting.

Source: Adapted from YPAR Curriculum (ICR)

CHOOSING THE RIGHT METHODS

DATA COLLECTION METHOD	USES	RCLL EXAMPLE	PROS	CONS
VISUAL & PHOTO METHODS	Methods here could include photovoice, photo-elicitation and any form of drawing. Visual methods can identify, represent and create change by showing experience and context through participants eyes.	Young people use photographs to explore their communities and tell about how they are connecting with nature during lockdown.	Visual methods are excellent ways to represent the world around us. They are especially good for individuals or groups who express themselves better through images rather than just words.	These methods can present challenges around logistics, can be expensive if equipment is needed. Ethics and privacy are a concern if topics are sensitive or dangerous.
SENSORY METHODS	Provides an in-depth perspective about people's experiences of and feelings about a particular issue or topic/place.	Participants use community walking to record (visual, sound etc.) key information about a specific area or context. See Regen Toolkit 02- example walking tour.	These methods provide important insight about how people interact with place. They can provide knowledge that is often not explored in other methods.	Sensory methods require both time and a lot of organisation (of participants, data and during analysis).
NARRATIVE	We live in and through stories. Storytelling as part of the research methodology can show us important aspects of the topic and how it affects the person/group.	Placement student journal reflections The Green Action and Wellbeing diary	Narrative and stories are a very natural way to make sense of the world. This data can be really rich and shows links between context, events, and people.	Narrative approaches when used as part of interviews or in a group setting require practice in facilitating. There can also be a lot of data which may be time consuming to analyse.

My research plan

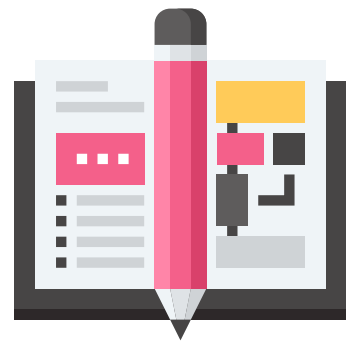**Aim and research questions** (including key concepts)

Participant group

Participant inclusion criteria:

Sample size: _____

Data Collection Method/s (including why you chose this method)

My research plan

Timeline & Tasks

Task	Who	Deadline
Research tool development		
Recruitment and organising interview/focus groups times		
Approval and consent		
Data management		

Other considerations:

A snapshot: Types of qualitative analysis

01 Thematic

"'A method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data. It minimally organizes and describes your dataset in (rich) detail' (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 79).

READ MORE ≫

02 Narrative

"'Beginning with a respect for ordinary lived experience, the focus of narrative inquiry is not only a valorizing of individuals' experience but also an exploration of the social, cultural, and institutional narratives within which individuals' experiences were constituted, shaped, expressed, and enacted — but in a way that begins and ends that inquiry in the storied lives of the people involved' (Clandinen & Rosiek, 2007. p. 42).

03 Discourse

In discourse analysis there is a focus on language - how it is used and what language does. This approach assumes that our understandings about the world, ourselves, and others is mediated through language. In some approaches, there is an emphasis on power, so language as a tool to define, include, exclude and control.
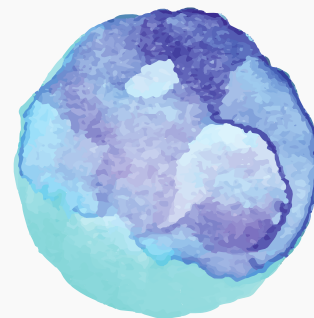
04 Content Analysis

Content analysis focuses on the presence of certain words, themes, or concepts within qualitative data. Can be both quantitative (counting and measuring) and qualitative (interpreting and understanding).
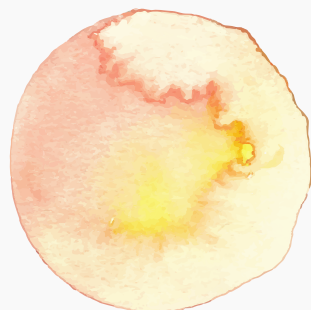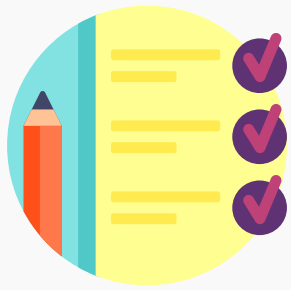
Criteria for assessing qualitative research

(Tracy, 2010)

1. Worthy topic

The topic is relevant, timely, significant, interesting.

