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Australian High Commission
Mauritius





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High Commissioner's Foreword

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Australian universities prepare students from all over the world to excel in their chosen careers and contribute to the development of the sectors and communities they support. This publication *Australian Alumni in Mauritius: Building a better future together* is a celebration of these achievements.

Industry leaders or pioneers breaking new ground, the Mauritian men and women profiled in this publication are a reflection of the many Australian alumni in Mauritius striving to bring about lasting change in their chosen field. With our global reputation for excellence in education, research and science, Australia is one of the most popular destinations for Mauritians wishing to study abroad. In 2017, more than 2,300 Mauritian students were enrolled in Australian education institutions, and a significant number were also choosing Australian distance education or undertaking Australian diploma or degree courses offered in Mauritius through partner education institutions. These education and research partnerships are increasing and evolving as Mauritius establishes itself as a regional education hub. At least 10 Australian education providers have formal linkages with Mauritian institutions with the launch earlier this year of the first Australian university campus in Mauritius. More partnerships are developing.

I am pleased to launch this publication in 2018, a special year for Mauritius as it celebrates its 50 years of independence. Australia is a committed and long-standing partner in the development of Mauritius. People-to-people links form the foundation of our bilateral relationship. The Australian Government's Australia Awards scholarship program supports human capacity development in critical sectors in Mauritius, including agriculture, ocean economy, environment and gender. Australian alumni have brought new ideas to transform the cultural and business landscape in Mauritius and create new commercial opportunities between our two countries.

Australia is proud of these achievements and recognises the role the Australian Alumni Association in Mauritius plays to promote friendship and networking opportunities and ongoing professional development. I invite you to discover the experiences and achievements of these Australian Alumni helping Australia and Mauritius build a better future together.

Jenny Dee
Australian High Commissioner to Mauritius
July 2018

Dean Ah Chuen

Building one of the most successful brands in Mauritius

Dean Ah Chuen is an Alumnus of multiple Australian universities and the Managing Director of ABC automobiles. He credits his Australian education and experience for equipping him with the right mindset for entrepreneurial success.

Dean Ah Chuen's passion for automobiles and entrepreneurial leadership helped him become one of the most successful businessmen on the island. He also credits his Australian experience as crucial in achieving his goals. "I lived in Australia for over ten years where I completed my undergraduate and postgraduate studies. For more than five years, I worked in the car and IT industry there. International work experience is always valuable. Studying, living and working in a cosmopolitan country like Australia is worth a great deal as one is exposed to different cultures and nationalities."

Dean Ah Chuen's life and work experience in Australia is bolstered by multiple academic achievements. A holder of a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Sydney, a diploma in Marketing Management from the University of New South Wales Kensington, and a Masters in Business Administration from the University of Western Sydney, he says that his Australian education helped develop the right attitude to run his business.

"I am indebted to Australian education for having helped me develop an attitude and mindset for entrepreneurship," he says. "Today, I take a genuine pride in being someone who likes to get things right and who works very hard at his job by achieving objectives within deadlines."

Dean is currently preparing his brand for the paradigm shift in the automobile market caused by the trend towards electric and autonomous vehicles.



Captain Louis Barbeau

Helping the Blue Economy and ensuring port security in Mauritius

Captain Barbeau is an Alumnus of the Australian Maritime College, Tasmania and the Sydney School of Navigation. As the Port Master of the Mauritius Ports Authority (MPA), he contributes in establishing Mauritius as the leading gateway port of the Southwest Indian Ocean and in maintaining the security of port operations on the island.

Captain Barbeau's Master Class 1 certificate from the Sydney School of Navigation and his Masters in Maritime logistics at the Australian Maritime College, Tasmania helped him achieve a successful 28 year career at the MPA as Port Pilot and now as Port Master.

"I first went to sea at the age of 18. I knew that I needed the right qualifications to be able to pilot a ship. At the time, I had family in Sydney so I decided to study there," he says.

The international exposure he received in Australia and the technical skills he learned were instrumental in shaping his achievements and who he is today.

"When you go to a big country like Australia, the people you meet are from very different backgrounds and are all open minded," he says. "Everyone you meet is ready to help you, and the opportunities such as libraries which are open 24/7, make it possible to achieve your educational goals. This positive environment helped me get to where I am today."

Captain Barbeau is using his years of experience and knowledge to contribute to the establishment of a strong Ocean Economy in Mauritius.





Bheema Bhoyroo

Using Health Law to tackle drink driving and accidents

Bheema Bhoyroo is an Alumna of the University of Melbourne and the first person to receive the Sandra Vegting Leadership Award. After a career in civil service, Bheema is now a State Counsel at the Director of Public Prosecutions Office. She wishes to use her knowledge in Health Law to tackle drink driving and accident cases and ensure that justice is not denied to victims.

Bheema started her career as a Public Health and Safety Officer for the Ministry of Health in Mauritius and is now a State Counsel at the Director of Public Prosecutions office representing the State in criminal cases. After completing her Bachelor of Law, she decided to push her knowledge further by applying for an Australia Awards scholarship to do a Masters in Health and Medical Law. She says her time studying in Australia was an eye-opening experience. "We were treated as working professionals in class, not students, so every time we discussed we were expected to prepare our subject well, we had

to participate, work together and bring new ideas. The fact there were students from different countries meant that everyone had a different experience to share."

Her Masters helped Bheema achieve her goal of specialising in medical negligence problems, an area relatively untapped in the Mauritian legal field. She aims to bring speedy justice to anyone having experienced medical negligence and, through her efforts, minimise the number of mistakes made in hospitals and clinics in Mauritius. Bheema's exceptional performance during the Australia Awards interview process revealed her potential leadership qualities and she became the first Mauritian awardee of the Sandra Vegting Leadership Prize awarded by the Australian Government. The prize - \$2000 (AUD) - allowed her to complete several leadership courses while studying for her Masters at Melbourne University. Bheema has recently joined the Director of Public Prosecution's office as a State Counsel, and will represent the State in criminal cases. She wishes to use her knowledge in Health Law to tackle drink driving and accident cases and ensure that justice is not denied to victims.



Zeinah Bhunnoo

Using technology and innovation for businesses

Zeinah is an Alumna of the Ducere Global Business School in Mauritius. The online degree allowed her to grow significantly in her role as Head of Growth for Star Knitwear and helped her to get even more involved in different aspects of the company and apply innovative practices to benefit operations.

Zeinah Bhunnoo's MBA in Innovation and Leadership is a testament to how Australia's innovative approach to distance learning can help students in the African region.

