Education Services Australia
Impact Report
2021–2022

Education
Services
Australia

ESA acknowledges the Eastern Kulin Nation, Traditional Custodians of the land on which our head office stands, and pays our respects to Elders past and present. We recognise the Traditional Custodians of Country across Australia and their continuing connection and contribution to lands, waters, communities and learning.

Contents

From the Chair

On behalf of the Board, I am pleased to present the 2021–22 Impact Report for Education Services Australia.

Despite our staff working from home again for almost another whole year, ESA has continued to create and deliver technology-based solutions to improve education across Australia. This is due in large part to our staff's dedicated and productive application of their education and technology expertise.

Throughout this period of the global pandemic, the experience of jurisdictions, education sectors and educators reinforced the role ESA plays in promoting safe, effective and productive use of technology. Issues of equality and access have taken on new significance, as has the importance of online security and data governance.

This report details the breadth of initiatives, services and platforms where ESA continues to provide leadership. This includes the extraordinary success of the transition to NAPLAN Online in May 2022 with 4.27 million tests completed by students online; the introduction of the NAPLAN low- and no-bandwidth solution across three jurisdictions; as well as the increased use of ESA's suite of digital education resources.

The achievements outlined in this report are only possible through the hard work of many.

In particular, I thank our CEO, Andrew Smith, and his executive team for their leadership. I genuinely thank all ESA staff for their work in making sure the way technology is used in education does indeed advance learning. This report provides proof of the impact and value of their work.

Thank you to my fellow directors for the commitment of their time and expertise in order to ensure ESA is a successful, well-governed, accountable and responsive organisation.

Lastly, I sincerely thank education ministers across Australia for the trust they continue to place in the Board and in ESA in delivering on their expectations.

Diane Joseph
Chair, Education Services Australia

From the CEO

As students, teachers and education leaders adapted to meet the challenges of the past year, I was again filled with pride at the commitment and creativity of ESA's staff. All staff responded to the challenges and continued to deliver high-quality projects and services that meet the changing needs of our stakeholders.

Throughout the year, ESA's digital teaching and learning resources remained an important source of support for teachers. We saw continued growth in the number of teachers and parents accessing our collections of quality-assured, freely available resources.

In 2022, NAPLAN testing was conducted exclusively online for the first time, marking a significant milestone in the program, and an achievement of which ESA and our partners can be proud. The success of this year's event was a testament to the skill and professionalism of the ESA team.

These and other achievements have been the result of the dedication and skill of the talented people at ESA. In 2022, the Voice Project recognised ESA as a Change Champion, a validation of our team's willingness to live our organisational values every day.

As new opportunities in education technology emerge, ESA is well placed to respond in a way that ensures the delivery of projects and services that support improved student outcomes, enhanced teacher impact and stronger school communities.

I want to express my appreciation to the staff at ESA for their performance through what has been another challenging year. I also want to acknowledge the trust that education ministers place in ESA. We are grateful to the ministers, their staff and their departments for their guidance and trust.

None of the achievements outlined in this report would be possible without the leadership and support of the ESA Board and, in particular, Diane Joseph, our Board Chair.

We look forward to working with all our stakeholders to build on our achievements as we strive to make a positive difference the lives and learning of young Australians.

Andrew Smith
CEO, Education Services Australia

About us

Our mission

ESA's mission is to combine education and technology expertise to create and deliver national solutions that further education reform in Australia and contribute to improved student outcomes, enhanced teacher impact and stronger school communities.

Our role

ESA works in collaboration with all Australian education jurisdictions to provide technology-based products and services for education. Focused on advancing nationally agreed education initiatives, programs and projects, ESA has been established to:

- research, test and develop innovative technologies and communication systems for use in education

- devise, develop and deliver curriculum and assessment, professional development, career and information support services

- facilitate the pooling, sharing and distribution of knowledge, resources and services to support and promote e-learning

- support national infrastructure to ensure access to quality-assured systems and content and interoperability between individuals, entities and systems

- create, publish, disseminate and market curriculum and assessment materials, ICT-based solutions, products and services to support learning, teaching, leadership and administration.

Our impact

In this report, we highlight some of the ways we are making a positive difference in the lives and learning of young Australians.

In 2021–22, as Australia's national cross-sector education technology provider, we leveraged our stakeholder relationships, our proven track record, and our unique combination of education and technology expertise to take a leadership position in driving initiatives and cementing our impact in Australian schools.

During this period, the COVID-19 pandemic continued to impact schools across Australia through learning disruptions and teacher shortages. We continued our commitment to increasing student outcomes, enhancing teacher impact and strengthening school communities by delivering high-quality education technology products and services that can be used in classrooms and at home.

The availability of our suite of comprehensive digital resources and lesson plans served to reduce teacher workload and administrative burden, and helped ensure no student was left behind as a result of disruptions to in-person learning.

By supporting our staff to continue their hybrid working environment through improved technology, we have continued to adapt to the times while finding new ways to work with our stakeholders to ensure they have the resources to succeed through this time.