2. Rich rigor

This is about the soundness of the research. To be rigorous, the study should use sufficient and appropriate: theoretical constructs, data/time in field, same(s), context(s), data collection and analysis procedures.

3. Sincerity

Sincerity is about the authenticity and genuineness of the research and is characterised by self reflexivity and transparency (e.g., methods and challenges).

4. Credibility

This refers to the trustworthiness and plausibility of the findings. Practices for increasing credibility include: Thick description, triangulation, multivocality, member reflections.

5. Resonance

This refers to the ability of the research to influence, affect or move readers/an audience. Practices for increasing resonance include transferable findings, naturalistic generalisation and aesthetic, evocative representation.

6. Significant contribution

"Does the study extend knowledge?" "Improve practice?" "generate ongoing research?" "liberate or empower"?

7. Ethical

The research considers the different types of ethics: procedural, situational and culturally specific, relational and exiting (e.g., leaving the interview, sharing the research).

8. Meaningful coherence

The study achieves what it set out to, the methods and procedures fit the stated goals, and the literature, research questions, and findings are interconnected.
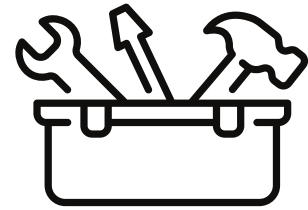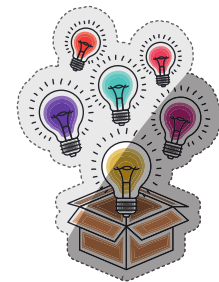
RESEARCH METHODS
TOOLS & RESOURCES

Sage Methods Map
Explore the research methods terrain, read definitions of key terminology, and discover content relevant to your research methods journey

Research Methods Toolkit
Canadian School Libraries

Creative Strategies
My Peer Toolkit outlines some creative strategies that you could incorporate into your research design (e.g., Vox pop)

Semi-structured Interview tips
This video provides some useful tips for conducting interviews. see Social design with Kirstene for more videos.

Arts-Based Evaluation
Jumblies Theatre (2013) provides examples of different arts based approaches to evaluation (applicable to research more broadly)

Arts Based Evaluation 101
This resource developed by ArtReach Toronto describes ABE and outlines creative activities that can be incorporated into workshops.

Art-based data gathering
ABE uses creative activity as a means of expression (Art for Social Change, Canada)

05

Reflexivity and Ethics in Research

CRITICAL QUESTIONS FOR COMMUNITY RESEARCHERS

As researchers we are in a powerful position to be the 'creators of knowledge,' and there are some important questions to engage with throughout the research process. Michelle Fine (2006), an educational psychologist who frames research using a social justice lens proposes questions aimed at **digging deeper into the why, how, when and with whom** and also who is made vulnerable by the research.

It is important for us to consider who (i.e., which group) the research will represent and what the project aims to achieve.

- What is the purpose of the research more broadly
- What is our agenda in carrying out the research?

For what?

With whom are we collaborating and how are we working with them to co-construct knowledge that best serves them?
While this isn't always an option for other research designs, there are a range of practices that have been used to ensure that participants in the research are included and given the opportunity to shape the questions and approach.