Delivered through the Ducere Global Business School (in partnership with the University of Mauritius), a social enterprise which provides 21 African countries with learning and leadership opportunities through their higher education programs, Zeinah sees her MBA as crucial to her career growth. "The Ducere MBA Innovation & Leadership has opened doors to more varied professional avenues within the same jersey wear manufacturing company I work at," she says. "Be it marketing & communication, branding, sourcing or merchandising & sales, I am now involved in a more dynamic and diverse manner in many areas of the business. Not that my voice was not heard before, but it is now sought-after and leads in the implementation of new strategies for growth."

Zeinah successfully applied concepts learned through her MBA coursework in the company she works for. She conceived and implemented an innovative digital marketing platform which helps market her company to its clients with no face-to-face interaction whatsoever. "This new platform is hugely cost saving and fulfills its purpose as successfully, if not more, than what has been done in the company for the past 20 years," she says. Zeinah also uses the skills learned through her MBA to assist her Human Resources department in creating a more inclusive company culture for employees and foster a sense of belonging to the company. She is currently working to help her company tap into the premium market.

Anjalee Dabee

Helping shape gender sensitive policies in Mauritius

Anjalee Dabee is an Alumna of Flinders University, Adelaide and the National Gender Expert at the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Country Office in Mauritius. She plays a crucial role in promoting Gender Equality in Mauritius by providing technical and policy advice to the country's Parliamentary Gender Caucus and ensures that programmes of the UNDP Country Office are gender sensitive.

Anjalee has 10 years experience working with the United Nations providing advice on gender-related issues. Her work tackles gender mainstreaming issues within the Mauritian policy and budgetary process and the representation of women in politics. In her opinion, studying and living in Australia has helped her develop the analytical skills necessary for her job. "I think Australia is quite advanced regarding gender equality in terms of the programmes to close sectoral gender gaps. My studies have equipped me with the skills to analyse policies from a gender perspective to achieve equality and equity. The education was holistic and focused not only on theories and examples from the developed world, but were also contextualised to analyse emerging developmental issues." Anjalee is proud of the improvement made in the African region on women's rights and gender equality since she started at the UNDP 10 years ago. She counts her contribution to the National Gender Policy Framework for Mauritius as one of her greatest achievements and hopes that her work will help redress the gender gaps in the country. Though she is proud of the progress made, she recognises that it is an unfinished agenda. "I would like to see at least 30% of women in Parliament and increase the number of women in decision making positions in the private sector. I am pleased that the Government of Mauritius is institutionalising gender mainstreaming through gender responsive budgeting following advocacy from the different stakeholders, including the Parliamentary Gender Caucus." Anjalee is currently contracted to the UNDP while studying for her PhD.



A portrait of Dr. Sanju Deenapanaray, a middle-aged man with dark hair and a grey beard, smiling. He is wearing a dark suit jacket over a light-colored shirt. The background is a plain, light color.

Dr Sanju Deenapanaray

Helping developing countries prepare for climate change

Sanju Deenapanaray is an awardee of multiple Australian scholarships and an Alumnus of the Australian National University (ANU) in Canberra. After spending years working in Australia and around the world, Sanju returned to Mauritius and worked for the United Nations Development Programme. He is now the Managing Director of Ecological Living in Action Ltd (E.L.I.A.), an organisation which helps African countries develop their capacity for sustainable development, and address developmental issues related to climate change.

Sanju's Australian story started when he became the first African to be awarded a scholarship from the Australian National University to study systems engineering. Then a pioneering undergraduate program, Sanju credits the degree and his experience in Australia as major factor to his success and how he approaches sustainable development. "Sustainability touches every bit of economics and society. We need to use a system based

problem solving approach to solve problems at the root, and not only in the short term."

"It's important to see the bigger picture and that's what I do now thanks to my undergraduate degree. It gives me a competitive advantage over other consultants as I can provide that to my clients". His positive first experience of Australia prompted him to return to the ANU for his PhD in Semiconductor Physics and Electronic Material Engineering on a second scholarship. During that time, he conducted research on solar cell technology alongside the field's leading expert, Professor Andrew Blakers, and completed his MBA with the Association of Professional Engineers, Scientists and Managers Australia (APESMA) and Deakin University in Melbourne. Sanju brings his years of Australian education and work experience to the benefit of developing countries through E.L.I.A. by providing consultancy expertise and research on matters including climate change, eco-design and the green economy. A thought leader on sustainability issues in the Indian Ocean, E.L.I.A. is the only organisation to offer expert advice to companies with sustainability programs in Madagascar, Comoros, Seychelles and Mauritius.

Jossy Dowlutrao

Promoting Australian distance learning through the Australian Alumni Association and community development

Jossy Dowlutrao is an Alumnus of the University of Southern Queensland Toowoomba (USQ) and the Chief Administrative Officer of the D.E. Shaw Group in Mauritius. Jossy's MBA, obtained via the USQ's distance learning classes, was crucial in helping him advance his career and to thrive in his current position. Jossy Dowlutrao obtained an Australian degree without disrupting his professional and personal life thanks to the USQ's distance learning classes.

When he decided to complete an MBA to further his skills and career options, Jossy knew he needed a course which would allow him to continue honouring his work commitments while studying. "Because of my work schedule, I needed a Masters degree that was more flexible. I did some research online and saw that the USQ was offering online Master's degrees, and I jumped on the opportunity." An undergraduate of the University of Mauritius, Jossy wanted to obtain his Masters from an international university. Despite completing his course online, he states that the experience and knowledge gained during his studies gave him the international exposure and experience he was looking for. "There were students from all over the world participating in the online discussion forums. If anyone had a question, he or she would post it there, and the tutor or other students could reply. I never thought that it would be this interactive."

Following the one-year course, Jossy's MBA qualified him for a position as Chief Administrative Officer of the D.E. Shaw Group, an American investment and technology development firm implemented in Mauritius. An active member of the Australian Alumni Association in Mauritius, Jossy helps organise talks and events promoting Australian education and shares his online study experience with prospective students wishing to do the same. Jossy also empowers young people through local NGO "Yes You Can" through education and activities including environment protection, art and culture and community development.



A portrait of Hervé Duval Jnr, a man with long, curly dark hair and glasses, wearing a dark blue suit, white shirt, and a red patterned tie. He is standing in front of a white building with a window. The background is slightly blurred.

Hervé Duval Jnr

Changing attitudes towards Corporate Law in Mauritius

Hervé Duval is a Barrister specialised in Corporate and Commercial Law, founder of the Ahnee-Duval law firm, Chairman of the Mauritius Bar Association (MBA), and Senior Counsel. This Alumnus of the University of Western Australia (UWA) credits the holistic approach to legal studies in Australia as a major contributor to his success.

