



# In2 science

A W A R D S 2 0 2 4

20 YEARS



Tuesday 10 December

5:30pm - 8:45pm

Ian Potter Auditorium, Melbourne

[in2science.org.au](http://in2science.org.au)

Tonight we will recognise and celebrate the outstanding achievements, contributions, and STEM engagement outcomes of In2science peer mentoring program participants.

Throughout 2024, In2science has supported STEM education in classrooms across 56 schools, reaching over 3,000 students. This evening, In2science will highlight exceptional examples of STEM engagement from across the program. We also commemorate our 20th anniversary and acknowledge the contribution we have had in STEM education since our inception in 2004.



## SCHEDULE

5:30 Arrival of guests

6:00 Welcome by:

- Dr Gabby Goldberg (Program Director)
- Hon Prof John Brumby AO (In2science Chair)
- Dr Jessica Danaher (RMIT University)

6:30 Presentation of awards and speeches

7:30 Refreshments

8:45 Close of the 2024 In2science Awards





# MENTOR SUPPORT TEACHER AWARD FINALISTS

## Veronica Chia

### *St John's Regional College*

Veronica, a dedicated educator from a new school to the program, has demonstrated exceptional commitment this year. Juggling her teaching responsibilities alongside the smooth operation of the program at her school, Veronica has gone above and beyond to support students in getting set up for the eMentoring experience. Her outstanding communication skills have facilitated collaborations with technical staff at the school to ensure students can access meetings with mentors seamlessly. Veronica's proactive efforts and unwavering dedication to providing students with valuable opportunities for mentorship highlight her passion for enhancing their educational experiences and fostering their growth in STEM fields.

## Amanda Dales

### *Bayswater Secondary College*

Amanda Dales of Bayswater Secondary College is a tireless and passionate educator, continually striving for excellence and providing a myriad of opportunities for her students. As a key contact teacher and In2science Advisory Board Member, we have been extremely fortunate to benefit from Amanda's unyielding passion and dedication to the program as she provides her unique perspective to the Board and to the Coordinators as she hosts mentors in her own classroom. Thank you for all that you do for In2science, Amanda! We cannot understate our appreciation for your efforts and boundless support.

## Vivian Duong

### *Mount Alexander College*

Coordinator Jarrod considers himself very lucky to have worked with Vivian over the past two and a half years. Vivian's enthusiasm for student support and learning is matched by her strong passion and enthusiasm for STEM equity. With often-times prolonged working hours and a mountain of marking to do, Vivian always makes time to have open, constructive discussions with Jarrod on where the program and our mentors can improve. We look forward to more discussions and placements with Vivian in the years to come.

## Kristen Raine

### *Maffra Secondary College*

Kristen, an exemplary teacher, has made a significant impact by supporting a record number of students throughout 2024, with nearly 20 students benefitting from her dedication. Her exceptional communication skills shine through in her proactive approach to discussing and accommodating student schedule changes with the eMentoring Coordinator. Kristen's commitment to nominating students for the In2science eMentoring program is evident in her thoughtful comments, which provide valuable insights when making successful mentor matches. Kristen's unwavering support and advocacy for her students have not only facilitated their participation in the program but have also contributed to creating meaningful and enriching mentorship experiences for them.





# Awarded to a teacher that provided an exceptionally supportive learning environment for mentors and students

## Matthew Tempone

### *Bundoora Secondary College*

Since being introduced to In2science in 2023, Matthew has been a champion for the program at Bundoora Secondary College. At the beginning of 2024 he took over the role of coordinating requests as well as taking on mentors in his own classrooms. During that time, we have placed 13 mentors in classrooms at BSC! That's over 200 students that have had the benefit of working with an In2science mentor. This has given those students the opportunity to learn from and ask questions of a university student who is currently undertaking further study in a STEM field. Matthew, this is an unbelievable achievement, and we want to thank you for not only your support of In2science but also for giving your students this invaluable experience and opportunity!

## Jessica Vieusseux

### *Keysborough College*

Since welcoming her first mentor in 2020, Jessica has been a rock-solid supporter for every mentor she's worked with. She has always made sure they understand how important it is to connect with students and get to know them, and as a result, mentors have found it so much easier to relate to students and meet their needs. Jessica, thank you for sharing your knowledge, passion, and experience with all the mentors you've guided over the years. You've truly been an amazing role model in the In2science program!

## Seven Vinton

### *Oberon High School*

Seven is a consistent and enthusiastic supporter of the In2science program. He immediately makes the mentors feel comfortable and provides great support for each mentor he has hosted, allowing them to thrive in the experience. Seven's calm manner in the classroom is key to this success, along with his eagerness to learn from the mentors himself and support the mentors to share their complex studies with the students. His positive influence was described best by Suniya, one of his mentors this year: "His passion for education and commitment to each student's growth was truly inspiring." Thank you, Seven, for inspiring our mentors and your students.





# SCHOOL ENGAGEMENT AWARD FINALISTS

## Bellarine Secondary College

Bellarine Secondary College has provided a wonderful environment for mentors, led by teacher Jennifer McCarthy. Jennifer has shown great commitment to the In2science program and her students. There have been three outstanding placements at Bellarine SC in 2024, with each mentor raving about the experience. This is all down to the enthusiastic and dedicated teachers at the school, who have all been flexible and so welcoming to the mentors. I have no doubt this will continue to be a strong partnership in 2025!

## Bundoora Secondary College

Bundoora Secondary College has been a long-time supporter of the In2science program, as evidenced by their previous wins in this category in 2016 and 2020. Semester after semester they request multiple mentors for their classrooms and often take on additional mentors due to their proximity to the La Trobe Bundoora campus. Their teachers are always welcoming and supportive of our mentors, and they work with us to make sure the students and mentors get as much out of our program as possible. We have also been given the opportunity to be part of their Open Night, enabling us to speak with prospective students and parents. Thank you, Bundoora SC. Your continued support is appreciated and is important to the ongoing success of In2science and inspiring the next generation of STEM superstars!

## Keysborough College

Since 2018, Keysborough College has hosted 26 mentors, having made a real impact over the last seven years. The teachers at Keysborough have been vital in helping mentors build confidence and develop practical communication skills, empowering them to become great STEM communicators. Their passion and dedication to the program continues to make a difference for both mentors and students. Thank you, Keysborough College, for your ongoing commitment and for all the positive work you do!

