

HE FEST

17-18 Sept Conference
19 Sept Workshops
www.hefest.com.au

FUTURE
CAMPUS 

HE FEST Program

Wed | 17 September

9:00 - 9:10	Welcome Tim Winkler Future Campus
9:10 - 10:00	Who do you really think we are? <i>What universities need to do to regain social licence, and how every staff member in the sector needs to embrace substantial change. Looking at how and why tertiary institutions need to change to engage with community.</i> Professor Iain Martin Vice-Chancellor, Deakin University
10:00 - 10:45	The Revolution We Need: Methods Matter in Tertiary Education Professor Adam Shoemaker Vice-Chancellor, Victoria University
10:45 - 11:00	Morning Tea
11:00 - 11:45	Are we preparing students for the future of work? <i>As AI and technological change have the potential to significantly alter entry-level professional roles, how are courses changing to ensure that degrees are not irrelevant when students graduate? This panel discussion features HE leaders from multiple disciplines.</i> Professor Marek Tesar Dean of Education, University of Melbourne Professor Lorne Neudorf Dean of Law, La Trobe University Professor Jenny George Dean of Melbourne Business School, University of Melbourne Professor Amanda White Deputy Associate Dean Education, UTS
11:45 - 12:30	What's Next? <i>An excursion into Government policy, current issues facing the sector and key trends that are critical to understand, from Australia's pre-eminent expert on HE policy.</i> Professor Andrew Norton Monash University
	Recommendations for the Nation <i>A fascinating case study on the success of the UTAS Schools Recommendation Program, which has largely replaced early offers for the university.</i> Michelle Weir Executive Director of Global Marketing & Recruitment, University of Tasmania
12:30 - 1:30	Lunch

<p>1:30 - 2:15</p>	<p>The LabNext70 Playbook: From Shadow AI to Strategic Capability</p> <p><i>Most universities are stuck in AI pilot purgatory—UNE broke out. Aaron Driver shares how UNE shifted from scattered 'shadow AI' to a secure, strategic tool used by 80% of staff. Hear real use cases and the leadership behind true transformation.</i></p> <p>Associate Professor Aaron Driver Director of LabNext70, University of New England</p>	<p>Future Campus Awards Showcase:</p> <p>Insights from three of 2025's successful HE marketing campaigns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VU - No One Sees You Like VU: <i>Insights into the redevelopment of Victoria University's brand strategy and new brand campaign</i> <p>Russell Downing & David Llewellyn VU</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deakin - See the wonderful possibilities: <i>Metrics, positioning and outcomes from Deakin's latest brand campaign.</i> <p>Abbie Allen Deakin</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • QUT - This is your campus: <i>An innovative internal communications campaign co-designed with students and implemented at low cost, enhancing belonging at QUT.</i> <p>Andrew Nicholls QUT</p>
<p>2:15 - 3:00</p>	<p>Creating Connection: Helping Regional Students say Yes to Uni</p> <p><i>Regional students face barriers to higher education, from distance to isolation. Universities are responding with outreach, accommodation support, scholarships, and digital tools. This session shares case studies and practical insights to advance equitable access, aligned with the Accord's goals</i></p> <p>Elissa Newall Senior Partner, Edified</p> <p>Paula Soon Director, Admissions and Client Services, VTAC</p> <p>Ellyse McNish Regional Equity Advisor, La Trobe University</p> <p>Jan Clohessy Director, Marketing and Growth, Federation University</p> <p>Xanthea Jensen Sales and Partnerships Manager, Iglu Student Accommodation</p>	<p>Future Campus Awards Showcase:</p> <p>Insights from leading 2025 HE campaigns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Best Field Trip in the World: <i>An insight into the cost-effective and award-winning student recruitment campaign by the University of Sunshine Coast.</i> <p>Justin Laing University of Sunshine Coast</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launching a new approach to Early Entry: <i>VU developed a new approach to its Early Entry campaign, targeting year 11 and 12 students through a broad range of transition initiatives, informed by prospective student feedback. This presentation will outline what made the new program successful, and share some results.</i> <p>Emily Bodey Director, Student Recruitment, VU</p>
<p>3:00 - 3:20 Afternoon Tea</p>		