Hervé Duval is a prominent figure in the legal field in Mauritius. His experience studying law at UWA had a profound effect on his approach to the profession. “I was very impressed by the Australian egalitarian values. I try to emulate the down to earth, no nonsense approach I admired so much about the Australian law academics and practitioners I met at and through UWA. In Western Australia the legal profession is fused, so my training helped me to better understand and fully appreciate the work of the Attorneys and Notaries I work with in Mauritius,” he says.

Australia’s approach to legal studies, and the country’s status as a common law country not only prepared him well for legal practice in Mauritius, but in his role training new Barristers at the Institute of Judicial and Legal Studies (IJLS) as well. “I like to think that people manage to stay awake (in lectures) because I do not try to lecture them but instead, try to share my experience as a law practitioner in the same manner the law practitioners in Perth would come and share their experience at UWA Law School.”

Alongside his practice and work at the IJLS, Hervé also works to restore respect for the legal profession in Mauritius through his role as Chairman of the Mauritius Bar Association. Among his many other achievements, he hopes to be recognised for bringing an Australian touch to legal advocacy and alternative dispute resolution in Mauritius.

Dr Sophie Fon Sing

Contributing to unlock the economic potential of algae

Dr Sophie Fon Sing is an Alumna of Murdoch University in Perth. She uses the knowledge acquired during her PhD to help startups leverage the potential of algae for commercial use and contribute to the future of the Ocean Economy in Mauritius.

Dr Sophie Fon Sing's path in academia started with a degree in Marine Science at Murdoch University. After specializing in Aquaculture and graduating with honours, she developed an interest in algae which led her to complete a PhD on renewable energy and algae.

She states that the field works she completed during her studies gave her a competitive advantage in the job market. "It gave me the strength to be adventurous, mindful and willing to go out there in tough conditions to do my work. When I finished my degree, I was not scared to look for jobs anywhere."

She believes that Australia is a thought leader in terms of research and development and that she has been very lucky to study there. She now uses her knowledge and experience to the benefit of startups and academic research.

Sophie is currently working on a contract basis at Green Create Nutra Ltd, a company pioneering spirulina farming in Mauritius for local and international export. With her broad and international experience in algal biotechnology, she hopes to inspire and empower people to harness the full potential of algae to resolve environmental, economic and societal issues.





Davis Hee Hong Wye

Helping Rodrigues reach its full potential

Davis is an Alumnus of the University of South Australia and Flinders University, Adelaide. As the Chief Island Executive of the Island of Rodrigues, he works to improve the lives of its inhabitants through the implementation of government policies and by improving the country's water supply and sustainable energy resources.

Davis credits his Masters of Hydrology and Water Resources from the University of South Australia and Flinders University as instrumental in helping him shape his career and in improving the life of the people of Rodrigues.

His studies and his time working for CSIRO (Commonwealth Scientific Research and Industrial Organisation) in Adelaide's wine regions helped him prepare for the challenges of providing a stable water supply to the island. "In Australia, I had the opportunity to work with CSIRO in the Clare Valley region. The geology of the area is similar to Rodrigues and my experience working with scientists there helped me to model an appropriate water flow when I returned to Rodrigues," he says.

Davis's work has contributed to providing a steady water supply to 95% of the island. He is currently working with the Australian Government to implement desalination plants in Rodrigues, and with the Mauritian Government to harness the power of wave energy to provide a source of renewable energy for Rodrigues.

A portrait of Jannick Jaunboccus, a woman with dark hair pulled back, wearing a maroon blazer over a light-colored top. She is smiling and looking slightly to the right of the camera. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

Jannick Jaunboccus

Promoting gender equality in Mauritius

Jannick Jaunboccus is an Australia Awards scholarship Awardee and the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare. Her Australian education experience helps her implement innovative social policies, which include empowering Mauritian women and bridging the gender equality gap.

Jannick has over 30 years of experience working in the Mauritian Civil Service and is now the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare. Her post-graduate diploma in Administrative leadership at the University of New England in New South Wales and her Masters in Public Policy and Management at Monash University in Melbourne played an important part in helping her achieve her career ambitions, and bring about change in Mauritian society. "My time at Monash equipped me with the policy, financial governance, analytical skills, and best management practices to be able to contribute effectively to the formulation of national policies," she says.

The course not only boosted Jannick's knowledge of her field but also equipped her with the skills to be a better leader. She embraces transformative leadership and uses it to get the best performance from her staff and other stakeholders through the implementation of joined-up government networking principles she studied at Monash. Jannick also forms part of the National Steering Committee on Gender Mainstreaming and works to ensure that all ministries engender their policies to make gender equality a reality in Mauritius.



Bhamini Kamudu Applasawmy

Helping develop the love and curiosity for science in Mauritius

An Alumna of the Australia Awards, Bhamini Kamudu Applasawmy completed an Australia Awards Fellowship in Science Centre Leadership at the Australian National University (ANU) in Canberra. The skills she learned help her in her role as Senior Resource Officer of the Rajiv Gandhi Science Centre, a parastatal body involved in communicating science to the Mauritian population. “We bring science to the doorsteps of the people,” says Bhamini, in a country where the number of students enrolled in science subjects is on the decline, the importance of her work cannot be overstated.

As Senior Resource Officer of the Rajiv Gandhi Science Centre, one of Bhamini’s main functions is to promote science and encourage younger generations to be scientifically curious. To do so, she designs and runs activities such as science shows and does outreach to introduce the community to telescopes and astronomy. In 2017, she joined science communicators from eight other African countries to perfect her skills at Questacon, Australia’s National Science and Technology Centre, and the Australian National University, one of the only universities in the world with a specialised department on science communication.

“As they (ANU) are specialists, I was able to perfect my skills. We were trained on exhibit development, science centre management and on how to run science shows and teacher workshops.” Run in collaboration with Questacon, the Australia Awards Fellowship allowed Bhamini to visit the prestigious science centre and collaborate with Australia to launch the Young Person’s Plan for the Planet in Mauritius. This extracurricular program enables young people to approach Sustainable Development Goals through a business planning approach. Mauritius is the first country outside of Australia to welcome this international program which was launched in February 2018.

