



NATIONAL CONFERENCE FOR REGIONAL, RURAL, REMOTE EDUCATION

18 - 20 AUGUST 2026 | MERCURE BALLARAT

DRAFT PROGRAM

as at 25/06/26*

Tuesday 18 August 2026

	Room 1	Room 2	Room 3
8:30am - 5:00pm			Regional University Study Hubs Network Symposium (must be a member of the Regional University Study Hubs)
1:00pm	Regional Uni Campus Forum	Principals Meeting	
3:00pm	Conference Registration opens		
5:00pm - 7:00pm	Welcome Reception & AREA Award Presentations		

Wednesday 19 August 2026

from 8:00am	Registration and Coffee on arrival
8:45am - 9:00am	Conference Opening & Welcome
9:00am - 10:00am	Keynote Presentation

10:00am - 10:30am

MORNING TEA

Room Theme	Room 1 Student Engagement, Aspiration & Motivation	Room 2 Pathways for Education	Room 3 Connections: Industry, Education & Communities	Room 4 Strengthening Rural Education Research
Parallel Session 1 10:30am - 11:00am	1A	1B	1C	1D
	“VECTOR” Virtual Education Connections to Overcome Remoteness. <i>Natalie Nelmes GUC</i>	Analysing the relationship between reading and writing scores on national literacy assessments in remote schools in Australia's Northern Territory. <i>Leonard Freeman James Cook University</i>	Partnering for Community Benefit <i>Ellyse McNish La Trobe University</i>	Ethical research practice in remote communities: A cautionary tale <i>John Guenther Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education</i>
<i>10 minute change over</i>				
Parallel Session 2 11:10am - 11:40am	2A	2B	2C	2D
	Small Schools, Big Aspirations: Careers Education for Children in Regional Communities <i>Therese Canty University of Canberra</i>	What American Rural Schools are Doing Right <i>Robert Mitchell University of Colorado Colorado Springs</i>	Connecting Campus to Community <i>Beth Boland UNE</i>	What's Rural about rural education research? <i>Melyssa Fuqua Faculty of Education, University of Melbourne</i>
<i>10 minute change over</i>				
Parallel Session 3 11:50am - 12:20pm	3A	3B	3C	3D
	Roots & Reach: How Student Employment is Transforming Regional Campus Life <i>Nicky Suter Deakin University</i>	Uni Step-Up Online - Impact of Dual Enrolment Program for RRR students <i>Jamie Fenech ACU</i>	Unconventional by Design <i>Beth Boland UNE</i>	Evaluating the Wuyagiba Bush Uni utilising the culturally responsive ‘Dilly Bag’ methodology <i>Andréa Jaggi Macquarie University</i>

12:20pm - 1:20pm

LUNCH

Room Theme	Room 1 Student Engagement, Aspiration & Motivation	Room 2 Pathways for Education	Room 3 Connections: Industry, Education & Communities	Room 4 Strengthening Rural Education Research
Parallel Session 4 1:20pm - 1:50pm	4A	4B	4C	4D
	First Bell to Farewell - How A Rural P-12 Became A Success Story <i>Danny Forrest Wedderburn P-12 College</i>	Reimagining Access: An Integrated Pathways Model for Regional and Rural Learners <i>Andrea Carr University of Tasmania</i>	Innovation in rural school wellbeing staffing, leadership & programs <i>Lachlan Marchant Cobram Secondary College</i>	Professional Experience: Preservice Teachers' Strong Beginnings in Regional, Rural and Remote Education Settings <i>Anna Du Plessis The University of New England</i>
<i>10 minute change over</i>				
Parallel Session 5 2:00pm - 2:30pm	5A	5B	5C	5D
	The role of place in the widening participation functions of Regional University Study Hubs	Branch Out Mentoring, Peer to Peer transition program	Rooted in Rural: Lessons Learned from Connecting Industry, Schools, and Communities through the ACES Grant	Leading a successful and flourishing rural primary school in Australia

Danielle Keenan | Study Hubs Australia

Charlie Bracey | Youthrive Victoria

Kriss Kemp-Graham | East Texas AM University (US)

Christopher Hudson / Department of Education Victoria; David Gurr / The University of Melbourne

10 minute change over

Parallel Session 6

2:40pm - 3:10pm

6A	6B	6C	6D
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Rural Social Space as Method: Exploring Aspiration with Rural Primary School Students	Community-Led or System-Controlled? The 2030 Choice for Regional University Study Hubs	Curtin University and the Western Australian RUSH Network: Co-creating higher education options with RRR communities	Understanding the career pathways of leaders in small rural communities
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Han Worsley | University of Canberra