3:20 - 4:10	What does AI-first mean for you in HE? <i>What will an AI-embracing university look like in the next year—and in 3–5 years? How do we prepare students for careers rapidly evolving with AI? La Trobe University's 'AI-first' strategy leads in responsible AI use by reshaping curriculum, boosting research, and enhancing student support with AI-driven tools.</i> Professor Theo Farrell Vice-Chancellor, La Trobe University
4:10 - 5:00	Pathways, Channels and the Future Fabian Marrone CMO, Monash University and CEO, Monash College Professor Allie Clemans DVC (Education), Monash University
5:00 - 6:30	Free Time
6:30 - 9:00	Conference Dinner - The General Assembly, Docklands

| Conference Dinner

The General Assembly

The General Assembly, Docklands

Join us for drinks, dinner and the 2025 Future Campus Awards at the General Assembly, fronting the Yarra with a spectacular view of the Melbourne skyline.

The dinner has been designed with a strong focus on networking and is proudly sponsored by Oliver Wyman: delivering Impact-Driven Strategy and Consulting for Tertiary Institutions in Australia.

Exclusive Dinner Partner

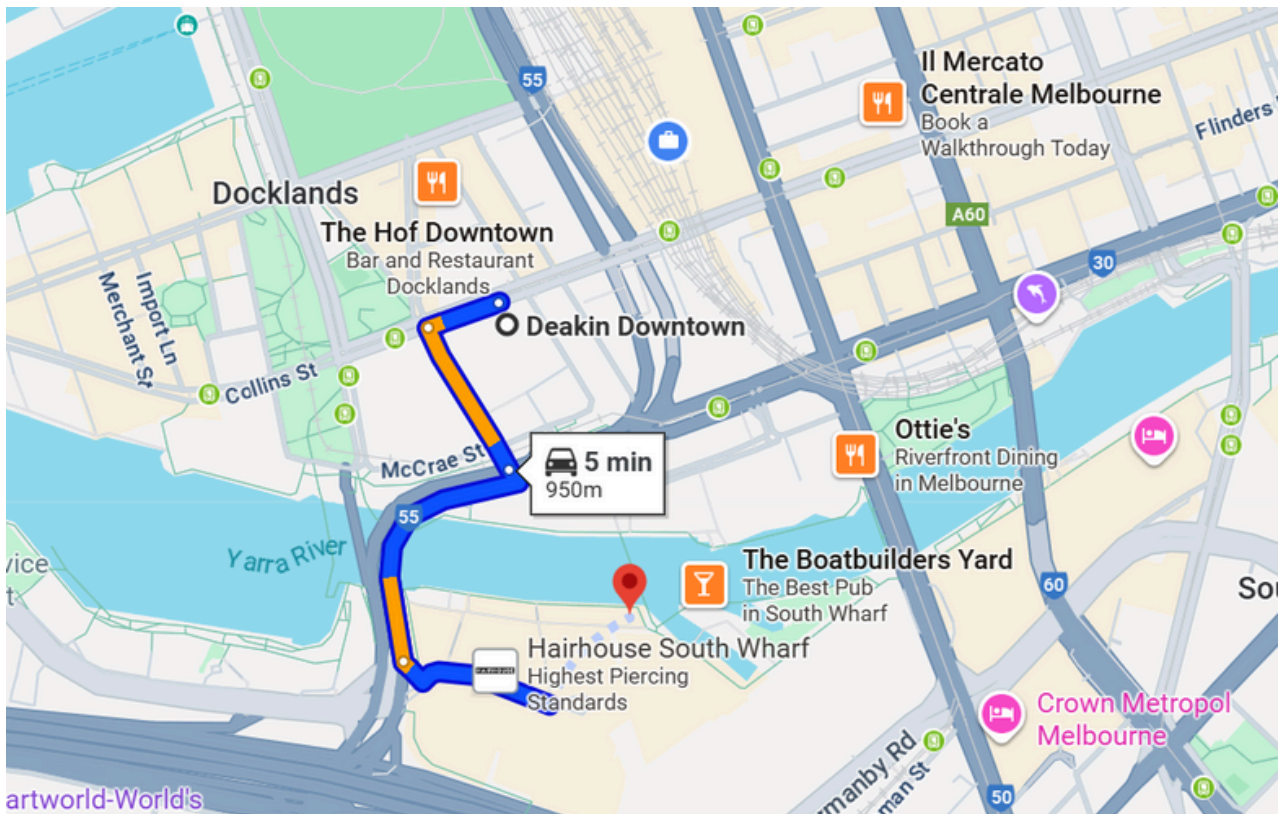


Location | [The General Assembly](#) 29 S Wharf Promenade, South Wharf VIC 3006

| Location

Arriving at The General Assembly - South Wharf Promenade

Follow these steps to easily navigate your way to The General Assembly at South Wharf — a riverside pub/dinner spot in Melbourne.



Instructions:

From Deakin Downtown (Tower 2, Level 12, 727 Collins St, Melbourne) to The General Assembly, South Wharf:

1. Exit Tower 2 onto Collins Street and head west toward Spencer Street.
2. Turn left onto Spencer Street and walk south to the Yarra River.
3. Cross the Seafarers Bridge and continue west along South Wharf Promenade.
4. The General Assembly will be on your left at 29 South Wharf Promenade.

Optional: Walk ~10-12 minutes, or take tram 109 toward Port Melbourne and alight at the Convention Centre/Southbank stop, then walk 5 minutes west along the Promenade.

HE FEST Program

Thurs | 18 September

9:00 - 9:10	Welcome Stephen Matchett Future Campus	