With whom?
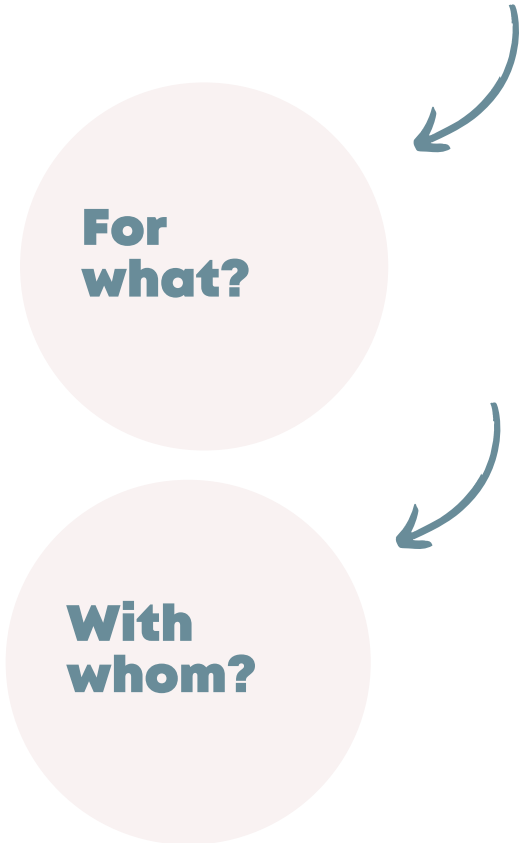
Reflecting on Power, Voice and Representation

It is really important to consider what kinds of power and privilege come with being a community-based researcher. As researchers we need to work alongside communities to facilitate a process that results in new understandings and social change.

You bring important knowledge as an insider (e.g., as a young person, community member) but being a researcher also positions you as an outsider (you have a skillset, knowledge and power that others may not).

Defining Reflexivity

An awareness of the researcher's influence over the research process. Personal reflexivity in which we reflect upon the ways in which our values, experiences, interests, beliefs, political commitments and our social identities shape the research (Willig 2013).

Listen to Prof. Fine discussing Critical Participatory Action Research.

IN FOCUS: ETHICAL PRINCIPLES

When conducting research with people we can draw on **four key ethical principles** to help us make decisions about how we carry out our research and what we set out to research.

RESPECT FOR PEOPLE

Respect people and their autonomy. We can do this by making sure people have *informed consent* to participating in research, have the freedom to choose whether they will participate or not, and understand what their participation involves.

JUSTICE

Fair distribution of people who receive the benefits of the research and those who bear its burdens. This means seeking equality in the both the research process and outcomes.

BENEFICENCE/NON-MALEFICENCE

Do no harm to participants (non-maleficence), and this can mean many types of harm like physical, emotional, psychological, social or financial. We also want to maximise benefits (beneficence) for both the participant and society more broadly.
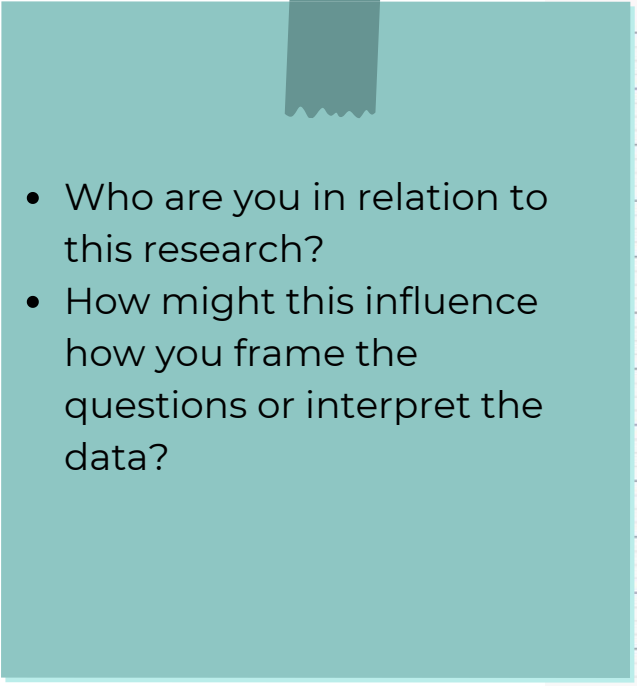
PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Protecting the personal information and the data that participants share with you. This can help prevent types of harm to your participants. But remember, confidentiality is different to anonymity! Some research methods may mean participants are not fully anonymous.
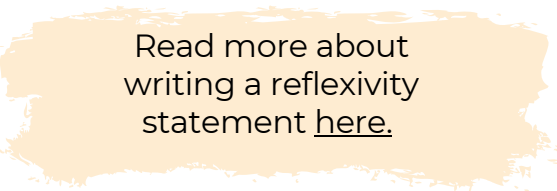
REFLEXIVITY AND THE RESEARCHER'S LENS