## Maffra Secondary College

Maffra Secondary College has demonstrated unwavering commitment to the In2science program since 2016, showcasing a longstanding dedication to fostering STEM education. The active engagement from STEM teachers, in collaboration with leader Kristen Raine, has been instrumental in successfully nominating students for the program, ensuring its continued success at the school. With an impressive 99 students engaged in In2science at Maffra since its inception, the school's impact on student mentorship experiences is undeniable. In the second half of 2024 alone, 14 students from Maffra Secondary College were actively involved in the program, forming amazing connections with their mentors. The program's influence extends beyond the school, as an ex-Maffra teacher's admiration for the program has led them to introduce it at their new school, highlighting the impact of In2science at Maffra Secondary College.

## Awarded to a school community that demonstrated outstanding engagement and connection with the In2science program

### Mount Alexander College

The partnership In2science has with Mount Alexander College is one of our longest running, and it predates all of the current In2science Coordinators! In fact, the teachers at MAC have helped coordinate more than 90 In2science placements reaching over 2,000 students since 2018. This highlights not only an outstanding commitment to the In2science program, but also to the MAC students by exposing them to new people, knowledge, experiences and pathways, giving them every chance to succeed.

### St John's Regional College

St John's Regional College has made a remarkable entrance as a new addition to the In2science program. Their enthusiasm and proactive approach have been evident in their keen participation, excellent communication, and commitment to bringing five students into the eMentoring program. The school's key connection, teacher Veronica Chia, has shown exceptional communication skills, fostering a seamless integration of the program within the school community. The school's dedication and engagement have been outstanding, with impressive student attendance and meaningful interactions with mentors. St John's Regional College's positive involvement and commitment to the program indicate a promising continuation in 2025, highlighting their commitment to providing valuable mentorship opportunities for their students.

### Westall Secondary College

A longtime and dedicated partner of the In2science program, Westall Secondary College has continued to provide an outstanding and welcoming environment for our mentors. Their teaching staff are communicative, engaged and accepting of our diverse pool of mentors, and the school's own diversity in the classroom has been a great mirror to the many and varied pathways that university students have experienced. Thank you, Westall SC, for your ongoing support of In2science!





# OUTSTANDING MENTEE STUDENT AWARD FINALISTS

## Harry Allison

*Maffra Secondary College*

Harry's exceptional dedication and enthusiasm during mentoring sessions have set him apart as a standout mentee. His adeptness in tackling complex Python problems and engaging thoughtfully with real-world applications of technology, such as AI tools, showcases his impressive skills and passion for learning. Harry's consistent pursuit of feedback and resilience in overcoming challenges not only reflects his commitment to growth but also positively influences those around him. Harry's mentor Siddhesh commented that "Harry engaged with me actively and thoughtfully during our mentoring sessions. He consistently asked insightful questions that demonstrated his curiosity and eagerness to learn." Harry's openness to feedback, reflective approach, and collaborative spirit create a dynamic and engaging learning environment, making the sessions with his mentor a rewarding experience every week.

## Avalon-May Barton

*Virtual School Victoria*

Avalon's mentorship journey has been marked by a deep connection with her mentor, showcasing the transformative power of meaningful mentor-mentee relationships. Through sharing captivating stories of STEM discoveries and applications in the news and everyday life, Avalon has demonstrated a genuine enthusiasm for learning and exploration. Her engagement and proactive approach not only reflect her dedication to the program but also embody the best attributes of a mentee, illustrating the profound impact of mentoring in fostering a love for STEM and inspiring lifelong curiosity and growth. Avalon's commitment to learning and her ability to forge strong connections with her mentor highlight the invaluable role of mentorship in nurturing students' interests and potential in STEM fields.

## Patrick Benson

*Geelong High School*

Year 9 student Patrick is commended for his hard work and interest in STEM. When reflecting on his placement, Patrick's mentor Jackson says, "Patrick's work ethic and curiosity about science truly stood out. He frequently completed his classwork ahead of schedule and, with notable initiative, tackled additional tasks. His questions were consistently thoughtful and insightful, demonstrating a capacity to apply scientific principles well beyond his experience. Patrick's enthusiasm for learning is exceptional, and he has a bright future in science!" We are very proud to have you in our program, Patrick!

# Awarded to a student that demonstrated extraordinary engagement with their In2science mentor and STEM learning

## Anthony Boag

### *Warragul Regional College*

Anthony's passion for science and commitment to learning have been evident in his participation in the eMentoring program, where he was a finalist in the 2023 In2science awards. His love for science motivated him to rejoin the program in 2024, encouraging classmates to join him and fostering a culture of learning within the class. Anthony's reliability, organisation, and proactive approach in seeking clarifications on high-level physics and engineering concepts demonstrate his dedication to expanding his knowledge. His ambitious goals to enhance his understanding of engineering applications and designs reflect his drive for continuous growth in STEM.

## Alexander Thieu Dunn

### *Simonds Catholic College*

Mentor Josh was very impressed with the maturity and kindness shown by Alex, despite only being a young Year 9 student. Josh wrote, "Alex was always so welcoming, engaged and respectful when I came to class. He has such a positive attitude and enthusiasm for all of his studies, not just science. As such, he is incredibly well-rounded. Alex demonstrated his character this semester when he asked for extra class materials so that he could bring them to a student who had been absent and catch them up on what was being taught. It was a pleasure being a mentor to Alex and I know for certain he will excel in everything he does." Keep up your positive outlook, Alex!

## Luke Krikelis

### *Essendon Keilor College*

Luke's mentor Patrick has these positive words to say: "Luke always asks the questions no one even thinks of. He is always trying to learn more and understand the world around him better. Luke will always be there to collaborate with others and foster a love of learning." This is high praise, especially for a Year 7 student. Patrick also enjoyed talking to Luke about his hobbies of designing and drawing race car tracks. We are very pleased to see such a great mentor-mentee connection.

## Millie Martin

### *Maffra Secondary College*

Millie's remarkable growth as a first-time mentee in the eMentoring program deserves recognition. Millie showed impressive dedication and active participation in every session. Despite being new to the experience, her genuine effort and consistent engagement have not gone unnoticed. Millie's commitment to her mentorship journey exemplifies her enthusiasm for learning and personal growth. Experiencing the mentorship alongside her friend Olivia, Millie has grown as a mentee and it was great to witness the girls' support for each other on this journey.



# OUTSTANDING MENTEE STUDENT AWARD FINALISTS

## Olivia Skewes

*Maffra Secondary College*

Olivia's active engagement and enthusiasm as a first-time mentee in the eMentoring program defy her initial shyness. Despite her quiet demeanour, Olivia actively participated in discussions, demonstrated her best efforts in tasks, and showed genuine enthusiasm for the topics explored. Not only did she excel in her role as a mentee, but Olivia also proved to be a supportive friend to her peer, Millie. Olivia's dedication and positive attitude have not gone unnoticed, as she has made a significant impact through her active participation and genuine interest in the program. Her commendable performance as a first-time mentee reflects her potential for growth and success in her academic journey.