9:10 - 10:00	Governance is "not up to scratch." So who should run universities? <i>There are Federal and NSW Parliamentary inquiries ongoing into the issue and media stories most days about the way tertiary institutions are run. In this session, two of the nation's key leaders in HE industrial relations come together for a unique conversation. Who should run Australia's tertiary institutions?</i> Damien Cahill General Secretary, National Tertiary Education Union (NTEU) Craig Laughton Executive Director, Australian Higher Education Industrial Association	
10:00 - 10:50	International Education and its place in the future of Australian HE <i>Insights from the Australian Government's new lead on international education, Assistant Minister Julian Hill.</i> Hon Julian Hill Assistant Minister for International Education, Australian Government	
10:50 - 11:00	Morning Tea	
	Stream A	
	Stream B	
11:00 - 11:45	A Healthy Interest <i>For decades, Tim Pegler has been engaging audiences with stories as a journalist, author and now health technology communicator. Bringing insights from the health and medical sector, Tim looks at critical elements of successful storytelling, insights into how to identify and present key human points of engagement, and insights into what it's like to attempt to engage with universities from the outside.</i> Tim Pegler Health Technology Business Development Lead, Author, Journalist	Approaches to student success, student retention <i>Macquarie University is undertaking a major implementation of a Salesforce platform that has involved rethinking the role of marketing and student recruitment from growing headcount to the recruitment of students with the best chance of graduating.</i> Professor Eric Knight Deputy Vice-Chancellor (People & Operations) Macquarie University
11:45 - 12:30	Creating HE Videos with impact <i>After 15 years in HE video production, and now completing a PhD on translating academic knowledge, Dan K Pearson looks at ways to boost impact, engagement and social licence.</i> Dan K Pearson DKP Studio and the QUT Digital Media Research Centre	Lessons from Australia's most popular course <i>Over 760,000 people have taken the UTAS Wicking Dementia Research Centre's free MOOCs. Director James Vickers shares insights into their radical approach to knowledge translation.</i> Professor James Vickers Director, Wicking Dementia Centre, University of Tasmania
12:30 - 12:35	Burrow Briefing Manuel Kambos CEO Burrow	