We have already identified the importance of reflexivity as a way to think about how we frame research. It is also one of the most important tools in qualitative interpretation and analysis. Remember that in qualitative research:

- The role of the researcher is actively engaged with participants — together both are 'co-creators'.

- Analysis and interpretation of data requires the researcher to draw on their interpretive capacities/judgement/experiences. This is shaped by their socialisation, training, theoretical frameworks and disciplinary traditions.

Reflexivity is an important means of ensuring rigour. Through engaging in reflexivity, the researcher considers the (inevitable) impact they have on data collection and analysis. Being reflexive means thinking about personal interest in the topic, because what you see in the data (to some extent) reflects who you are (Terry et al., 2017).

- Who are you in relation to this research?
- How might this influence how you frame the questions or interpret the data?

Read more about writing a reflexivity statement here.

ETHICS GUIDELINES AND RESOURCES

NHMRC Guidelines
is the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in **Human Research**

NHMRC Guidelines
for ethical research with **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander** peoples and communities.

Ethical considerations in research and evaluation with **children and young people.**

Child Safe Standards
All Victorian organisations that provide services or facilities to children are required by law to comply with the Child Safe Standards (DHHS)

YacVic Code of Ethical Practice
is a framework to help those working with young people through ethical dilemmas.

Ethics, safeguarding and consent
Yerp is a toolkit for young people to help them shape the present and future of Victoria.

Research with Young People
Yerp was developed by YacVic, the peak body and leading policy advocate for young people issues in Victoria.

References

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3(2), 77-101. 10.1191/1478088706qp063oa

Chen, E., Leos, C., Kowitt, S. D., & Moracco, K. E. (2020). Enhancing community-based participatory research through human-centered design strategies. Health Promotion Practice, 21(1), 37-48. https://doi.org/10.1177/1524839919850557

Clandinin, D. J. & Caine, V. (2011). Narrative inquiry. In Lisa. M. Given (Ed.), The Sage encyclopedia of qualitative research methods (pp. 542-544). Sage Publications. http://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781412963909.n275

Clandinin, D. J., & Rosiek, J. (2007). Mapping a landscape of narrative inquiry: Borderland places and tensions. In D. J. Clandinin (Ed.), Handbook of narrative inquiry: Mapping a methodology (pp. 35-75). Sage Publications.

Fine, M. (2006). Bearing witness: Methods for researching oppression and resistance: A textbook for critical research. Social Justice Research, 19(1), 83-108.