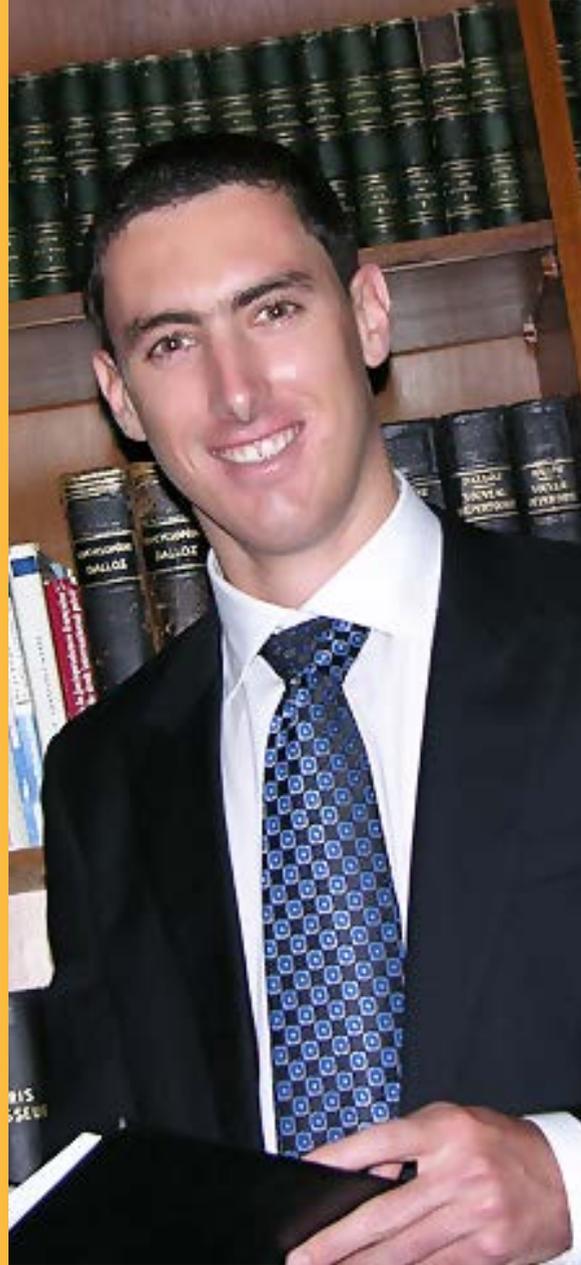
Xavier Koenig

Building commercial ties between Australia and Mauritius

Xavier Koenig graduated from Curtin University of Technology, Perth with a Bachelor of Commerce Degree Accounting and Business Law Double Major. Now an executive in one of Africa's biggest law firms, he credits his Australian experience as a major factor in his success and tries to build commercial ties between Australia and Mauritius. After high school, Xavier chose to go to Australia for his tertiary studies hoping to use the reputation of its universities for a competitive advantage. "I decided to enrol in a Bachelor of Commerce degree (double major) at Curtin due to the university's reputation as one of the best business schools in the country and in the region."

His undergraduate experience taught him the practical aspects of developing a business along with a knowledge of business law. It also gave him a passion for the legal field and helped define his career. To build his experience, Xavier followed his degree with a Diploma in applied corporate governance with Chartered Secretaries Australia and joined Minter Ellison, one of the Asia Pacific's leading law firms, working in the Corporate, Energy and Resources and Insolvency departments. Xavier's Australian education and work experience helped him to excel when he returned to Mauritius to further his career at ENSAfrica, Africa's largest law firm, becoming the firm's youngest partner in 2017 and helping them expand their services in Mauritius into Insolvency, Corporate Administration and Trust practices.

Xavier is now using his knowledge to collaborate with the Australian High Commission in Port Louis and other businesses with commercial interests in Australia to help establish an Australian Chamber of Commerce in Mauritius and facilitate the incorporation and administration of Australian businesses on the island.



He also assists Australian businesses wishing to use Mauritius as a platform for their activities and investments in Africa. Xavier's continued connection with Australia is not limited to financial services as he recently represented Mauritius at the Commonwealth Games in Queensland in Squash.

Tina Mooneswamy

Guiding future generations

Tina Mooneswamy is an Alumna of South Metropolitan TAFE (SM TAFE) and the Preschool Manager at the Charles Telfair Campus. She applies Australian approaches to early childhood education to the children under her care, and coaches the university's students studying Early Childhood Education and Care.

Tina discovered her love for Early Childcare Development through her courses at the South Metropolitan TAFE of Western Australia. "I was initially rather sceptical of the field I had chosen. But after my experience at SM TAFE, I knew I wanted to push my studies in the field even further."

Tina's Australian education experience taught her the skills to manage the Charles Telfair Preschool, and to grow as an individual. "The best thing about studying with an Australian institution was definitely the lecturers and the high quality of lectures I sat in on a daily basis. They used a variety of teaching methods and moved through the course material ensuring that no one in the class fell behind. The course offered its students multiple opportunities to work as part of a group to complete different tasks. The most important thing for me about the Australian study experience was the chance to grow as a person, as well as academically." She credits the work placement opportunities and the focus placed on child care requirements in helping her advance in her studies and chosen career path. She tries to pass on the Australian approach to childhood education in her coaching role at Charles Telfair. "I encourage, guide and support my teachers and students of the Diploma of Early Childhood Education and Care to believe in inclusive education and to respect diversity and let each child grow, learn and develop at his/her own pace. By doing this, I am sure we help those little children in their daily life and to become successful people in the future." Tina is currently undertaking online courses with SM TAFE in order to become a Lecturer in Early Childhood Education at the Charles Telfair Campus.





Dr Ruby Moothien Pillay

Strengthening research ties between Australia and Mauritius

Dr Ruby Moothien Pillay is an Alumna of James Cook University in Queensland. Now the Director of the Mauritius Oceanography Institute, she trains her staff and colleagues on proper research methodology and protects Mauritian reefs through her coral farming project.

An esteemed scientist, published author, and team leader, Dr Ruby Moothien Pillay is one of the leading intellectuals on marine science in Mauritius today. Her interest in the field began in the 1990s when she joined the Albion Fisheries Research Centre. Wanting to push her knowledge of marine ecology further, she applied for the Australia Awards scholarship and went to James Cook University for her Postgraduate Diploma and Masters degree.

After training under some of Australia's leading experts in marine ecology, Dr Ruby returned to Mauritius to help develop policies and projects to protect Mauritian reefs and train her colleagues in improved research methods. Her passion for her work and extensive educational experience led her to become the Director of the Mauritian Oceanography Institute in 2001. She credits the Australian "do it yourself" approach to research and life as a major part of her success. "In Australia, there's no spoon feeding. I started learning how to be independent, to collect, analyse my data and do my research on my own. This way of doing things made me what I am today." She recently facilitated the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between Macquarie University and the Mauritius Oceanography Institute, further strengthening Australia-Mauritian research collaborations and her commitment to protecting local reefs. Dr Ruby now sees herself as a mentor for her colleagues, and provides technical and scientific advice to the government to form policies regarding the protection of Mauritian reefs. One of her latest achievements is the successful implementation of coral farming projects which train coastal communities in reef rehabilitation techniques which limit the negative effects of climate change and human influence on local reefs.