HE FEST Program

Thurs | 18 September

12:35 - 1:30 Lunch		
1:30 - 2:15	<p>Message from the Front</p> <p><i>Perspectives on the changing face of public relations and communications, and what is working in other sectors. Also a consideration of what a leading PR firm expects of grads.</i></p> <p>Jo Painter Group Managing Director, Icon Agency</p>	<p>Insights Into Student Satisfaction and Wellbeing</p> <p><i>Analysis of student satisfaction at Australian universities, and an introduction to approaches which may improve student mental health and wellbeing</i></p> <p>Professor Chi Baik Centre for the Study of Higher Education, University of Melbourne</p>
2:15 - 3:00	<p>AI and You</p> <p><i>AI isn't coming, it's already here. This session looks at practical ways to implement AI in your work - with insights from two experts with huge experience in managing technological change</i></p> <p>Ray Fleming Founder, Stratentia</p> <p>Michael Burgess Founder, FutureNow Consulting</p>	<p>The Academic of the Future</p> <p><i>AI is transforming universities across teaching, research, and knowledge creation. As higher education adapts, the role of the academic is rapidly evolving. This session explores the academic of the future—an intermediary between the academy, AI systems, and the learner. In this changing landscape, one certainty remains: academics must embrace lifelong learning, not just teach it.</i></p> <p>Professor Julie Cogin Provost, Australian Catholic University</p>
3:00 - 3:15 Afternoon Tea		
3:15 - 4:00	<p>The Case for Brand in Times of Crisis</p> <p><i>In crises, brand building often takes a back seat—but that's shifting. A subtler, integrated brand story across channels and content is now more powerful than ever. This session shows how to craft a cohesive narrative, with quick wins to build momentum and make the case for a brand-led approach in higher ed marketing.</i></p> <p>Tracy Chalk Chief Marketing and Communications Officer, UTS</p>	<p>Future Campus Awards Showcase:</p> <p>The sector's marketing leaders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">VU - Childcare Deserts: <i>sparking a national conversation for change</i> <p>Corinna Langelaan & Gemma Williams Victoria University</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">CQU - CQU x Brother & Co: <i>more than a refresh: a brand reimaged together</i> <p>Kylie Devine Director, Global Brand & Marketing, (Acting) CQU</p> <p>Piet Human Executive Creative Director of Brother and Co</p>

4:00 - 4:45

Not all pics are worth 1000 words. How to make yours count!

With free online and AI-generated images everywhere, knowing what makes a picture engaging—and when you need a human behind the lens—is essential. Veteran photographer Neil Bennett shares what works, why, and how to build an authentic brand through images.

Neil Bennett | International photographer & former chief visual storyteller for News Corp

Interdisciplinary research and how to grow it

Funding bodies are pushing for more cross-disciplinary work, yet university structures and career paths often hinder it. I'd highlight the Science and Society Network's role in fostering interdisciplinary research and supporting EMCRs with seed grants that have delivered an 8:1 return in external funding.

Professor Emma Kowal | Deakin University

4:45 - 5:00

Conference Wrap Up

Stephen Matchett & Tim Winkler | Future Campus

Workshop 1:

Image Isn't Everything - But It Can Be: How to Stand Out from the Herd with Great Pictures

Facilitators	Neil Bennett and Tim Winkler
Date and Time:	Friday 19th of September 10:00am - 12:00pm
Venue	Deakin Downtown
Cost:	\$295





Standing Apart from the Competition: Visual Storytelling for Higher Education

Too often, images are chosen to decorate, not define.

In an era where anyone can generate a passable picture with AI or download a polished stock image in seconds, the institutions that stand out are those that use photography with strategic intent—crafting visual narratives that reveal who they are, not just what they offer.

With many Australian universities offering similar courses, the pressure is on to cut through the clutter and engage prospective students, donors, staff and the public with the essence of your institution's distinctiveness.

Photography remains one of the most powerful yet underutilised tools in higher education marketing. Done well, it can cut through sameness, connect emotionally with audiences, and bring authenticity to your brand.

This workshop is for anyone involved in communications, marketing, engagement or branding who wants to elevate the way their institution is seen—literally. You'll learn how to move beyond generic or decorative imagery and start using visual storytelling to define your identity, attract the right students and partners, and build lasting engagement. Internationally-recognised photographer Neil Bennett, former Head of Visual Storytelling at News Corp Australia and Head of Photography at AAP, will share expert insights into how to plan, capture and select images that communicate meaning and build profile. With experience across the UK, US and Australia—including at Monash University—Neil brings a practical, sector-informed perspective on what makes images work in the real world.