## Nha Y Tran

*Charles La Trobe P-12 College*

Year 8 student Nha really stood out to her mentor Ebru as a confident young person with great communication skills. Ebru describes Nha as "curious, fun, respectful, humble, and an impressive character! She always greets people with a smile and doesn't hesitate to ask how they're doing." Ebru enjoyed talking to Nha every week and developed a strong connection with her. Ebru says, "I hope her hardworking and curious nature will lead her to the right and great places." Well done, Nha! We are sure you will achieve all your goals.









# STEM CHAMPION MENTOR AWARD FINALISTS

## Sienna Fazzino

*The University of Melbourne*

*Bachelor of Science (Mathematical Physics)*

### **Mentored at Mount Alexander College**

Engaging a room full of 15-year-olds with mathematical physics is easier said than done, but Sienna made it look effortless during her placement. Brice, Sienna's host teacher at Mount Alexander College, noted that she was "super engaged with assisting students, helping them through problems and advising them on university life." Sienna was a fantastic role model for the Year 10 class and easily helped the students delve deeper into physics outside of the classroom, where it can take them, and how physics is everywhere and for everyone.

## Anthony Hadj

*Swinburne University of Technology*

*Master of Science (Astronomy)*

### **Mentored at Gleneagles Secondary College**

Right from the moment he interviewed, Anthony demonstrated a clear love and passion for education and mentoring. In fact, Anthony had previous experience volunteering in classrooms which certainly shone through in his efforts at Gleneagles Secondary College this year. Partnered with teacher Mai Dang, Anthony took on two Year 7 Science classes and made a strong impact in the classroom, from sharing his expertise

in physics to supporting struggling students. Anthony's efforts as a champion of STEM were recognised by both Mai and the students who gave Anthony a hand-made card on his last day at school. Thank you, Anthony, for sharing your passion and enthusiasm for science with the next generation of young scientists!

## Jessica Ikhtear

*La Trobe University*

*Bachelor of Biomedicine*

### **Mentored at Epping Secondary College and The Lakes South Morang College**

Jess has once again been an outstanding mentor! Her passion for guiding and teaching young people is inspiring. Her kind and friendly nature enables easy connections with everyone that crosses her path. She has been able to have fruitful conversations with many of the students she has mentored, guiding one student through the pathway to becoming a doctor, as that was Jess' original end goal. Not only has Jess been inspirational in her mentoring class, she has also given up more of her own time to assist with a secondary school open night and a training day for the next batch of new mentors! Jess' participation in our program has allowed her to realise her true passion is for teaching, and she has just been accepted into the Teach For Australia Masters program for 2025. Our loss will certainly be their gain! So very proud of you, Jess. You will be missed!

# Awarded to a university mentor who showed outstanding initiative in promoting STEM to their student mentees

**Anthony Menna**

*RMIT University*

*Bachelor of Applied Science  
(Medical Radiations)*

## **Mentored at Pascoe Vale Girls College**

Anthony has been a great mentor at Pascoe Vale Girls College, completing three placements with teacher Carolyn Drenen since 2023. Even with a packed schedule, juggling his clinical placements, he found ways to stay involved, often popping into classes multiple times a week. His positive energy and approachable attitude really made a difference with the students, and he was able to bring his radiology studies into the classroom in a way that connected with what they were learning. Whether it was giving presentations, or just being there to support Carolyn and the students, Anthony's reliability and willingness to pitch in made him an integral part of the classroom. The students loved having him around so much in semester 1 that they asked if he could come back for semester 2! It just goes to show why Anthony won the In2science award for Mentor Impact in 2023.

**Suniya Tariq**

*Deakin University*

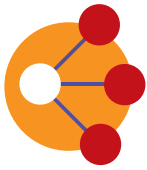
*PhD (Engineering)*

## **Mentored at Oberon High School**

Suniya is a dedicated mentor, passionate about inspiring others to find and follow their own STEM journey. While placed in a Year 12 Systems Engineering class, she researched each of the students' future plans and created a list of study options, costs, and had a one-on-one conversation with each of them to talk it through. Suniya also discussed scholarship opportunities and how to apply to university. Her supervising teacher, Seven, mentioned how greatly appreciated this was by his students. Thank you for taking such an interest in your students' futures, Suniya!







# CONNECTION

## MENTOR AWARD FINALISTS

**Ebru Mars Aslan**

*La Trobe University*

*Bachelor of Engineering  
Honours (Industrial)*

**Mentored at Charles La Trobe  
P-12 College**

Mars has been an outstanding mentor. Her love and passion for In2science and STEM in general is ever-present. She made connections easily in her class, allowing for important discussions around further study and STEM career paths. As a female engineering student, she has been an amazing role model for the young female students in her mentoring class. With her education journey beginning in Turkey, she has a pathway to further education in Australia that shows all students that further education is available to everyone - you just have to want it! You have made such an impact Mars, not only on the students but also on your Coordinator Rachel. Well done!

**Hugo Connolly**

*Swinburne University of Technology*

*Bachelor of Laws/Bachelor of  
Psychological Sciences*

**Mentored at Bayswater  
Secondary College**

Hugo joined In2science in semester 2 this year on recommendation from another mentor, and we couldn't be happier to have him on board! Hugo is a natural empath and demonstrated a great commitment to engaging and connecting with students through his mentoring placement at Bayswater Secondary College. Mentoring in a Forensic Science class (somewhat adjacent to his own fields of Law and Psychological Sciences) gave Hugo many opportunities to build on his science communication skills, which he leapt into with great fervour. We're lucky to have you, Hugo!



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# Awarded to a university mentor who consistently and authentically connected with students in the classroom

Allan Davies

*Deakin University*

*Bachelor of Mechanical Engineering (Honours)*

## **Mentored at Bellarine Secondary College**

Allan is the embodiment of a committed and connected mentor. He enjoyed the start of the program so much that he then attended the same class multiple times a week, as well as a couple of additional classes. His beautifully detailed reflections showed the connection Allan had with the students and his appreciation of the experience. His host teacher, Jennifer, said that “the students are very engaged with Allan in the room and are excited when told he is coming back into the class each week. They enjoy his style of interaction and appreciate his knowledge.” Your impact has been amazing, Allan!