Vikash Munbodhe

Working to preserve Mauritian coral reefs and marine biodiversity

Vikash Munbodhe is an Australia Awards Alumnus with a Masters of Science, Fisheries, Biology, and Management from James Cook University in Queensland. As the Senior Scientific Officer at the Albion Fisheries Research Centre, his work helps formulate policies that preserve Mauritian reefs and create a sustainable Ocean Economy.

Mauritius owns one of the largest Exclusive Economic Zones in the world. With ocean activities now seen as a potential pillar for the Mauritian economy, Australian Alumni such as Vikash play a vital role in protecting this valuable asset.

A former nurse at the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life, Vikash received a scholarship in 2001 to study Environmental Science at RMIT. The experience led him to take on the position of technical officer at the Albion Fisheries Research Centre. His motivation to improve his research skills led him to apply for an Australia Awards scholarship which took him to James Cook University. He says his experience studying and living in Townsville was a transformative one and essential to his career. "I got to work with leaders in marine science. Studying at James Cook University allowed me to develop my writing and communication skills and my capacity regarding research. I am now able to conduct my own research and formulate policies which help marine conservation in Mauritius." He states that the conservation of coral reefs is essential if Mauritius is to develop a thriving Ocean Economy.

"Our coral reefs are very valuable, and with the consequences of climate change, we help to limit the damage being done thanks to the reduction of fishing and tourism related sea-based activities inside the lagoon, by promoting Fish Aggregating Device (FAD) fishery and jetcraft activities outside the lagoon." Vikash is actively involved in assessing new coastal projects for their ecological and socio-economic sustainability. He also coordinates the recently set up National Coral Reef Network, a think tank of major stakeholders in marine conservation who share data and provide unified strategies to reef conservation in Mauritius. Vikash is the current Australian Alumni Ambassador in Mauritius, an important position that sees him promote Australian education on the island.



Kevin Payendee

Strengthening bilateral ties between Australia and Mauritius

Kevin Payendee is an Alumnus of the Australian National University and First Secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade of the Republic of Mauritius. Posted in Canberra, he plays a vital role in promoting Mauritian interests in Australia and leads projects central to the sustained economic growth of Mauritius.

When the time came for Kevin to further his knowledge of public policy and diplomacy, he turned to a recognised institution in the field, the Australian National University (ANU) in Canberra.

He enrolled in the Master of Public Policy (with specialisation in International Policy) and the Master of Diplomacy course. Both courses had a significant impact on his career. "After two and a half years spent at the ANU, I emerged with the right research and analytical skills, confidence and understanding which not only helped me to contribute fully to my work but to society at large."

Already a career diplomat posted in Canberra, Kevin's time at the ANU helped refine his skills by critically engaging with the work of other academics and experts on issues such as international trade, sustainable development and climate change which are critical to Mauritius. The experience proved instrumental when he subsequently occupied the role of Desk Officer for bilateral relations between the EU and Mauritius and while working on complex consular cases.

Kevin is posted at the Mauritian High Commission in Canberra and helps maintain the bilateral relationship between Mauritius and Australia. He is currently involved in developing a research project on the Ocean Economy which will contribute to the island's long-term economic growth.



Romi Poonoosamy



Building a cultural bridge between Australia and Mauritius

Romi Poonoosamy is an Alumnus of the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts and Edith Cowan University. Now the Director of Santral Art, a networking platform and management structure for artistic and performance professionals, Romi aims to push the Mauritian cultural scene forward on a local and international level.

Born to a father and mother involved in stage production and artist promotion, Romi was always destined for the entertainment world. A direction he confirmed when he joined the prestigious Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA), an institution that the likes of Hugh Jackman and Tim Minchin have called home. At WAAPA, Romi took his love for stage lighting to the next level with an Advanced Diploma in Lighting for Performance.

“Australia broadened my mind. My lecturers Joseph Mercurio, Brian Anslow and Chris Edmund have been around the world and come back to Australia to teach. I’ve studied under people who have worked for Enrique Iglesias and Britney Spears, and coached Hugh Jackman.”

Recognizing his potential, his tutors encouraged him to pursue a Bachelor of Arts, Performing Arts with a Major in Lighting for Performance and a minor in Event Management and Public Relations which he completed in 2010.

Romi is now the director of Santral Art, a networking platform and management structure for artists and technicians working in the entertainment industry. Through his organisation, Romi aims to build a cultural bridge between Australia and Mauritius. By inviting Australian speakers to the island to discuss their careers, he hopes to give young Mauritian artists and technicians some of the exposure he had while studying in Australia. “Everybody here thinks that their job is hard and that it’s hard to reach their dreams because they are in Mauritius,” he says “I want to show them that their peers in other countries are facing the same problems too and how they overcome them.”

Romi is currently in talks with the Western Australian Ballet Company and hopes to bring them to Mauritius for a series of shows, workshops, training and lectures.



Dr Sarita Ramanan

Promoting Australian education in Mauritius

Dr Sarita Ramanan is an Alumna of Curtin University. After completing her Doctorate in IT, she was named Head of Faculty of IT, Design, and Communication at Curtin Mauritius. Her position allows her to expand the number of courses available at the University, alongside her lecturing and research work. Her role is invaluable in promoting Australian education across the country and IT skills in Mauritius.

Thanks to the presence of Curtin University in Mauritius, Sarita never had to leave the island to obtain her Australian degree.

An official campus of Curtin University, Curtin Mauritius lowers the economic barrier to entry for Mauritians wishing to benefit from the knowledge and expertise of an Australian degree. Sarita is a perfect example of this. "Curtin University has been a major pillar of my academic career," she says." From the latest learning, and teaching techniques to inspiration for Work Integrated Learning projects to doctoral research support, Curtin has been instrumental in shaping me as a lecturer, senior lecturer, faculty head and researcher."

Now a Head of Faculty, Sarita advances Curtin Mauritius's objective of providing work experience to its students through their Work Integrated Learning program. Her PhD thesis in IT Governance and Green IT models for Large Mauritian Organisations helps her conduct research to limit the ecological impact of the IT sector in Mauritius.

Sarita is currently leading a collaborative study aimed at exploring graduate work-readiness in Mauritius and preparing the pre-launch of new courses at the university. She hopes her efforts will improve the employability of Curtin Mauritius's students and give them an advantage in the island's competitive job market.