Greenwood, D. A. (2019). Place, land, and the decolonization of the settler soul. The Journal of Environmental Education, 50(4-6), 358-377.
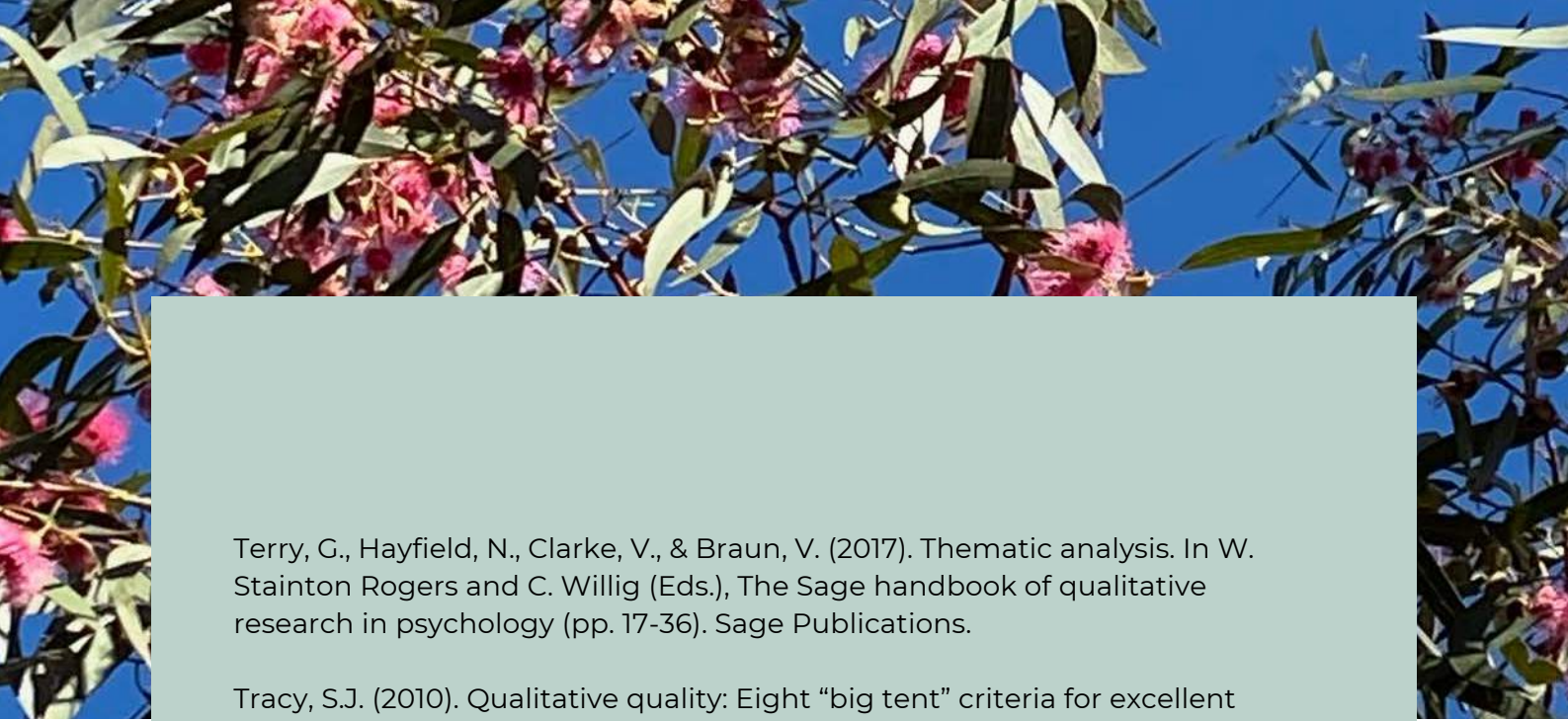
Ideo.org. (n.d). What is Human-Centered Design? Retrieved from: https://www.designkit.org/human-centered-design

Israel, B. A., Schulz, A. J., Parker, E. A., & Becker, A. B. (1998). Review of community-based research: Assessing partnership approaches to improve public health. Annual Review of Public Health, 19, 173-202. 10.1146/annurev.publhealth.19.1.173

Spradley, J. P. (1979). The ethnographic interview. Rinehart & Winston.

Stringer, E. T. (1999). Action research (2nd ed.). Sage Publications.

The Institute for Community Research (2014). Youth Participatory Action Research Research Curriculum. Retrieved from: https://www.oregon.gov/oha/PH/HEALTHYPEOPLEFAMILIES/YOUTH/Documents/CurriculumYPAR2014.pdf

Terry, G., Hayfield, N., Clarke, V., & Braun, V. (2017). Thematic analysis. In W. Stainton Rogers and C. Willig (Eds.), The Sage handbook of qualitative research in psychology (pp. 17-36). Sage Publications.