Our work at a glance

ESA offers a broad range of products and services for schools, teachers and families across Australia. This section provides an overview of our work in 2021–22, with comparisons based on the usage numbers of 2020–21.

Digital Technologies Hub

Supports the Digital Technologies curriculum with high-quality resources and services for teachers, students and parents. **A total of 274,200 users visited over 1 million pages throughout 2021–22.**

274,200
Users

Early Learning Languages Australia (ELLA)

Encourages Australian children to study an additional language by offering a fun, digital, play-based language program. Uptake has continued to grow, with a total of **over 4,900 preschools now registered across Australia**.

4,900
Registered preschools

edu.au domain registrar

The edu.au domain registrar is the only place where Australian education and training providers can register website domains specific to the Australian education sector. ESA provides registration and renewal services for **over 17,000 domains across the sector.**

17,000
Domains

The Girls in STEM Toolkit (The GiST)

Encourages female students to study and pursue careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) by providing online resources and case studies to all Australian schools. **Users increased by 15 per cent to more than 23,300.**

+15%
Increase in users

Literacy Hub

Provides online, evidence-based resources and professional learning for Australian educators, as well as activities for families. It includes Phonics Check for teachers of Year 1 students, and advice and activities to help families support their child's literacy development at home. **A total of 12,327 Phonics Checks were completed since November 2021.**

12,327
Phonics Checks

Mathematics Hub

An online portal offering teaching and learning resources to help students build, develop and nurture mathematics and numeracy skills. It also provides materials for parents and families to support their child's maths learning at home.

myfuture (national career information service)

Helps young Australians with career planning, career pathways and work transitions. **Users increased by 33 per cent, with 769,800 users visiting more than 11 million pages.**

769,800
Users

myskills (national directory of VET organisations and courses)

Provides access to current, trustworthy information to help jobseekers, students and employers find training that best suits their needs.

7,300+
Training courses listed

National Schools Interoperability Program (NSIP)

Secures the exchange of education information by establishing education data standards and working collaboratively with stakeholders on interoperability and data sharing.

Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability (NCCD)

Supports the annual national schools' census, fostering better understanding of the needs of students with disability and how these students can be best supported at school. The portal had **326,500 users and 8.5 million page views.**

8.5M
Page views

Online National Assessment Platform
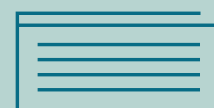
Enables online delivery of national assessment across all Australian schools, using contemporary assessment and reporting technology to deliver NAPLAN and National Assessment Program (NAP) sample testing. This year marked Australia's completed transition to NAPLAN Online testing, with over **1.2 million students submitting online tests from 9,313 schools.**

1.2M
Students

Safer Technologies 4 Schools (ST4S)

Provides a standardised approach to evaluating digital products and services used by government, Catholic and Independent schools across Australia. **More than 140 vendors completed a Readiness Check through the ST4S website.**

140
Readiness Checks

School Survey

Enables schools to gain valuable feedback from their community via a purpose-built online survey tool developed to meet the needs of government schools in WA, Tas, SA and the NT.

Schools Catalogue Information Service (SCIS)

Provides a central library cataloguing service to create high-quality, consistent catalogue records for schools. In this period, SCIS subscribers included **77 per cent of Australian school libraries.** Internationally, SCIS is used by 42 per cent of New Zealand schools and 713 schools in the United Kingdom.

77%
of Australian Schools
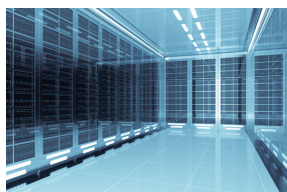
Secured managed hosting services

Secures personal and private data on behalf of Australian Government departments and agencies via enterprise-grade, secure Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS).

Scootle

Provides access to over 12,000 quality-assured digital resources aligned to the Australian Curriculum in a single national repository. Users increased by **25 per cent to over 1.96 million**.

1.96M
Users

Student Wellbeing Hub

Supports the Australian Student Wellbeing Framework. Provides information, resources and professional development for teachers, students and parents, for the creation and maintenance of a safe and welcoming school environment for all students. **Users increased by 16 per cent to over 161,200.**

16%
User increase

Enhancing our impact

Supporting teaching and learning

Improving literacy skills for early years students

Launched in 2020, the phonics project aims to improve literacy outcomes in young learners through the Literacy Hub, Year 1 Phonics Check and Phonics Targeted Assistance Program (TAP) for disadvantaged primary schools.

Incorporating research evidence into practice

During 2021–22, TAP literacy coaches have worked one-on-one with 77 primary schools across Australia to create and implement targeted literacy improvement plans to improve student outcomes that are focused on evidence-based systematic synthetic phonics instruction.

Professional development on the science of language and reading has been delivered to 154 educators in 75 TAP schools, while professional development about how to best support struggling readers has been delivered to 286 educators in 64 TAP schools. The Literacy Hub has broadcast three webinars on the theory and practice of the 'Big Six' of reading, oral language development and phonological and phonemic awareness. An average of 93 per cent of attendees rated the webinars as good or excellent, and 44 per cent indicated the webinars would support them to use the evidence to inform the design of their lessons.