Christon Kenneth Dsouza

*RMIT University*

*Master of Engineering (Electrical and Electronic Engineering)*

## **Mentored at Keysborough College**

Christon has been a fantastic In2science mentor, completing two placements with teacher Jessica Vieuxseux at Keysborough College this year. He has built a strong bond with the students, so much so that they are genuinely disappointed when he’s not there. His teacher shared that Christon has become a key part of the class, helping students feel supported and motivated to take their engineering projects to new levels. His ability to connect with the students and make them feel confident in their work is what really sets him apart. Reliable, easy to work with, and always there for the students, Christon is more than deserving of this award!

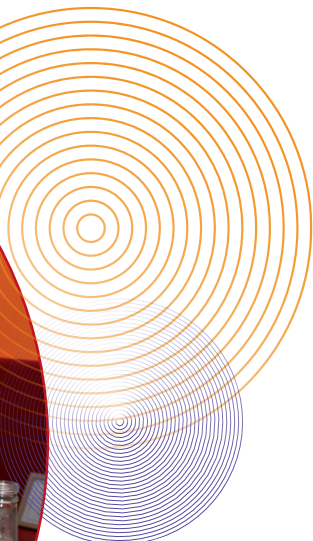
Oriyana Qaisar

*The University of Melbourne*

*Bachelor of Science (Human Physiology)*

## **Mentored at Essendon Keilor College**

Working in a class with both neurotypical and neurodivergent students can be a challenge, even for the most experienced teachers, let alone a volunteer mentor. However, being such a caring and open-minded person, Oriyana jumped straight into the class without hesitation and excelled from day one. She connected wholeheartedly with the students and her host teacher, making the classroom a welcoming, understanding, and supportive environment for everyone.



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# DEDICATION

## MENTOR AWARD FINALISTS

### Jackson Giddens

*Deakin University*

*Doctor of Medicine*

#### **Mentored at Geelong High School**

Jackson is currently studying a Doctor of Medicine, with this year being his first of intensive training at Geelong Clinical School. Even with this heavy full-time workload, he has enthusiastically mentored during both semesters at Geelong High School. Jackson is passionate about science and really cares about the students in his class, sharing fun stories about making windmills, doing quadrats in the sunshine, and getting through to students that were reluctant to participate. His dedication to attending each week directly from the hospital, at a different time if needed around his classes, speaks to Jackson's caring personality and commitment to making a difference for his students. We, and your students, appreciate you and your enthusiasm, Jackson!

### Jake Grover

*Swinburne University of Technology*

*Bachelor of Computer Science  
(Software Development)*

#### **Mentored at Lilydale Heights College and Bayswater Secondary College**

Since joining the In2science program in 2023, Jake has dedicated so much time to his mentoring placements. He has routinely taken on two placements and, with the support of his host teachers and the Swinburne Coordinator, has often continued mentoring the students in those classes well beyond the official placement end date. Jake is a testament to volunteerism and an outstanding mentor. He is never afraid to take on a challenge and engages with every student in the room. Thank you, Jake, for your incredible dedication to In2science!

### Max Marchesan

*La Trobe University*

*Bachelor of Arts (Linguistics)/  
Bachelor of Science (Chemistry)*

#### **Mentored at Thornbury High School and Antonine College**

Max has once again been a brilliant mentor, making In2science a permanent part of his schedule. He continues to be committed to the program and passionate about mentoring and inspiring students. Here is what his teacher had to say this semester: "Max was a great mentor for the students and it is always useful to have a second pair of hands



# Awarded to a university mentor who showed exceptional dedication and commitment to the In2science program

in the room! The biggest advantage for me for the mentor program is how much the kids enjoyed having him there.” Well done, Max! You have made an impact in so many students’ lives.

**Ananya Padmakumar**  
*The University of Melbourne*  
*Master of Science (Microbiology)*  
**Mentored at Footscray High School**

Ananya is one of the most dedicated, patient, and adaptive mentors In2science has had the pleasure of meeting. Her host teacher Michelle stated that “Ananya was a fantastic support in my Year 7 Science class. She engaged positively with all students.” Working with four different teachers in the same class over a single semester would have deterred many, but not Ananya. She moulded herself into whatever she needed to be in the class and worked with whoever needed the help so she could reach, connect, and support the students no matter the circumstances.

**Solano Shaji**  
*RMIT University*  
*Master of Biotechnology*  
**Mentored at Preston High School**

A real hit with the Year 7 students, Solano has been a fantastic mentor at Preston High School, helping them build mini wind turbines and learn about sustainable energy. The students really enjoyed working with her, and she did a wonderful job getting them engaged. Solano’s friendly, approachable vibe made it easy for her to connect with the students, and they were always excited to see her in the classroom. Teacher Sarah Warwick has praised her for being such a positive, helpful presence in the class. Solano’s commitment and great attitude make her more than deserving of this nomination!



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# COMMUNICATION MENTOR AWARD FINALISTS

## Sabrin Abdifatah Adan

*La Trobe University*

*Bachelor of Biomedicine*

### **Mentored at Mount Ridley College**

Sabrin came to In2science with minimal experience in volunteering but brought a passion for STEM and inspiring young students. Seeing a lot of herself in the students, Sabrin was able to easily connect with them and share her story. She related to their experiences and was able to guide them and shine the light on new pathways they had never considered! Sabrin used different ways of communicating with the students, including using fun quizzes like *Kahoot!* to get them involved. Sabrin's teacher indicated that having Sabrin in the classroom increased student engagement and improved learning outcomes. Sabrin's communication with her Coordinator was excellent. She was always prompt when responding to messages and professional in her manner. Thank you for a great semester of mentoring, Sabrin! We hope to have you back again next year.

## Anastasia Bickley

*Deakin University*

*Bachelor of Forensic Science*

### **Mentored at Bellarine Secondary College**

Anastasia has thoroughly enjoyed sharing her passion for and knowledge of forensics in the Year 10 Forensic Science class at Bellarine Secondary College. Her ability to communicate the science within forensics in an engaging and interesting way was demonstrated each

week with various case studies she brought in. Her teacher, Omar, agreed with the impact Anastasia had on the class, commenting that "her passion and knowledge is above and beyond what I have in this subject area and students genuinely looked forward to her visits each week!" Thank you for sharing your stories and passion, Anastasia!

## Dion Lepair

*The University of Melbourne*

*Bachelor of Science/Diploma of  
Mathematical Sciences*

### **Mentored at Simonds Catholic College**

The dynamism of the classroom and the life of a teacher often means teacher and mentor alike must pivot and work on something other than planned. This was never a problem for Dion. During his time at Simonds Catholic College, Dion, in his own words, found great joy in "being able to give an alternative perspective or deeper intuition behind a concept and seeing students click with the content." Dion bounced around the classroom explaining complex science theories to any and all students that needed a hand or a different perspective on the problem. Well done, Dion!