Claudie Ricaud

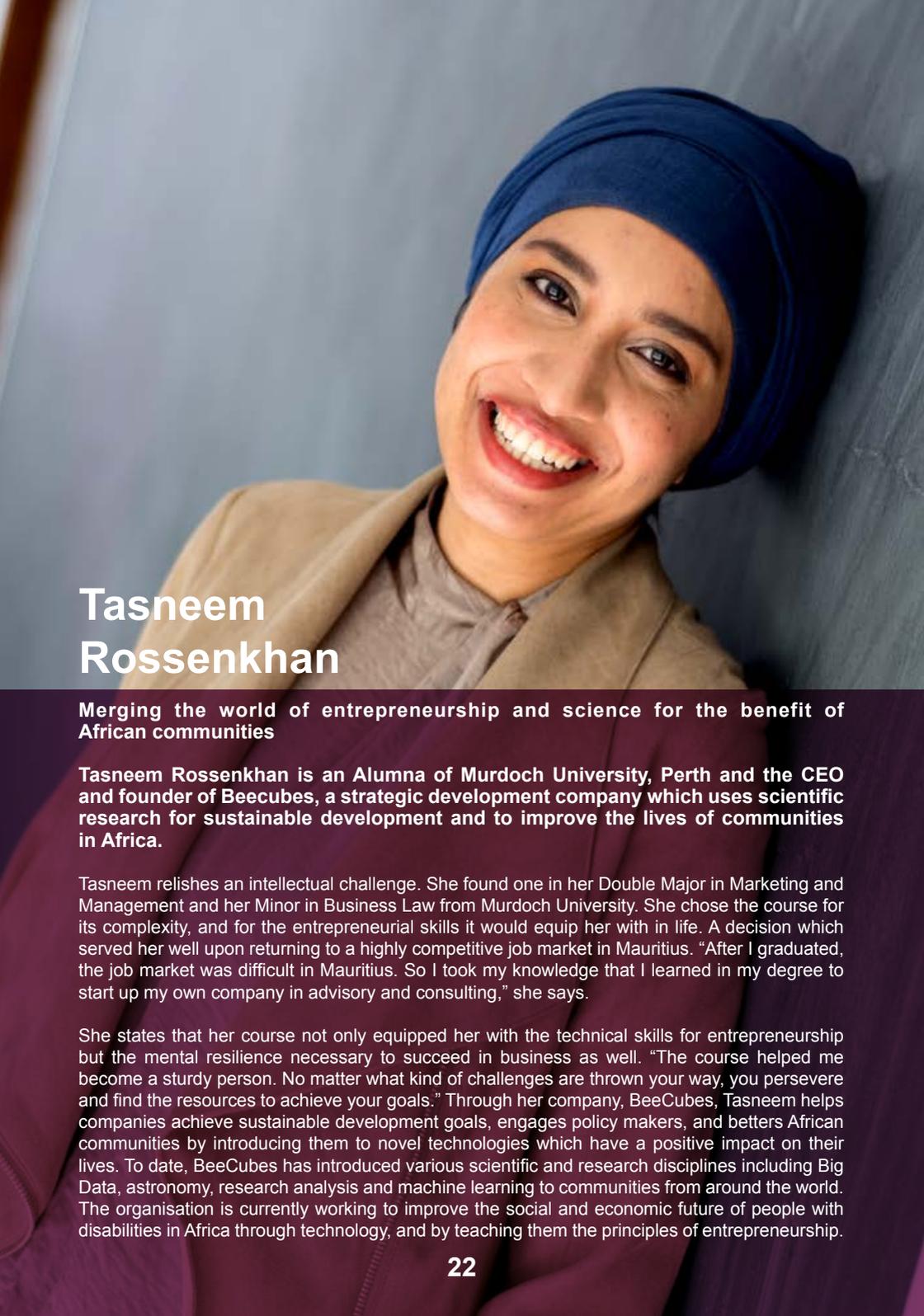
Promoting music and preserving the Indian Ocean's musical cultural heritage

Claudie Ricaud is an Alumna of the University of Sydney. Her Double Major in Ethnomusicology and French help her in her mission of preserving the musical and cultural heritage of the Indian Ocean and run an educational institution for musicians on the island.

Joining the University of Sydney allowed Claudie to explore her passion for music and equipped her with the skills she uses today in her capacity as the Director of the Conservatoire François Mitterrand.

"When I got to University, I realised the huge number of paths possible," she says. "Before leaving, I was always interested in the development and history of music in the region. There hadn't been much research done in that field, and I didn't know how to go about it. But when I started my studies in Australia and saw the way research was being done on Aboriginal music, it helped me a lot to go forward." Claudie is now one of the most prominent cultural figures on the island. She credits the research skills and commitment to high standards she learned in Australia for her success.

Her training helped her to become the Director of the Conservatoire François Mitterrand, a parastatal body with the mission of teaching and promoting music and preserving the national heritage. Claudie is currently achieving her dream and is set to open a museum chronicling the history of music in the Indian Ocean.

A portrait of Tasneem Rossenkhan, a woman wearing a blue hijab and a beige blazer over a grey top. She is smiling warmly at the camera. The background is a soft, out-of-focus grey.

Tasneem Rossenkhan

Merging the world of entrepreneurship and science for the benefit of African communities

Tasneem Rossenkhan is an Alumna of Murdoch University, Perth and the CEO and founder of Beecubes, a strategic development company which uses scientific research for sustainable development and to improve the lives of communities in Africa.

Tasneem relishes an intellectual challenge. She found one in her Double Major in Marketing and Management and her Minor in Business Law from Murdoch University. She chose the course for its complexity, and for the entrepreneurial skills it would equip her with in life. A decision which served her well upon returning to a highly competitive job market in Mauritius. “After I graduated, the job market was difficult in Mauritius. So I took my knowledge that I learned in my degree to start up my own company in advisory and consulting,” she says.

She states that her course not only equipped her with the technical skills for entrepreneurship but the mental resilience necessary to succeed in business as well. “The course helped me become a sturdy person. No matter what kind of challenges are thrown your way, you persevere and find the resources to achieve your goals.” Through her company, BeeCubes, Tasneem helps companies achieve sustainable development goals, engages policy makers, and betters African communities by introducing them to novel technologies which have a positive impact on their lives. To date, BeeCubes has introduced various scientific and research disciplines including Big Data, astronomy, research analysis and machine learning to communities from around the world. The organisation is currently working to improve the social and economic future of people with disabilities in Africa through technology, and by teaching them the principles of entrepreneurship.



**Dr Devika
Saddul**

Helping Women integrate the scientific field in Mauritius

Devika Saddul is an Alumna of the Australia Awards and one of Mauritius' prominent scientists. Her work helps farmers boost their productivity and promotes sustainable agricultural practices.

Mauritius struggles with self-sustainable food production due to climatic conditions and lack of agricultural land. The island nation imports up to 75% of its agricultural and food products making it vulnerable to the market's price fluctuations. Though complete autonomy is impossible, the Mauritian Government aims to increase local food production in the near future.