Tim Winkler, Director of Twig Marketing, will facilitate the session, drawing on more than two decades of experience working with over 30 higher education institutions. Together, they'll help you explore the strategic role of imagery in brand building and equip you to make better visual decisions across campaigns and content.

Topics covered include:

- **The perfect image brief** – What to ask, what to avoid, and how to plan for powerful results
- **Photographer vs AI vs stock** – When to invest, when to improvise
- **Choosing the right talent** – Who represents your brand and how to capture them well
- **Creative freedom vs control** – Do great shots come from detailed briefs, creative instinct—or both?

Plus, practical guidance on questions like:

- **What if my campus/lab/office is dark and ugly?**
- **How do I make dentistry, accounting, or arts courses visually appealing?**

If you want your university to be remembered—not just seen—this workshop will give you the tools and confidence to capture more images that count.

Workshop 2:

AI, Strategy, and the New Student Journey

Facilitators	Ray Fleming and Michael Burgess
Date and Time:	Friday 19th of September 1:00 - 3:00pm
Venue	Deakin Downtown
Cost:	\$295





The world your students are preparing for is rapidly being upended. Is your marketing keeping pace?

AI isn't coming - it's already here. And it's rapidly transforming how education is delivered, consumed, and valued. For university marketing leaders, this means rethinking everything. What does it mean for student recruitment? For the value proposition of a degree? For the entire marketing function, including how we structure our teams, engage prospects, differentiate our offering, utilise third partners?

But with so much hype, and so little clarity, many are left wondering where to start, and can be tempted to wait until there's clarity before making the right decision.

You're not alone if your team is feeling stuck. Too many university teams are stuck in reactive mode - watching AI evolve from the sidelines, unsure how to respond. As student expectations shift, employer demands evolve, and academic delivery models adapt, the role of marketing is being fundamentally reshaped. If your team doesn't have a clear AI strategy yet, you're already falling behind.

While the headlines scream innovation, your inbox is full of uncertainty. How will employer expectations shift your messaging? What role will marketing play as new forms of credentialing and hybrid delivery emerge? And just how fast will academic delivery change?

Meanwhile, other institutions are already making moves - experimenting, adapting, and building AI capability at speed. Without a clear strategy and pragmatic approach to deliver meaningful change, the risk isn't just falling behind. It's being left out of the conversation altogether.

Join us for a pragmatic, future-focused workshop designed for higher ed marketing leaders. It's clear that nobody knows all the answers, and that we are all learning from the experts a few steps ahead of us! And spending time comparing notes with leaders and colleagues, and challenging our own thinking is valuable.

Led by [Michael Burgess](#) - former Chief Student Experience Officer at Western Sydney University and ex-head of strategy at NRMA - and [Ray Fleming](#) - former global higher education industry lead at Google Cloud and Microsoft ANZ, and cohost of the [AI in Education podcast](#) since 2019 - this 3-hour workshop will blend lifting your knowledge of what's happening in an AI-disrupted world with real-world case studies, forward-looking insights, and facilitated discussions to **help you:**

- Understand where AI is already reshaping higher ed - from classrooms to campaign teams
- Explore how marketing can drive value in a redefined student experience
- Build the components of a roadmap to guide your team's development over the next two years