# Awarded to a university mentor who excelled at communicating STEM concepts to diverse audiences in the classroom

## Kalpani Anuradha Mirihana

*RMIT University*

*PhD (Applied Chemistry)*

### **Mentored at Werribee Secondary College**

Kalpani has been an amazing mentor at Werribee Secondary College, where she really excelled at communicating complex STEM concepts to a diverse group of students. As a PhD student in Applied Chemistry, Kalpani brought her passion for science into the classroom, delivering hands-on lessons and experiments that made STEM feel exciting and accessible. She worked closely with the lead teacher, David Lu, to create interactive lessons, including chemistry demonstrations and dissections that got students engaged and excited about learning. Kalpani was all about making students feel comfortable and confident, always offering support and feedback to help them grasp challenging concepts. Her ability to connect with students from diverse backgrounds and create an inclusive, motivating learning environment shows how strong her communication skills are. Kalpani's passion for mentoring and commitment to student development really stood out, making her a well-deserving finalist for this award.

## Nolan Wen

*Swinburne University of Technology*

*Bachelor of Engineering (Honours)*

### **Mentored at Bayswater Secondary College**

A new mentor this year, Nolan demonstrated a passion for STEM and student learning right from the outset. Their cheerful nature and approachable demeanour made conversation easy and effortless. As the weeks of placement flew by, Nolan gave incredibly detailed updates on how things were progressing in the classroom, noticing patterns in individual students and when they struggled and succeeded. Nolan made great use of this insight and, with the support of their Coordinator as well as their peers, came to develop a range of strategies to engage and communicate more effectively with those students who needed it most. By the end of the placement, Nolan had built an exceptional understanding of how students in the class engage with content, and how they could best support the students to build on their interests and succeed. Well done Nolan, and thank you for your outstanding work!

of Science





# IMPACT

## MENTOR AWARD FINALISTS

### Ava Collison

*The University of Melbourne*  
*Bachelor of Science (Chemical Systems)*

#### **Mentored at Footscray High School**

Ava has received glowing reviews across their three placements with In2science, highlighting their easy-going nature and natural ability to support students and challenge their views on what STEM is and who can study it. Ava's host teacher Mitchell says, "Ava has been amazing in interacting with various groups of students and giving insight into university life and studies." It is no surprise that Ava is now on the path to becoming a teacher to continue impacting the lives of high school students and supporting them on their own STEM journeys.

### Arlo Fehring

*Swinburne University of Technology*  
*Bachelor of Engineering (Robotics and Mechatronics)/Bachelor of Computer Science (Data Science)*

#### **Mentored at Dandenong High School and Bayswater Secondary College**

One of Swinburne's longest serving mentors, Arlo is an outspoken advocate for STEM and a champion of innovation, creativity and sustainability. They have made an incredible impact in every classroom that has been fortunate enough to host them. In2science aims to broaden the horizons of students less interested in STEM. Arlo goes beyond this and guides those students already committed

to discovering new ideas and solving the problems of tomorrow by stretching their knowledge and encouraging them to look deeper. This year at Dandenong High School and Bayswater Secondary College, Arlo provided that pillar of moral support and direction to students in the senior year levels, as well as that bright spark of innovation and ideation to the younger students. Thank you, Arlo, for being a ceaseless inspiration and beacon for our future thinkers!

### Gayathri Melepat

*RMIT University*  
*Bachelor of Biomedical Science*

#### **Mentored at The Lakes South Morang College**

Gayathri has made a real impact at The Lakes South Morang College, going above and beyond to connect with students and make STEM feel more approachable. As a Biomedical Science student, she helped students with tricky concepts, shared tips from her own school experience, and created a positive, supportive atmosphere. Gayathri was always there to encourage and praise the students, making them feel confident and proud of their work. After term 3, the students asked if she'd come back for term 4, which shows just how much they appreciated her! She has done a fantastic job challenging perceptions of STEM and making it more relatable and fun.

## Awarded to a university mentor who made a strong impact by challenging perceptions of STEM in their student mentees

**Limna Suja Shaji**  
*Deakin University*  
*PhD (Engineering)*

### **Mentored at Belmont High School**

Limna's positive attitude and welcoming smile immediately puts the people around her at ease. Her host teacher, Carly, detailed how she "made contact with all students and offered assistance, advice or just a friendly smile to help students feel supported." Through building this safe space for her students, Limna was then able to share her enthusiasm for STEM and modelled her passion to motivate them. Carly commented that Limna's "PhD project was fascinating and got many students interested in STEM pathways that they did not realise were an option." Thank you for your passion to inspire others, Limna!

**Melinda Virgona**  
*La Trobe University*  
*Bachelor of Agriculture*

### **Mentored at Upper Yarra Secondary College**

Melinda is new to In2science but has previously undertaken similar mentorship roles. Her experience shone through from the beginning of her placement, making easy connections with the students. Melinda was placed at Upper Yarra Secondary College (also new to In2science!) in their Viticulture class - yes, that's right - their grape growing class! This was the perfect match as Melinda is completing her Bachelor of Agriculture with an interest in botany and sustainable farming techniques. This is what her host teacher, Marcus Cook, had to say: "Mel has worked well with all students, taking on STEM roles in the vineyard and collaborating with students using the data loggers to collect vital information on soil health. She has been a positive role model, making connections with our students." I have little doubt that Melinda has made an impact on the students she worked with and has demonstrated what is possible in the world of STEM and agriculture. Well done, Melinda! It is a pleasure to have you as part of In2science!







# MENTOR LEADERS PROGRAM

## AWARD FINALISTS

### Ava Collison

*The University of Melbourne*  
*Bachelor of Science (Chemical Systems)*

#### **Mentored at Footscray High School**

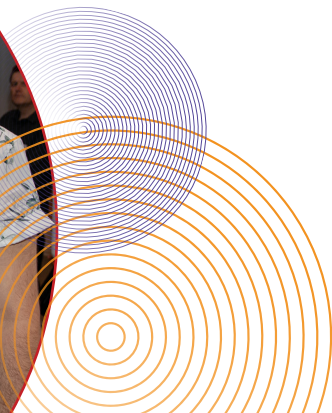
In their first year of mentoring in 2023, Ava stood out as a strong communicator and showed huge potential to be an accomplished STEM educator. We had no hesitation in recommending Ava for the Mentor Leaders Program in 2024. Ava excelled in both their In2science placement at Footscray High School and as a mentee in the Mentor Leaders Program this year. Ava and their mentor Brianna Steed from Monash University met regularly to discuss topics such as Masters programs, job hunting, graduate degrees and resume writing. We are glad that participating in this program allowed Ava to expand their skills and knowledge, and we are certain that they will achieve all their future goals!

