

TUESDAY, 14 FEBRUARY 2023

FEDERATION FAST TRACKING REGIONAL SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Federation University Australia is helping regional businesses upskill and retrain staff through a mix of face-to-face and digital learning that utilise the latest trends in learning design and development.

The New Business Accelerator (NBA) was created to enable Federation to fast-track specifically customised design and development of industry-focused courses and materials, like micro-credentials – or ‘short courses’ - to respond to the shifting needs and requirements of industry.

This industry-collaborative approach to education aligns with Federation’s adoption of the co-operative education model, which will see workplace learning embedded in all university and TAFE courses by 2025. Since its inception, the NBA has successfully developed a range of courses at the request of industries throughout regional Victoria.

Headed by Professor Gabriele Suder, the NBA has already helped many businesses in the region upskill and reskill staff, aiding staff retention and creating a more agile work force. In addition to her role as Dean of the New Business Accelerator, Professor Suder also sits on the board of Commerce Ballarat and is the founder and chair of the Microcredentials Community of Practice and Working Group Victoria.

Microcredentials are short, targeted courses that help learners from a range of backgrounds and motivations to pursue professional development through continuous learning. They can be delivered fully online, through face-to-face teaching, or a blend of these formats, offering industry learners the flexibility they need in their approach to learning, and to achieve the best balance of work, life and education commitments.

One of the first short courses delivered by the NBA was a series of ‘Innovation in Business’ workshops for Commerce Ballarat. These workshops were designed to help small to medium-sized businesses in the region connect and develop strategies to help them leverage and maximise new opportunities post COVID-19.

More recently, the NBA has delivered an ‘Introduction to Dairy Manufacturing’ course which was developed together with Dr Dylan Liu, a Federation University lecturer in Food, Science and Sustainability. This fully online short course was developed in response to industry demand and was officially launched with staff from Australian Consolidated Milk in Girgarre, Victoria, and Bubs Australia.

Given the success it has enjoyed since being established, the NBA will soon be launching a new range of fully digital courses including Women in Leadership, Leadership for non-leaders, Cyber-security in regional supply chains, and Strength & Conditioning. These courses have been specifically developed following a regional skills gap analysis and will be available both to industry partners that are looking to re-skill or up-skill staff, as well as individuals that are wanting to take their career in a new direction

A list of up-to-date short courses on offer can be found on [Federation's FutureLearn partner page](#).

Quotes attributable to Federation University Australia Dean, New Business Accelerator, Professor Gabriele Suder

“Through the New Business Accelerator, Federation University can now deliver customised courses that provide a flexible pathway to those that are looking to reskill or upskill through a series of short courses.”

“Micro-credentials offer a cost-and-time-effective way for business and individuals to maintain their competitiveness in the workplace, enabling themselves to quickly realign with emerging skills needs in the market. At Federation we can recommend, develop and deliver the optimal solution for business needs across a wide range of disciplines, drawing on our world-class expertise in various fields.”

Quotes attributable to Commerce Ballarat CEO, Jodie Gillett

“Federation University was the perfect choice for the development of a customised series of Innovation in Business workshops with a face-to-face and digital option for Commerce Ballarat. The New Business Accelerator team approached our request from a best practice perspective, tailoring it to our needs and offering new, applicable tools and insights in their delivery, with impact. These workshops help regional businesses be more resilient, driving and leveraging innovations productively.”

About Federation University Australia

With a history spanning over 150 years, Federation University Australia is Victoria’s premier regional dual-sector university with campuses located in Ballarat, Berwick, Brisbane, Gippsland and Wimmera. From 2018-2022 Federation ranked first in Australia for first-generation student enrolments. In a first for Australia, the globally recognised co-operative education model will be embedded across all Federation programs from 2025.