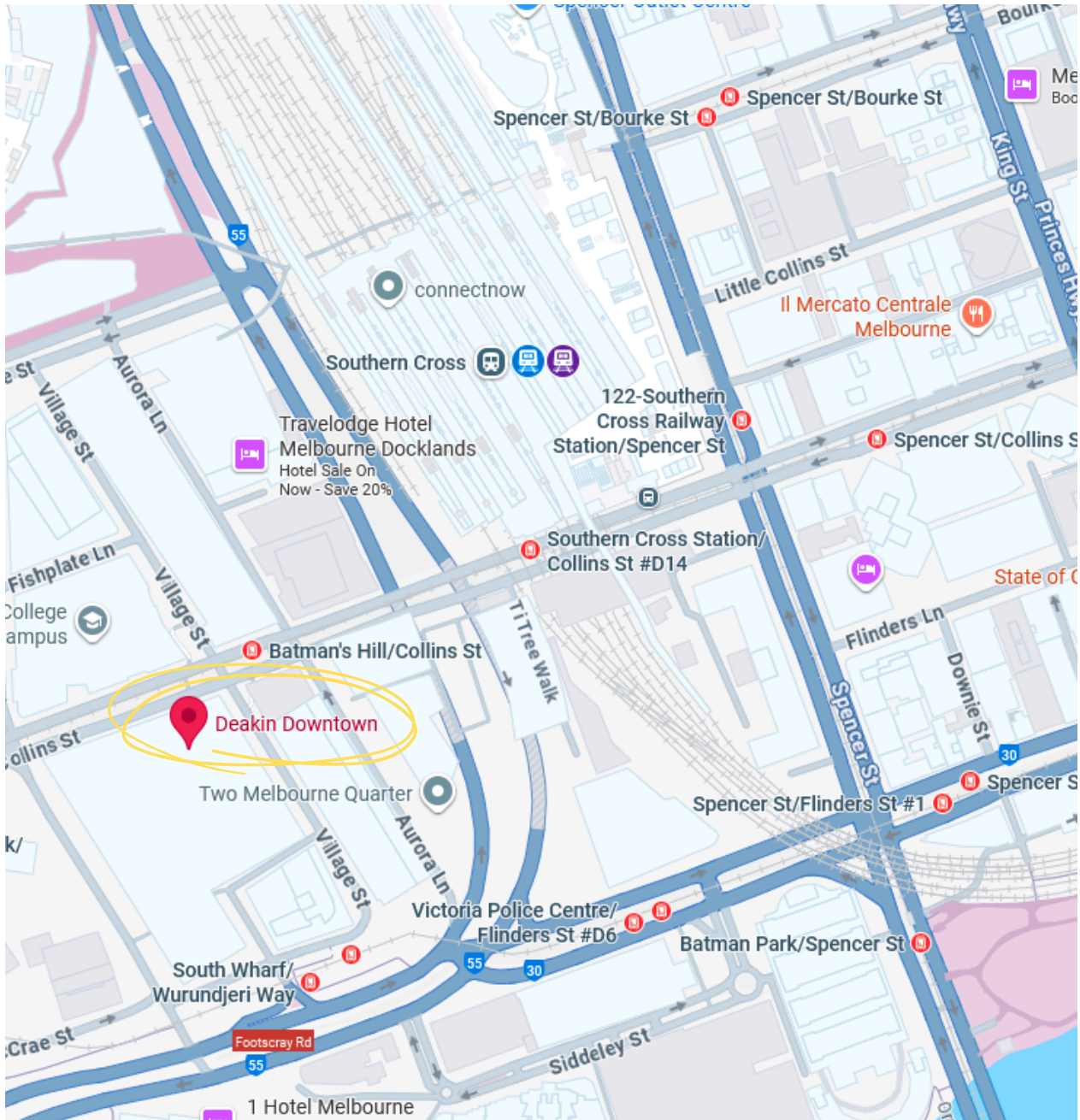
You'll leave with a sharper sense of what's possible, what's urgent, and what's next - for you, your team, and your university.

Tickets strictly limited: Cost \$295 incl GST

| Location

Arriving at HE FEST venue - Deakin Downtown

Follow these steps to easily navigate your way to Deakin Downtown, which is on Level 12 of Tower 2 in the Collins Square Precinct, 727 Collins St, Melbourne 3008.



Instructions:

1. Enter Collins Square (727 Collins St, Melbourne) via the Collins Street entrance underneath the yellow geometric sculpture.
2. Make your way across the lobby floor towards the escalators on the right-hand side.
3. Ascend the escalators and turn left, following signage to the elevators.
4. Select Level 12 on the touch screen and wait to be allocated an elevator letter and then make your way to the corresponding elevator door.
5. Upon arrival to level 12, turn right and proceed through the glass sliding doors where you will find our reception desk.

[Learn more about accessing Deakin Downtown PDF](#)

| Partners



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