### Arlo Fehring

*Swinburne University of Technology*  
*Bachelor of Engineering (Robotics and Mechatronics)/Bachelor of Computer Science (Data Science)*

#### **Mentored at Dandenong High School and Bayswater Secondary College**

Arlo has been part of the Mentor Leaders Program for two years. This year, they were mentored by Asindu Dombepola from Thermo Fisher Scientific. Arlo and Asindu met regularly and discussed a huge range of topics, with a big focus on networking and how to gain experience in the med tech industry. Asindu had these positive words to say: "I am thoroughly impressed with Arlo's dedication and passion for their studies and work. Arlo consistently demonstrates a strong drive to excel and asks insightful questions about career development and life post-university. Their communication is clear and consistent, particularly when scheduling our mentoring meetings. This proactive approach and eagerness to learn made Arlo a pleasure to mentor and a promising future professional in STEM." We have loved having you in the In2science program, Arlo!





## Awarded to a university mentor who embraced the opportunities of the Mentor Leaders Program and showcased their skills while engaging with STEM students

### Jake Grover

*Swinburne University of Technology*

*Bachelor of Computer Science  
(Software Development)*

#### **Mentored at Lilydale Heights College and Bayswater Secondary College**

Jake was new to the Mentor Leaders Program this year and was matched with Varun Srirama from Toyota Australia. Varun says, “It was my pleasure to mentor Jake, it has been a rewarding experience for me. He is a person with passion for both learning and teaching. He has a calm nature with an enthusiasm for acquiring knowledge and exploring new areas.” Varun and Jake focussed their discussions on internships and graduate programs that Jake could apply for. It is fantastic to see that this relationship was mutually beneficial, with Varun stating that Jake “has a very strong academic foundation and enjoys teaching kids on how to navigate and embrace the digital world, whether it’s coding or digital literacy. This action would definitely inspire the younger generation to explore new possibilities. His enthusiasm has personally inspired me to teach kids.” We know Jake will take this experience into his bright future!

### Mahin Maleki

*Deakin University*

*PhD (Engineering)*

#### **Mentored at South Oakleigh College**

Mahin was new to the In2science program in 2023 and was very keen to join the Mentor Leaders Program this year. Mahin has embraced this program wholeheartedly and shown great enthusiasm, meeting regularly with her mentor Lachlan Trudgeon from SPARK North East Link. Her detailed updates were insightful and demonstrated that she was taking every opportunity to learn what she could from Lachlan about LinkedIn profiles and job searches. They also discussed Mahin’s mentoring placements at South Oakleigh College, where she showed dedication and excitement with the high school students. It is great to see such a successful mentorship and we know Mahin will go far!



# REGIONAL IMPACT

## MENTOR AWARD FINALISTS

**Aleeta Carmody**

*Deakin University*

*Bachelor of Human Resource Management (Psychology)*

**Mentored at Virtual School Victoria and Maffra Secondary College**

Aleeta, a former eMentee turned eMentor, is a dedicated mentor who has made a significant impact in the program. Inspired by her own positive experience with In2science during high school, Aleeta took on the role of mentoring three students throughout 2024. Despite the challenge of guiding mentees with diverse interests beyond her expertise, Aleeta approached each session with enthusiasm and empathy. Her exceptional communication skills with both her mentees and In2science Coordinator highlighted her commitment to fostering a supportive and inclusive environment. Aleeta's passion for empowering the next generation of STEM enthusiasts shines through in her impactful mentorship.

**Ryan Manuel Halim**

*The University of Melbourne*

*Bachelor of Science (Civil Engineering Systems)*

**Mentored at Maffra Secondary College**

Ryan is an outstanding eMentor with a reputation for being reliable, a great communicator, and incredibly patient. His ability to creatively tackle engineering problems alongside his students sets him apart as a mentor who goes above and beyond. This semester, Ryan took on two eMentees and demonstrated his flexibility by readily accepting a new mentee at short notice. His dedication to fostering a supportive learning environment and his willingness to adapt to the needs of his mentees make him an invaluable contributor to the In2science program.



20 YEARS

Awards 2024

## Awarded to a university mentor who went above and beyond while engaging students in the online In2science eMentoring program

### Siddhesh Jadhav

*The University of Melbourne*

*Master of Science (Earth Sciences)*

#### **Mentored at Maffra Secondary College**

Siddhesh, a dedicated eMentor, skilfully guided his mentee through Python challenges, emphasising critical thinking and problem-solving. His nomination reflects the valuable mentoring skills he developed while engaging with students, encouraging exploration of technology, and building confidence. Siddhesh's punctuality, active listening, and interactive approach contributed to the success of their sessions, fostering a supportive learning environment. Through collaborative problem-solving and structured tasks, Siddhesh promoted real-time interaction, critical thinking, and independent learning, empowering his mentee to excel in STEM.

### Moshfeque E Jahan

*Swinburne University of Technology*

*Bachelor of Computer Science  
(Software Development)*

#### **Mentored at Maffra Secondary College**

Mosh, a dedicated eMentor, has mentored six students over three semesters and was a finalist at our 2023 Awards Night. His hands-on approach in guiding Year 7 students in Robotics and Computer Science, using Python programming, boosted their confidence and interest in technology. Mosh's communication skills and adaptability in teaching, along with his infectious

enthusiasm for STEM, inspired students to explore the field further. His commitment to fostering a supportive learning environment and showcasing real-world applications of STEM subjects make him a standout mentor in the program.

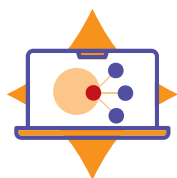
### Jolene Erin Rosca

*Deakin University*

*Master of Counselling*

#### **Mentored at Ballarat High School and Virtual School Victoria**

Jolene's two-year journey with In2science showcases her dedication and inspirational mentorship. Transitioning from in-class mentoring to eMentoring in 2024, she formed strong bonds with three students, particularly with one mentee whom she continued to guide across both semesters. Their shared love of space and science has not only deepened their connection but also inspired their exploration of STEM topics with enthusiasm. Jolene's ability to foster such impactful relationships underscores her empathy, mentorship skills, and genuine passion for nurturing her mentees' interests, highlighting the transformative power of mentorship in cultivating a love for learning in STEM.