Chris Ronan | Study Hubs Australia

Luke Webster | Curtin University

Pauline Thompson | The University of Melbourne

10 minute change over

Parallel Session 7

3:20pm - 3:50pm

7A	7B	7C	7D
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Parents of First in Family University Students: A Systematic Review	Breaking Barriers in Remote Australia: Place-Based English Language Education and Workforce Pathways for Migrants in the Pilbara	It takes a community to invest in your success	Strengthening regional education through professional learning
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Jaimy Facchin | University of Wollongong

Relma Bule-Turner | Pilbara Kimberley University Centres

Angelina Ambrosetti | Central Queensland University

Tyron Paspas | Victorian Academy of Teaching and Leadership

3:50pm - 4:20pm

AFTERNOON TEA

4:20PM - 5:20PM

Keynote Presentation

7:00pm

Conference Dinner

Thursday 20 August 2026

from 8:30am

Registration and Coffee on arrival

8:55am - 9:00am

Day 2 Welcome

9:00am - 10:00am

Keynote Presentation

10:00am - 10:30am

MORNING TEA

Room Theme

Room 1	Room 2	Room 3	Room 4
Student Engagement, Aspiration & Motivation	Pathways for Education	Connections: Industry, Education & Communities	Strengthening Rural Education Research
8A	8B	8C	8D

Parallel Session 8

10:30am - 11:00am

STEM in Sport Programme: A Place-Based Model Transforming STEM Pathways in Regional Western Australia	Credential Divides and Unseen Sides: Labour Market Segmentation and Regional Education Pathways	Perspectives on Delivering Bachelor of Nursing Education in a Rural Health Setting: Insights from Students	Transforming Research into Action: Regional, Rural and Remote Research Pitch
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Shan Su | Pilbara Kimberley University Centres

Ben Archer | Torrens University Australia

Sarah Bourke | Country University Centre Bass Coast

Martin Dickens | NSW Department of Education

10 minute change over

Parallel Session 9
11:10am - 11:40am

9A	9B	9C	9D
Pilbara Kimberley University Centres Supporting Aspiration and Higher Education Pathways for Secondary Students across Northern Western Australia	Bridging Education, Industry, and Communities: The Professional Certificate in Education (Rural & Regional)	Building Capability Across Australia's University Study Hub Workforce: Standards, Identity, and Sustainability	Travelling at the Speed of Trust: Co designing Regional Outreach in the Ovens Murray
<i>Jacinta Homann Pilbara Kimberley University Centres</i>	<i>Martin Dickens NSW Department of Education</i>	<i>Danielle Keenan Study Hubs Australia</i>	<i>Sarah Lambert RMIT University</i>

10 minute change over

Parallel Session 10
11:50am - 12:20pm

10A	10B	10C	10D
The road to active learning	Growing our Own' Early Childhood Educators in Regional SA	Surveying the Field: A Bourdieusian Framework for Understanding the Community Impact of University Study Hubs	From Place to Possibility: Building Career Capability and Community for Regional, Rural and Remote Women
<i>Alexander Iser Wedderburn College</i>	<i>Anita Kuss Uni Hub Spencer Gulf</i>	<i>Ben Archer Torrens University Australia</i>	<i>Jane Coffey Curtin University</i>

12:20pm - 1:20pm

LUNCH

Room Theme

Room 1	Room 2	Room 3	Room 4
Student Engagement, Aspiration & Motivation	Pathways for Education	Connections: Industry, Education & Communities	Strengthening Rural Education Research
11A	11B	11C	11D

Parallel Session 11
1:20pm - 1:50pm

Negotiating Uncertain Futures: Young People, Schooling and Aspirations in Rural NSW	Growing our Own' - Uni Hub's place-based cadetship program	Pilbara Kimberley University Centres (PKUC) Building Local Leadership through the Certificate IV in Leadership and Mentoring Program	Reimagining Rural Futures: Creativity, Economic Gardening, and University Community Ecosystems for Regional Innovation
<i>Leanne Fray University of Newcastle</i>	<i>Anita Kuss Uni Hub Spencer Gulf</i>	<i>Jacinta Homann Pilbara Kimberley University Centres</i>	<i>Philip Dennett London South Bank University UAE</i>

10 minute change over

Parallel Session 12
2:00pm - 2:30pm

12A	12B	12C	12D
The Four C's - Beyond the Postcode	Local Solutions for Rural Healthcare Workforce		Why Choose Rural? The case for teaching in these schools
<i>Danny Forrest Wedderburn P-12 College</i>	<i>Samantha Avitaia University of Wollongong</i>		<i>Andrew King New Zealand Rural Schools Leadership Association</i>

10 minute change over

2:30PM - 3:00PM

AFTERNOON TEA

3:00PM - 4:00PM

Keynote Presentation

Conference Close

* Program subject to change.