" Phonics TAP has changed the way we teach reading in Foundation. Our focus on teaching phonics across F–2 has been positive and continues to build teacher capacity. "

Foundation teacher, NSW

" We are running the Phonics Check. This is my first week with an emergent class and using the daily review format.

It feels like I'm doing meaningful teaching and the level of engagement is amazing. "

Year 1 teacher, VIC

" We are buzzing with enthusiasm as we think, revise, alter and apply our new and sharpened learning. "

Year 1 teacher, VIC

Incorporating classroom data into practice

In 2021–22, 370 schools have assessed 12,327 students through the Year 1 Phonics Check. Our TAP literacy coaches have supported teachers in developing the skills to collect and analyse classroom data using tools like the Year 1 Phonics Check, and to adapt their teaching practice in response to the data. A suite of practical classroom resources and documentation is available to TAP schools to support implementation.

" **Phonics TAP is the whole package. The support provided by the literacy coach is outstanding.**

We are improving our teaching practice and our students are showing growth. "

Year 1 teacher, VIC

12,327
Students assessed using the Year 1 Phonics Check

77
Schools received 1:1 coaching

440
Educators given professional development training

Supporting student wellbeing

Building student resilience during times of uncertainty

School communities have experienced extraordinary changes over the last few years. By supporting teachers and students during this time of uncertainty and increasing awareness of the impact of the pandemic, we have helped school communities adjust during – and plan beyond – the pandemic.

This year, the Student Wellbeing Hub continued to support teachers, students, parents and carers through the pandemic by curating high-quality resources with a focus on wellbeing. Updated regularly and published on a dedicated COVID-19 page, these resources provided timely advice around topics such as managing stress, building resilience and preparing to return to school after lockdown.

The Student Wellbeing Hub team worked with community psychologist Dr Lyn O'Grady to develop a professional learning course aimed to equip teachers with the understanding of resilience and provide strategies to support students during this time. 'Building Student Resilience' is a new online professional learning course developed for teachers, and is available for free on the Student Wellbeing Hub. The course consists of three self-paced modules and explores the latest research about resilience.

In the course, teachers learn how school communities have responded to the impact of the pandemic and other traumatic events such as the bushfires. The course provides tools to plan strategies ranging from the classroom to the whole-school environment to sustain resilient attitudes and practices. Since launching in June 2021, more than 400 teachers have completed one or more modules.

The Student Wellbeing Hub has also engaged principals and teachers through its live webinar program, with specially designed topics on supporting students' mental health as we re-adjust to living with COVID-19, delivered by Dr O'Grady.

- Supporting secondary students through lockdown and beyond.

- Supporting students' mental health: readjusting to living with COVID-19.

The Hub also presented webinars supporting a range of additional wellbeing topics, including the following:

- Relationship education for students with autism

- Respectful relationships education: sustaining a program over time

- What does school attendance tell us about how students feel about school?

- Olympics Unleashed: encouraging students to be the best version of themselves.

6
Webinars

8,874
eLearn users

2,331
Webinar registrations

Supporting access and diversity

Supporting students with disability through the NCCD

In 2021–22, more than 326,500 users accessed the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability (NCCD) portal as a central source of information, resources and professional learning opportunities, and to report on their support provided to students with disability for the national schools' census. Our teams continue to develop new resources that target areas of need and build schools engagement with the NCCD.

Not all students with disability have formal diagnoses. In these cases, schools that have a reasonable belief that a disability exists can impute disability. ESA has developed a series of advisory guides and an introductory animation to assist schools with this process. All students with a diagnosed or imputed disability receive learning adjustments to ensure they can access and participate in learning on the same basis as students without disability.

ESA has also hosted two successful webinars that focus on key issues for schools. The first, 'Imputing disability for the NCCD', was attended by over 600 participants and addressed the process of imputation and the role of evidence and family communication in supporting that process.

A second webinar, 'Moderation for the NCCD', attracted more than 450 participants in June 2022. This interactive webinar took participants through role-plays of school-based moderation using case studies from the portal. Users observed the process before polling their decisions to compare to the outcomes of the recorded role-plays.

The recorded versions of both webinars are published on the NCCD portal and continue to attract viewers. In addition, the portal has published 10 case studies to the existing collection of 60, illustrating across a range of disabilities, levels of adjustments and school settings.

School staff continue to use the NCCD portal to support their professional development in this space. Almost 89,200 educators and support staff have completed these courses this year.

ESA will be publishing an online course, 'NCCD for school leaders', to complement the existing e-learning courses. We will also publish a second series of the NCCD podcasts, with the focus of five episodes being on imputing disability, with conversations ranging from parents and school perspectives through to distance education.

326,500
Users

89,189
Online course completions

10
New case studies

Reawakening language learning

Teaching resources to support the revival of the Noongar language in schools in south-west WA

ESA has been engaged by the Department of Education, Western Australia, to develop, in collaboration with Noongar people, a Noongar Language Program for Year 3 students.