# REGIONAL CONNECTION

## AWARD FINALISTS

### Richard Cassar

*The University of Melbourne*

*Doctor of Medicine*

#### **Mentored at Warragul Regional College and Ballarat High School**

Richard's exceptional mentorship journey is marked by a strong and enduring connection with his mentee, as evidenced by the request to continue their mentorship from semester 1 to semester 2, and even into the upcoming year. Through engaging discussions on a variety of STEM topics, Richard has successfully inspired a deep interest in science in his mentees. Having been a dedicated mentor since 2023, Richard has guided a total of five students, demonstrating his commitment to ensuring that all students have access to quality mentorship and educational support. Richard's impact as a mentor transcends academic guidance, as he continues to inspire and empower students to pursue their interests in STEM fields with enthusiasm and confidence.

### Hoi Tung Kathy Chang

*The University of Melbourne*

*Bachelor of Science*

#### **Mentored at Warragul Regional College**

Kathy's mentorship journey this year has been defined by an admirable connection with her mentee, centred around their shared love for animals. Through their mutual passion, Kathy and her mentee explored nature, connecting classroom learning to real-life experiences with animals. Kathy's commitment to the program

was unwavering, as she consistently attended professional development opportunities to enhance her mentoring skills. By fostering a connection through their shared interests and translating academic concepts into meaningful real-world experiences, Kathy has not only enriched her mentee's learning journey but also exemplified the transformative power of mentorship in creating engaging and impactful educational experiences.

### Sauti Malabika Nadi

*RMIT University*

*Master of Biotechnology*

#### **Mentored at Maffra Secondary College**

Sauti's impactful mentorship journey involved fostering strong connections with two mentees, demonstrating exceptional dedication and support. Through active engagement, genuine interest, and open communication, Sauti built a trusting relationship with her mentees, encouraging discussions on science, biotechnology, and university life. Her commitment to understanding her mentees' needs and providing valuable guidance highlights her excellent communication skills, leadership, and problem-solving abilities. Sauti's kindness and support during challenging times at school further exemplify her dedication to creating a supportive learning environment. By actively participating in problem-solving and initiating discussions, Sauti ensured a positive and enriching experience for her mentees, showcasing her unwavering commitment to their growth and success.

Awarded to a university mentor who showed significant initiative in connecting with students in the online In2science eMentoring program

## Wing Yin So

*The University of Melbourne*

*Bachelor of Science*

### **Mentored at Maffra Secondary College**

Soey's mentorship approach is characterised by her exceptional empathy and dedication to her mentees, especially those with additional needs. When a mentee faced challenges attending sessions due to these needs, Soey demonstrated understanding and support, ensuring that the mentee's wellbeing was a top priority. Her commitment to preparing engaging materials for each session showcases her proactive approach to creating a stimulating learning environment. Despite her academic commitments, Soey consistently gives her all to mentoring, making it a priority and demonstrating her unwavering dedication to supporting and empowering her mentees. Soey's compassionate and student-centred approach highlights her ability to create a supportive and inclusive space for all mentees, fostering their growth and success in their educational journey.

## Amna Waseem

*Deakin University*

*Bachelor of Science (Human Biology)*

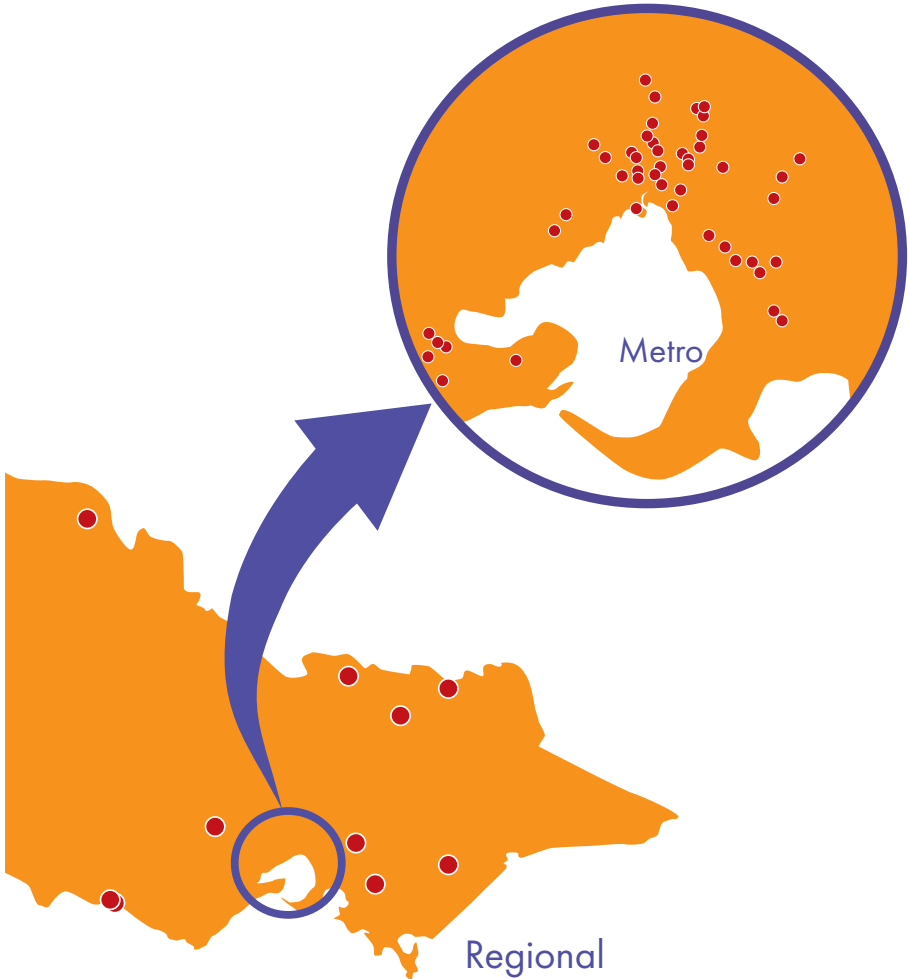
### **Mentored at Ballarat High School**

Amna's impactful mentorship in the second semester of 2024 saw her guiding four mentees with exceptional dedication. Going above and beyond, she provided invaluable support in navigating Year 10 work experience and university opportunities, instilling confidence and knowledge crucial for their future academic endeavours. By fostering engagement and enthusiasm among her mentees, Amna's flexibility and proactive approach exemplify her commitment to empowering students and creating a supportive learning environment that facilitates growth and success.