Tracy, S.J. (2010). Qualitative quality: Eight "big tent" criteria for excellent qualitative research. Qualitative Inquiry, 16(10), 837-851, 10.1177/1077800410383121

Vaughn, L. M., & Jacquez, F. (2020). Participatory research methods: Choice points in the research process. Journal of Participatory Research Methods, 1, 1. https://doi.org/10.35844/001c.13244
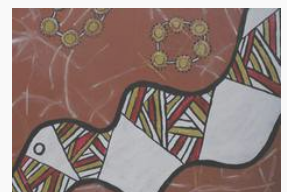
Wang, C. C. (2006). Youth participation in photovoice as a strategy for community change. Journal of Community Practice, 14(1-2), 147-161.

Willig, C. (2013). Introducing qualitative research in psychology (3rd ed.). McGraw Hill.

REGEN TOOLKIT

06 Social Media for Action

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY   **STREAT**

Social Media for Action

This toolkit contains the what, who and how of using social media to inspire action

By Thomas Denning

Table of Contents

01 Introduction

Social media is one of the most widely used modes of communication in society today. It is a powerful tool that can reach a broad audience with relative ease. Platforms like Instagram, Facebook and YouTube are regularly used to build community and connect like-minded people locally or globally. Social media is (and have been instrumental in providing a platform for stories that may not have not been heard before). For more on stories of place and people, see Regen Toolkit 02.

Young people's recent employment of social media has played a powerful role in social movements globally, including climate change, gun control, the Black Lives Matter Movement and resistance led by young people in countries such as Hong Kong (Azar, 2019; Vink 2018). Since empowering individual action is a crucial aim of the Regenerative City Living Lab (RCLL), drawing on such technology was fit for purpose.

Our strategy was to create a community around the RCLL program that had the scope to reach a wider audience beyond just the Victoria University campus alone. Empowering individual action is a crucial aim of RCLL. A platform that can inflate awareness, engage users in activism and serve as a means for sharing stories and representations about young people otherwise disconnected from mainstream media is Instagram (Molder, Lakind, Clemmons, & Chen, 2022; Brünker, Deitelhoff, & Mirbabaie, 2019; Yuen & Tang 2021).

Ensuring our content, learnings and experience in the garden was available for a broader audience means that anyone, anywhere at any time, could be inspired to take action.

For more on Instagram mobilisation in the RCLL see Regen Toolkit 03.

02 What is your purpose?

Messaging is essential when trying to build an online community, and it is well worth taking the time to think about what you want to communicate.

Ask yourself
- What are the core themes of your subject matter? What is at the heart of it?
- What is the tone of your messaging? Friendly, kind, funny?
- What kind of information do you want to convey? Informative, educational, accessible?

It is also important to consider what platform will suit your needs best. Instagram is great for a mix of written, photography and video elements. YouTube is perfect if you love creating video content, and Facebook is useful if you want to create a community group with active members.

03 Who is your audience?

It is essential to identify who the audience is for your messaging. Even if the people engaging with your content change over time, it is still worthwhile creating posts with a particular audience in mind. This Keeping your audience in focus can help inform how often you post, what content goes into your messaging and the best way to communicate with your followers.