Noongar people are the original inhabitants of the south-west region of WA, which represents one of the largest Aboriginal cultural blocs in Australia. The largest numbers of WA schools sit on Noongar Country, highlighting the significance of sharing Noongar language and culture with students, their families and the wider community.

The Noongar Language Program will develop teaching and learning materials to support public schools located on Noongar Country to provide opportunities for students to learn Noongar, an Aboriginal language that is being renewed by community Custodians. The program will use the Marribank Orthography and *Noongar Waangkiny: A learner's guide to Noongar* to capture the main dialects within three Noongar regions:

- Djiraly region (northern region)

- Kongal-marawar region (south-western region)

- Kongal-boyal region (south-eastern region)

The program will be taught to Year 3 students by a Noongar language teacher or Noongar community member, with the support of a classroom teacher, as part of typical classroom timetables.

We have been working with the Department of Education WA, a Noongar language expert, a Circle of Noongar Advisors and a languages writer to develop the engaging language program, which focuses on the importance of language to culture and Country.

Lessons include 'Noongar way of life', which provides students with information about Noongar language and culture directly relating to the words and language they are learning, strengthening their connection to Country.

The Noongar community was consulted to find a suitable name for the program. The program has been called 'Yikan Noongar' to represent the life of language and Country.

> " There was a time in history when Noongar language was either spoken in private or not spoken, and where Noongar language may have laid dormant in some places. Our people and our Country are the holders of our language. Language can be seen in the landscapes, oceans, rivers and seasons, and heard in the wildlife. Country has kept language safe. Yikan Noongar means *awaken Noongar* and represents a new era where we can awaken and revive Noongar language by learning to speak it together. "

Coleen Sherratt and
Charmaine Councillor

This work supports the Western Australian Curriculum's Language Revival Learner Pathway of the Aboriginal Languages and Torres Strait Islander Languages Framework.

Helping students shape their future

Enhancing career education through our national career information service

This year, our national career information service, myfuture, continued to expand its resources to enhance career education in schools. The platform saw an 11 per cent increase in registered users during this time.

Supporting primary teachers in career education

Schools are starting to embrace the opportunity to teach careers at a primary school level. Research highlights that this is the ideal stage to introduce career education and the importance of encouraging student understanding of the world of work without bias from a young age.

To support this, myfuture has developed new resources to bolster careers education at the primary school level. This initiative is aimed at introducing a career-minded approach to learning that facilitates students' ambition and combats gender and class-based stereotypes.

Developed using a research-based methodology, myfuture's primary school resources are aligned to the Australian Curriculum and the Australian Blueprint for Career Development.

The resources are individually tailored to specific cohorts from Foundation through to Year 6. Each resource includes a framework for teachers to follow and three lesson plans covering:

- personal management

- learning and work exploration

- career building.

The lesson plans work sequentially, allowing students to first identify the things they are good at, match their skills to relevant professions and then understand the steps they need to take to achieve their goals. Through this process, students gain an understanding of key concepts related to career development and gain transferable skills.

Also included is a workbook for students to fill out in the lessons.

6
Webinars

1,105,256
Users

4
Insights papers

Insights to support teachers and career practitioners

myfuture's *Insights* series draws on professional research and theory to explore how to support users' transition from study to the world of work. In 2021–22, myfuture published four *Insights* papers, with each accompanied by a webinar session with subject matter experts to further enhance understanding of the topics. Papers included:

- Career education in primary school

- What is labour market information?

- Career planning for students on the spectrum

- Delivering career education in the post pandemic world.

myfuture also introduced a new Industry Insights webinar series in partnership with the Australian Business and Community Network (ABCN), designed to help students better understand roles and opportunities across a range of in-demand industries.

Each webinar featured a panel of industry representatives to discuss their own career pathways and their lived experience. Industries covered included:

- information, media and telecommunications

- professional, scientific and technical services

- financial and insurance services

- construction

- agriculture, forestry and fishing.

Enhancements and security

Further enhancements were made to support site users through improvements to the search functionality and user experience, security updates to maintain compliance with the Information Security Manual, and the development of new content to support diversity across the site.

Supporting schools and systems

The successful digital transformation of Australia's national assessment program

In May 2022, ESA successfully completed the digital transformation of Australia's national assessment program from a paper-based test to an adaptive online test, delivering the online tests to more than 1.2 million Australian students for the first time.

The NAPLAN Online platform, managed by ESA on behalf of the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) and all state, territory and Commonwealth education departments, provides a seamless experience for all students regardless of their location, device or ability.

Over the three-week test period in May, more than 4.3 million tests were completed by more than 1.2 million students in years 3, 5, 7 and 9 across 9,313 schools. On Wednesday May 11, the system received more than 1 million test attempt logins with a peak load of 315,000 concurrent students logged on the platform.

The successful transition to online testing marks the beginning of a new era for NAPLAN.

> Making the final leap from paper to online was a significant effort and I thank all the students, teachers, schools, states and territories who worked hard to make it a success. Transitioning thousands of schools to online is a large-scale multifaceted IT project involving multiple organisations and the technology and logistics are highly complex.
>
> To reach the end of NAPLAN testing with over 4 million tests successfully submitted by more than 1.2 million students is a significant milestone and one to be proud of.