# THANK YOU

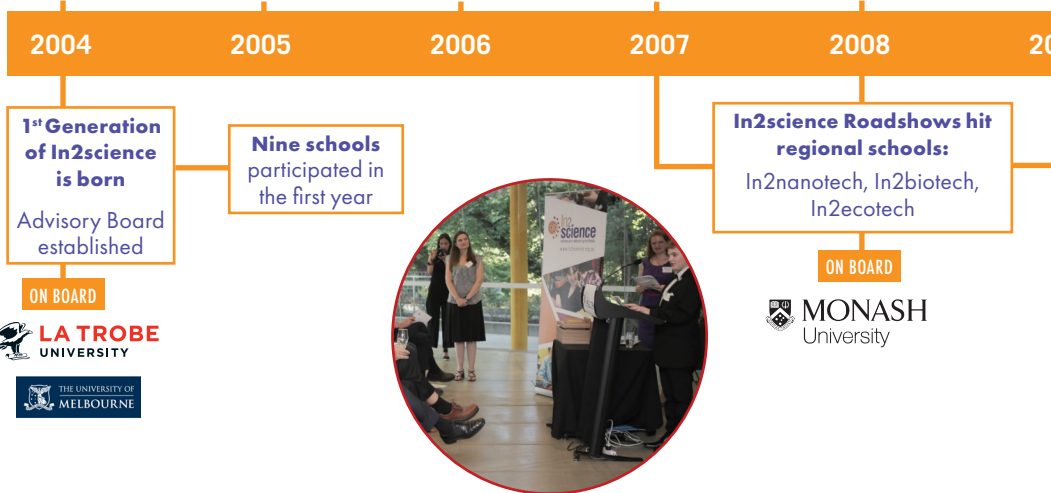
## TO OUR PARTNER SCHOOLS



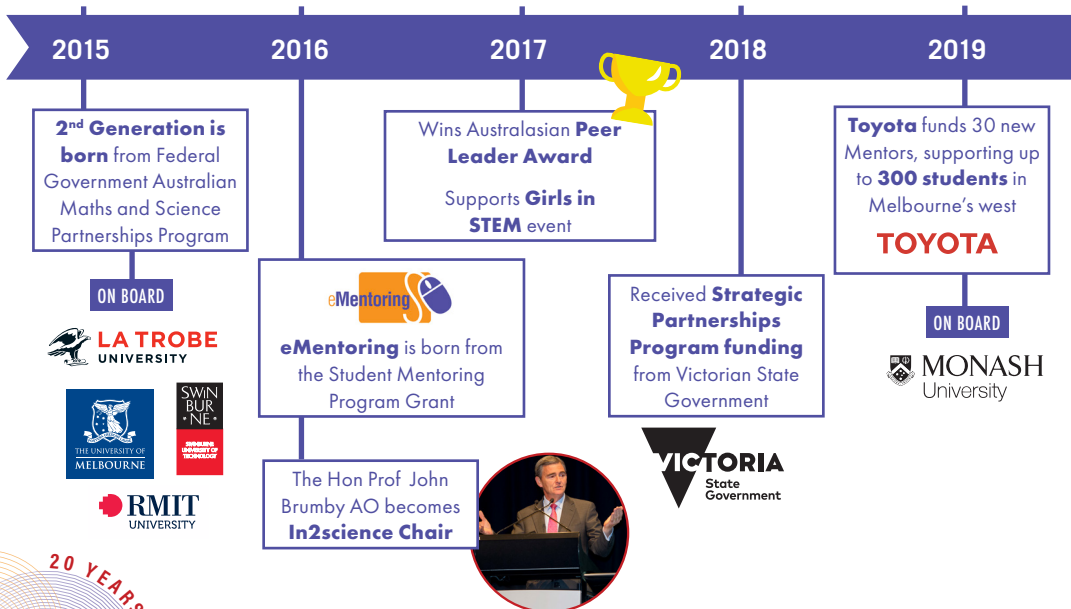


Antonine College  
Ballarat High School  
Bayswater Secondary College  
Bellarine Secondary College  
Belmont High School  
Brunswick Secondary College  
Bundoora Secondary College  
Caroline Chisholm Catholic College  
Charles La Trobe P-12 College  
Cobram Secondary College  
Copperfield College  
Craigieburn Secondary College  
Cranbourne Secondary College  
Croydon Community School  
Dandenong High School  
Epping Secondary College  
Essendon Keilor College  
Footscray High School  
Galen Catholic College  
Geelong High School  
Gleneagles Secondary College  
Glenroy Secondary College  
Hoppers Crossing Secondary College  
Hume Central Secondary College  
Keysborough College  
Lilydale Heights College  
Lyndhurst Secondary College  
Maffra Secondary College  
Maribyrnong College  
Matthew Flinders Girls  
Secondary College  
Melbourne Girls' College  
Mill Park Secondary College  
Mount Alexander College  
Mount Ridley College  
Oberon High School  
Pascoe Vale Girls College  
Pahran High School  
Preston High School  
Red Cliffs Secondary College  
Rosehill Secondary College  
Simonds Catholic College  
South Oakleigh College  
St Albans Secondary College  
St John's Regional College  
Templestowe College  
The Lakes South Morang College  
Thornbury High School  
Upper Yarra Secondary College  
Virtual School Victoria  
Warragul Regional College  
Warrnambool College  
Werribee Secondary College  
Westall Secondary College  
Western Heights College  
Williamstown High School  
Wodonga Senior Secondary College

## FIRST GENERATION



## SECOND GENERATION



# Celebrating 20 Years



ON BOARD



Alan Finkel  
becomes  
**Patron**

First In2science  
**Awards Night**



ON BOARD



**1<sup>st</sup> Generation closes**

RMIT and Swinburne  
University of Technology  
self-fund the program  
for 2 years



2020

2021

2022

2023

2024

**Pivot to online mentoring** for metropolitan schools in response to COVID-19

**Mentor Leaders Program** created, with support from Toyota

STEM-integrated Learning Forum, hosted by **Australia's Chief Scientist Dr Cathy Foley AO**

ON BOARD

**Deakin University** started in-class mentoring in Geelong and Warrnambool

**20<sup>th</sup> year of In2science**





## PARTNER UNIVERSITIES



The In2science program is jointly funded by:

The Victorian Government through the  
Strategic Partnerships Program

The Australian Government through a Department of  
Industry, Science and Resources WISE Grant

In2science Partner Universities

The Selby Scientific Fund



Australian Government  
Department of Industry,  
Science and Resources