As the Senior Research Scientist at the Food and Agricultural Research and Extension Institute (FAREI), Devika Saddul plays a central role in this objective. A holder of a Postgraduate Diploma in Applied Science, specialising in Ruminant Production from the University of Queensland, and an Alumna of an Australia Awards Short Course on Livestock Systems at the University of New England in New South Wales, Devika uses her knowledge and experience to improve farming methods and formulate policy measures to boost the sector.

For Devika, her Australian education was instrumental in helping her achieve her goals. "The turning point of my career is when I went for the short course through the Australian Awards Africa. It was a very hands-on experience, and it helped me to refocus a project I was doing and give it an orientation." Following a grant from the Australian Government, Devika's project taught a group of 12 farmers ways to decrease the mortality rates among their goat herds, allowing them to sell more at the market. With half the farmers in the group being women, the project contributed to breaking gender barriers within the community and established women as decision makers.

Devika is also the inaugural President of the Mauritian Chapter of the Organisation for Women in Science for the Developing World (OWSD) launched with the support of the Australian High Commission at the inaugural Australia Mauritius Research and Innovation Forum (AMRIF) in February 2018. She hopes that the organisation will help empower Mauritian women and provide a platform for information sharing and the promotion of science.

Lawrence Wong

Promoting Australian exports in the Indian Ocean

An Alumnus of La Trobe University Melbourne, Lawrence Wong now runs the successful food and manufacturing company La Trobe Co. Ltd. Lawrence credits his Australian education for his entrepreneurial success, and the high quality of the Australian dairy industry which helped him launch La Trobe Co. Ltd.'s flagship milk powder brand, Snowy.

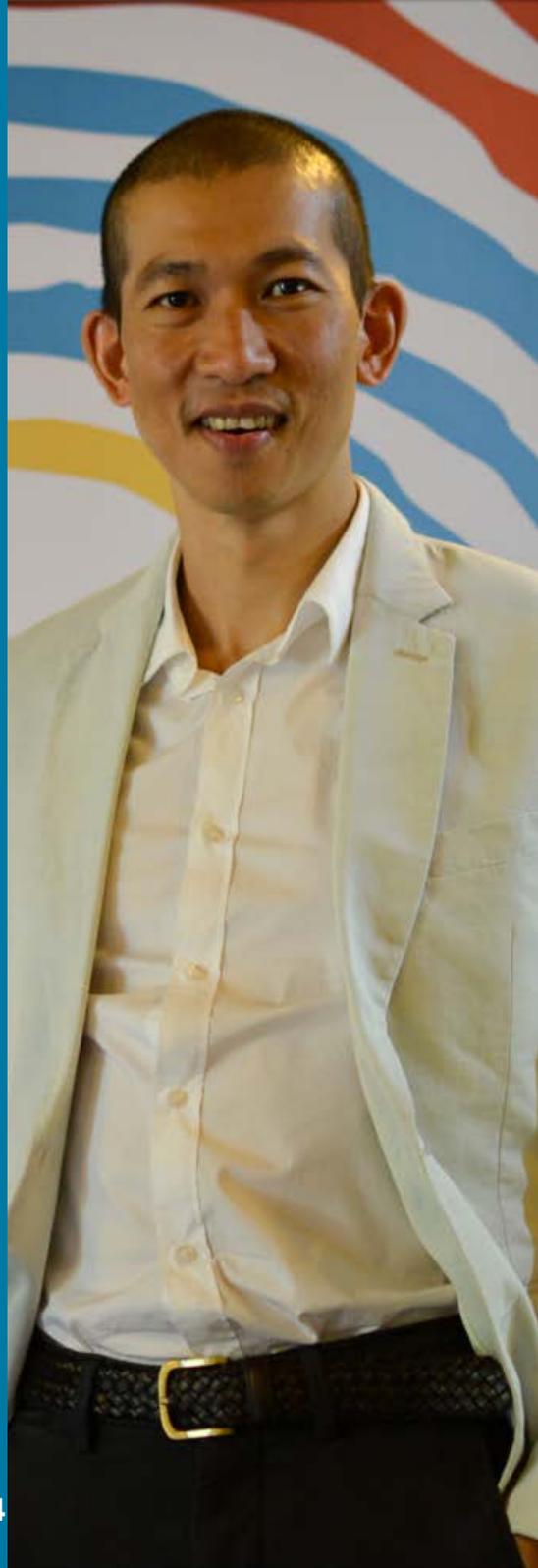
After completing high school, Lawrence left for Australia to study for a Business and Commerce undergraduate degree with a double major in accounting and finance at La Trobe University. Despite majoring in accounting, it took him one job interview to realise that he was not interested in pursuing a career in the field. Fortunately, his degree helped prepare him for one of the most important roles in his life.

"In Australia, university life is quite open-minded. You learn to live on your own, and they encourage you to take part in extracurricular activities a lot. That helps you to develop a broader vision when looking at things, and without realising, you learn a lot about entrepreneurial skills." He put these skills, and his knack for figures to use when he started his company, Latrobe Ltd, in 2001.

From humble beginnings, La Trobe Co. Ltd. is now one of the largest retailers and manufacturers of food goods in Mauritius.

Central to the company's success is Snowy milk, a product imported from Australian manufacturer, Murray Goulburn, and packaged and sold through La Trobe Co. Ltd.

Lawrence now has his sights set on exporting his products to the rest of the African region and, in the process, introduce more people to Australian exports.



Australian Alumni Association

Connecting Alumni in Mauritius

The Australian Alumni Association (AAA) is instrumental in promoting friendship and networking opportunities among Australian alumni. Intended as a means of promoting Australian education in the country, the duties of the Mauritian chapter of the AAA have now evolved to identify and harness partnership opportunities for Australian universities within the Mauritian public and private sector.

The AAA is invaluable in promoting the Australia Awards Africa scholarship program. As many of its members are former awardees, these volunteers are a great source of scholarship information for anyone interested in applying for an Australia Award. As part of their mission of promoting Australian education, members of the AAA participate in the annual Mauritius International University and Career Expo offering students and their families (particularly parents) first-hand advice on living and studying in Australia. Mauritians who have studied at an Australian education institution are encouraged to join the AAA to maintain their professional and personal network.

Stay connected -  @AustralianAlumni, Email: aaamauritius@gmail.com

 Africa Connect Alumni, Australia Global Alumni - www.globalalumni.gov.au



credit: Tourism Australia



credit: Tourism Australia



credit: Tourism Australia

Australia Awards Africa Program

Growing an influential network of African leaders, reformers and development advocates across the continent

The Australian Government has a long history of providing international scholarships, beginning with the Colombo Plan in the 1950s. Today, scholarships are being offered both at Government level, through the Australia Awards, and by Australian education institutions directly. Since 2011, the Australia Government has provided over 130 Australian Awards scholarships to Mauritians of which 50 percent were awarded to women.