ACARA CEO
David de Carvalho

Scale of project receives international recognition

In recognition of the scale and impact of this project, ESA received the Computer Weekly's APAC Innovation Awards 2022 for the public sector.

The award was presented to ESA for its technical management of NAPLAN Online which has transformed the way that Australian schools administer the annual national assessment program, with significant improvements across all phases from set up and delivery through to scoring, marking and reporting.

4.3M
Tests

1.2M
Students

9,313
Schools

Strengthening our connections through innovation and partnerships

Teaching drone safety to the next generation of pilots

This year, we were engaged by the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) to help raise awareness of drone safety in Australian schools and homes through the development of materials to support CASA's Know Your Drone campaign.

In collaboration with the national aviation safety regulator, ESA developed a suite of educational resources for young people under the age of 16, teachers, and parents and carers of school-aged children.

The resources provide information about drone rules, regulations and flying zones through a variety of resources, including animated videos, a printable board-game, quizzes, curriculum-aligned lesson plans, certificates and more. The resources are available through a dedicated classroom resources section on CASA's Know Your Drone campaign website, with printed resources available to order.

66 **Drones offer an innovative opportunity to inspire students to develop their science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) skills in a fun and engaging way.**

Given the expanding role of drones in STEM education, we recognise the need to support education providers to teach students about drone safety. 99

CASA's Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS) Branch Manager, Sharon Marshall-Keeffe

The project provided an opportunity for ESA to demonstrate its resource development capacity to a national organisation who is not involved in the everyday business of education. The resources were promoted through CASA's media campaign, which was published through a number of media outlets.

Strengthening our services

Building a positive culture to empower our people

ESA has been recognised as a 2021 Change Champion through Voice Project for leading initiatives that achieve measurable and meaningful change in the workplace.

The national award celebrates our positive change in workplace culture as demonstrated through our employee engagement surveys, which showed a 10.5 per cent growth in staff perceptions over the past two years.

Wellbeing has been embedded into ESA's Learning and Development framework to ensure staff prioritise their health.

To ensure we are aligned and focused, knowledge-sharing across the organisation continues to be a priority. Our project management office (PMO) provides a central point to facilitate transparency, consistency and accountability across the organisation and to support staff in their roles.

Another area that has undergone significant change within ESA is the technology available to support staff in their work. Our Information and Communications Technology (ICT) team continues to focus on evolving our capacity to support remote and hybrid working arrangements and making organisation-wide communication and collaboration easier.

Voice Project says the award recognises ESA as one of the top changemakers in the Small to Medium category (200 staff or fewer), with only a small number of their clients meeting these criteria.

Organisational sustainability

Planning and investment activity during the year aimed at improving services for stakeholders and leveraging existing services included:

- A major upgrade to the ESA finance system to improve our service offering to external clients using ESA's financial management services and the efficiency of our internal financial management and reporting.

- Establishment of a Business Applications roadmap to guide future technology investments to support business improvement and achieve greater consistency and efficiency across the organisation.

- Expansion of ESA's secured managed hosting services to education-related organisations to secure and protect their data holdings.
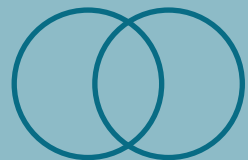
5
Years average tenure

21%
Part-time staff

4%
Casual staff

4%
Interstate staff

Strengthening our relationships

ESA has demonstrated an ability to combine education and technology expertise to generate and deliver digital education resources and technology services. Both avenues work to further Australia's education reform agenda and meet the needs of stakeholders across all sectors.

Two of our strategic pillars focus on supporting our stakeholders through the delivery of high-quality projects and services that meet the needs of stakeholders, and by strategically engaging stakeholders to establish partnerships that help them achieve their goals.

Read about how we are strengthening our relationships with our stakeholders and partners for the benefit of the broader Australian education sector.

National education architecture

ESA has continued to work closely with its counterparts in the national school education architecture during 2021–22. We have worked with the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL), the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) and the Australian Education Research Organisation (AERO) to advance key national priorities, including collaborating to:

- research and develop a proposal for a national online formative assessment program in response to the minister's request

- research and shape opportunities for the future of Australia's national assessment

- develop a proposal to support teachers implementing the revised Australian Curriculum through an expanded and updated pool of high-quality, curriculum-linked digital teaching and learning resources.

auDA

As the sole .edu.au domain registrar, ESA maintains a strong relationship with .au Domain Administration Limited (auDA) to ensure that governance is maintained, and education sector stakeholders are across any changes within the domain space.

In 2021–22, auDA announced the launch of .au direct, providing a new, shorter domain for websites and email addresses in Australia. In support of this initiative, ESA is now a .au direct registrar for the education community. This supports members of the .edu.au domain registrar who wish to complement their existing namespace or protect their brand with a .au address.

CIO Leadership Group

In partnership with state and territory Chief Information Officers, the Safer Technologies for Schools (ST4S) program has nurtured relationships both within Australia and across the globe.