04 How to create

After identifying what you are trying to communicate and who your audience is, you can begin building some visual identity around your ideas. A coherent and consistent visual language helps streamline the look of your messaging and provides an identity to everything you produce.
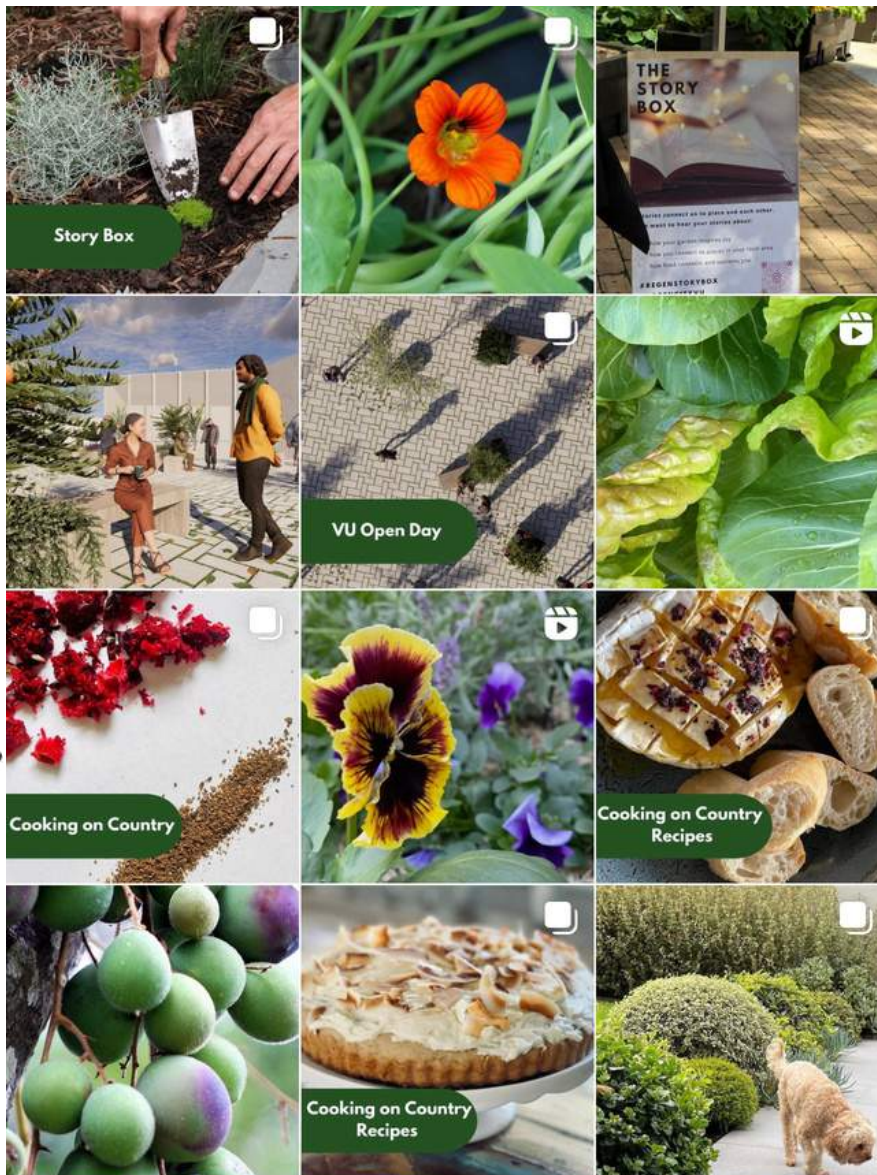
Creating a mood board with colours, images, and visual elements can be influential in helping you hone what you want your visual identity to be. You can use this mood board as a point of reference going forward to help inform the content you create.

05 Visualisation

Text to prompt further interaction

Plenty of greenery and activities people can try at home

Warm tones from our mood board

Visual elements of how people interact with their gardens

Honing your visual language allows you to achieve a consistent look to your messaging. The above image is a snapshot of our Instagram page for the project, and you can see how we have incorporated ideas from our mood board into the final picture grid.

References

Azar, T. (2019, November 22). Youth activism in the age of social media. Northeastern University Political Review. https://www.nupoliticalreview.com/2019/11/22/youth-activism-in-the-age-of- social-media/

Brünker, F., Deitelhoff, F., & Mirbabaie, M. (2019). Collective Identity Formation on Instagram--Investigating the Social Movement Fridays for Future. arXiv preprint arXiv:1912.05123.

Molder, A. L., Lakind, A., Clemmons, Z. E., & Chen, K. (2022). Framing the Global Youth Climate Movement: A Qualitative Content Analysis of Greta Thunberg's Moral, Hopeful, and Motivational Framing on Instagram. The International Journal of Press/Politics, 27(3), 668-695.

Vink, A. (2018). Online Activism: Social Change Through Social Media. Greenhaven Publishing LLC.

Yuen, S., & Tang, G. (2021). Instagram and social capital: youth activism in a networked movement. Social Movement Studies, 1-22.