Over 2021–22, the ST4S program has engaged with over 140 education technology products and services, resulting in close to 100 assessment reports. A key finding is that approximately 32% of suppliers using the ST4S Readiness Check are identifying critical issues for remediation ahead of the full assessment. When undertaking full assessments, the ST4S program has discovered several key common issues that suppliers need to address, including multi-factor authentication, encryption on the wire, data hosting and privacy policies.

Working within Australia, ST4S has consulted with EduGrowth to engage suppliers and promote the benefits of meeting information security and privacy requirements. Industry engagement was also a key focus of the EduTech 2022 event where we had the opportunity to engage with software suppliers and educators regarding ST4S and its benefits.

Across the globe, the ST4S team has worked closely with the New Zealand Ministry of Education, resulting in a new version of the ST4S assessment framework which incorporates both Australian and New Zealand requirements, and providing a path forward for assessments to be shared across both countries. In a similar vein, the ST4S team is working with colleagues in the USA, UK and Europe to develop an internationalised approached to security and privacy in the education sector, using ST4S as a template to develop an international harmonised approach.
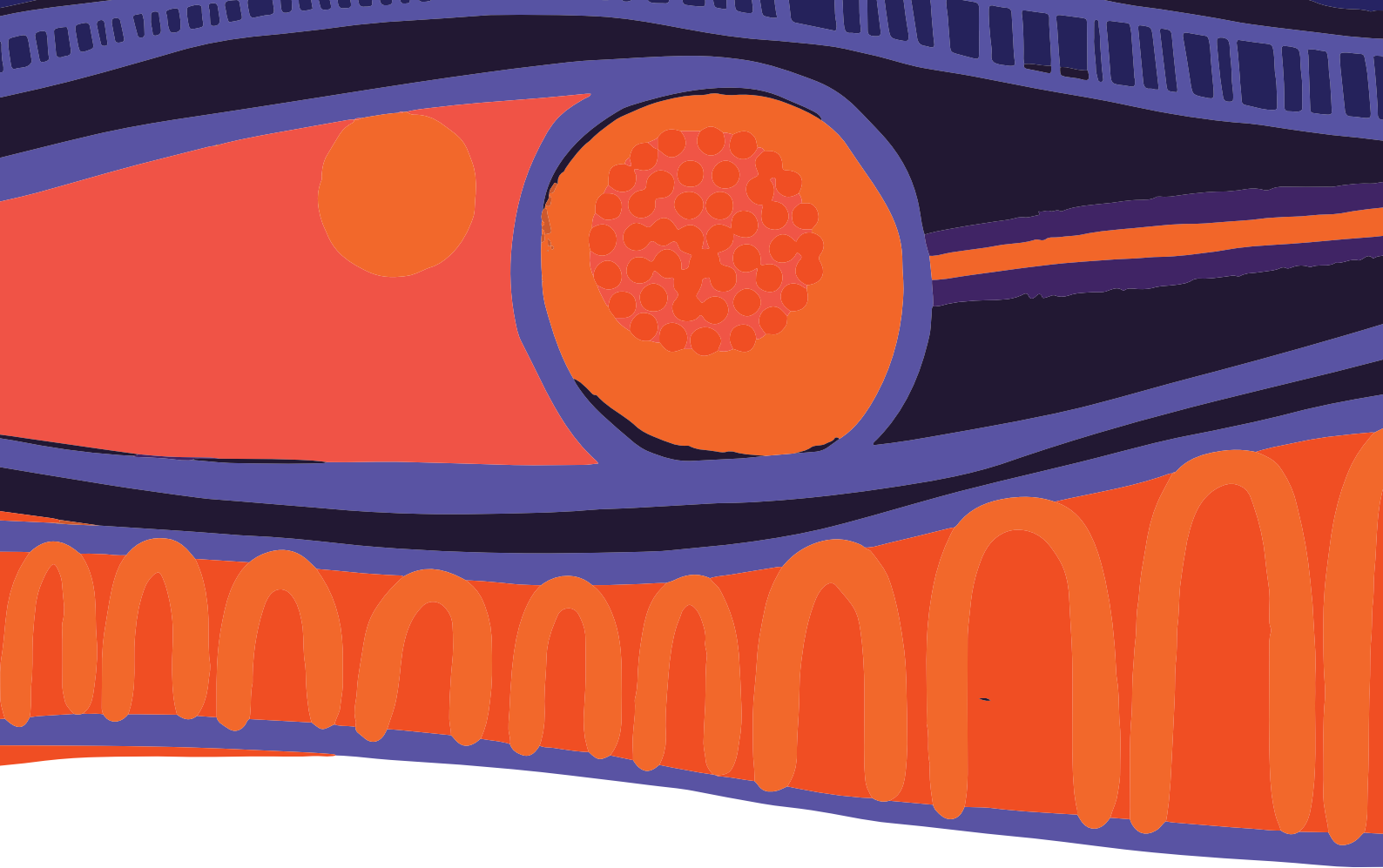
Social responsibility

Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)

We continued our Reflect RAP journey, while the RAP Working Group developed our Innovate RAP.

This year, we took the following actions in our commitment to working toward reconciliation.

- Submitted our Innovate RAP to Reconciliation Australia to commit to being bolder and more innovative in our actions.

- Presented a NAIDOC Week 2021 all-staff event with Shane Charles, a Wurundjeri, Boon Wurrung and Yorta Yorta man, who shared his vision on the role of reconciliation, treaty and education to heal Country in a powerful presentation.

- Attended the Birrarung Wilam (River Camp) walk as part of NAIDOC Week, where 18 staff learnt about the rich Aboriginal history of Birrarung Marr and the Kulin Nation.

- Surveyed ESA staff on their knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and perspectives to inform the development of ESA's Cultural Learning Strategy.

- Published two interviews with the Narragunnawali award winners in education publications to highlight ways that schools are working toward reconciliation.

- Started an ESA Reconciliation Book and Film Club to increase staff understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights.

- Hosted a National Reconciliation Week 2022 all-staff event featuring changemakers Kirsten Banks, a Wiradjuri woman, science communicator and astrophysicist, and Alinta Iddles-Williams, a Ngunnawal, Ngambri and Wiradjuri woman, arts and performing arts educator, where they shared their experience of being brave and influencing others in their reconciliation change journey.

We are looking forward to elevating our activities to advance reconciliation in 2022–24 through our Innovate RAP.
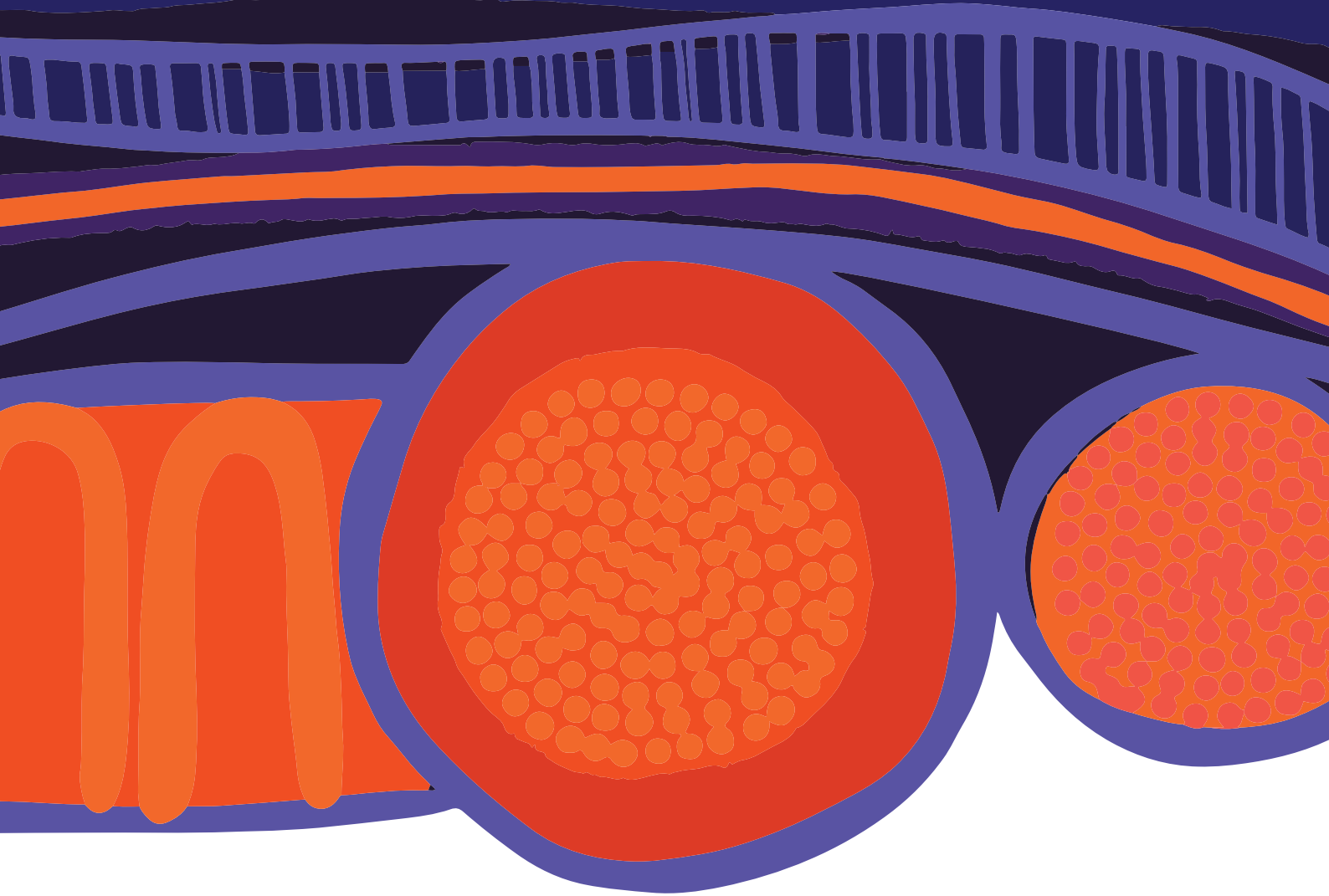
## Climate Active certification

In May 2022, Climate Active confirmed that ESA has maintained its carbon-neutral status for its 11th year based on our 2020–21 environment report.

Our 2020–21 target was to maintain emissions per FTE at 2019–20 levels. An audit of ESA's emissions inventory showed that we exceeded our emissions target, recording a 20 per cent decrease in emissions per FTE. Despite this, a 5 per cent increase in total emissions from the previous year was recorded due to the inclusion of emissions made by employees while working from home, due to the purchase of new hardware and software, as well as data-centre-related costs.

During this period, our carbon offsets were purchased through the Rimba Raya Biodiversity Reserve Project, which protects one of the most highly endangered ecosystems in the world.

The Rimba Raya project has successfully defended more than 64,000 hectares of carbon- and biodiversity-rich lowland peat forest from conversion to oil palm plantations, protecting more than 120 threatened and endangered species in the project area in Central Kalimantan in Indonesian Borneo.

As one of the first companies in Australia to achieve certification under the Australian Government's Climate Active Carbon Neutral Standard, we are proud of our continued leadership in this space.
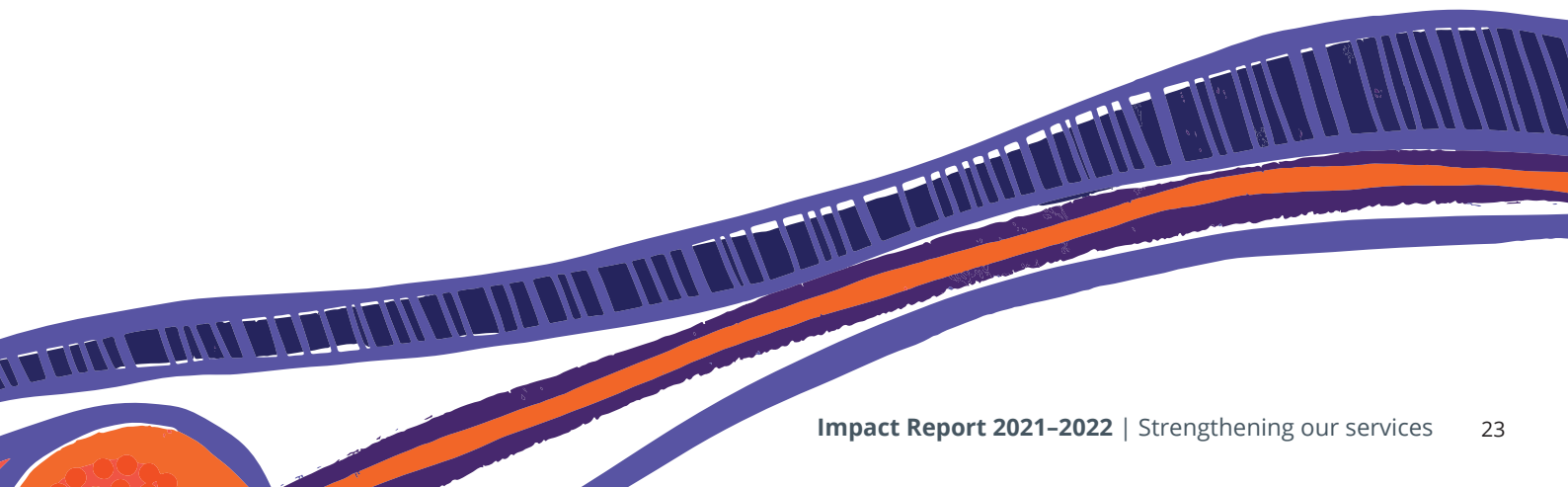
International Women's Day

ESA celebrated International Women's Day (IWD) this year with an online event attended by 110 staff.

It was a significant opportunity to reflect on and celebrate women's social, economic, cultural and political achievements, and celebrate the positive impact that the women of ESA have on the lives and learning of young Australians.

This year's event focused on the theme #breakthebias, and featured ESA board member Kathe Kirby and General Manager of Digital Services Corinna Maloney. Both speakers inspired participants by sharing their career journeys and key learnings.

As part of the presentation, ESA staff were invited to explore the importance of recognising and challenging stereotypes and gender bias. Kathe Kirby drew on her experience as Executive Director of Asialink and the Asia Education Foundation (AEF) to highlight the need for Australians to be 'Asia literate' and ensure an intersectional lens is applied to the discussion of gender parity.

The discussion marked a call to action to accelerate gender parity and a commitment from staff to help break gender bias.

68%
Female staff

67%
Female managers

Thank you

We would like to extend our sincere gratitude to our partners and stakeholders for continuing to trust in ESA's education technology expertise. Through your support and collaboration, we can continue to make a positive difference in the lives and learning of all Australian students.

Sincere thanks also to the broader Australian school community for your continued trust in our range of ESA products and services. Your continued support and feedback ensure we can continue to meet the evolving needs of our community.