The Australia Awards-Africa program aims to contribute to African leadership and human capacity development in priority sectors where Australia has extensive experience and expertise including public policy, agriculture and extractives. The Australia Awards offer equal opportunities for all participants - men, women and people with disabilities. Special arrangements are in place to support applicants and Awardees requiring specific assistance.

Australia Award Scholarships (Masters)

Australia Award Scholarships at Masters-level are undertaken at Australian universities. These scholarships contribute to the long-term objectives of developing countries by equipping Awardees with the skills and knowledge they need to drive change and achieve sustainable economic growth and social development. Scholarships are offered to emerging leaders from eligible countries in a variety of fields aligned with national development priorities and in which Australia has world class expertise.

Australian Award Scholarships (Short Courses)

Australia Award Short Course Scholarships offer opportunities for short-term postgraduate training delivered in Australia and/or in Africa for up to six weeks. The training targets experienced employees from African public, private and non-government organisations (civil society).

Australia Awards Ambassador

The Australian Awards Alumni Ambassadors help to promote and represent the Australia Awards in the African region. Active across the continent, these volunteer champions are key in cementing Australia's role as an active partner in the development of Africa. Mr Vikash Munbodhe, Senior Scientific Officer at the Albion Fisheries Research Centre, is the current Australia Awards Alumni Ambassador in Mauritius and the fourth to hold this position since its inception in 2013.

For further information on scholarships visit

www.australiaawardsafrica.org or www.studyinaustralia.gov.au/scholarships



Sandra Vegting Leadership Prize

Continuing the work of an Australian leader in the Indian Ocean

The Sandra Vegting Leadership Prize was established by the Australian Government to remember the life and achievements of HE Sandra Vegting, Australia's High Commissioner to Mauritius and Seychelles and Ambassador to Madagascar and Comoros from 2011 to 2014.

The Sandra Vegting Leadership Prize is awarded annually to the most outstanding female Australia Awards Masters scholarship recipient from the Western Indian Ocean states.

Awardees are entitled to apply for funding up to the value of \$2,000 (AUD) on activities that will contribute to their leadership skills development goals over the period of their Australia Awards course.

Since its launch, 4 women from Mauritius (1), Rodrigues (1) and Madagascar (2) have been awarded the Prize.



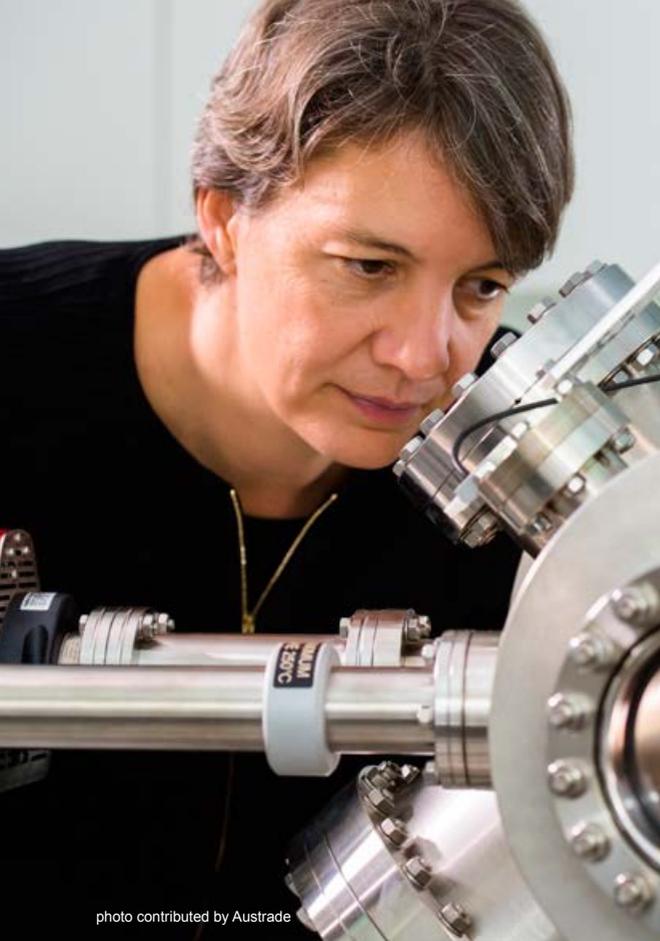
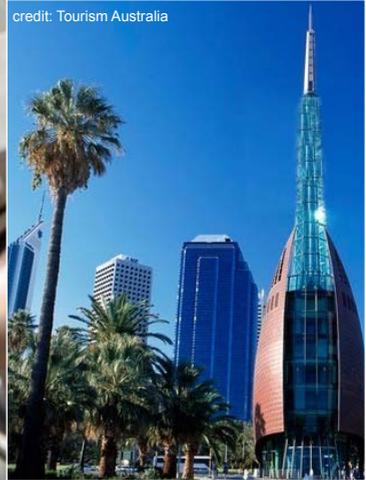


photo contributed by Austrade



credit: Tourism Australia



credit: Tourism Australia

Australia-Mauritius Education Relations

Building a better future together

At least ten Australian education providers have formal linkages with Mauritian institutions – with a growing focus on research partnerships - including Curtin University, Deakin University, Ducere Global Business School, Edith Cowan University, Macquarie University, Murdoch University, North and South Metropolitan TAFEs, University of Southern Queensland and University of Western Australia.

The opening of Australia's first university campus, Curtin Mauritius, on the island in early 2018 reflects a long term commitment to deepen the education partnership and Mauritius as a regional educational hub.

Facts on Australian Education and Research

Australia has 6 universities included in the top 100 universities in the world *

- Australian universities provide study and research opportunities in every major discipline.
- Australia has the third highest number of international students in the world.
- Australia has educated 15 Nobel Prize winners over the last century in the fields of medicine, science and literature.
- 2,5 million international alumni of Australian institutions are making a difference around the world.
- Australia has a long and proud tradition of world class education, cutting edge research and development:
 - o Over 1 billion people around the world rely on Australian discoveries and innovation everyday.
 - o Australian global achievements include discovery of penicillin in 1945, the “black box” flight recorder, Wi-Fi, ultrasound, through to observations that led to the discovery of the accelerating Universe in 2011.
 - o Australia has one of the world’s highest rates of patent applications for innovations in renewable energy and biotechnology.
 - o Australia today is looking for breakthroughs using blockchain technologies, robotics, artificial intelligence, and big data.
- The Australian Laureate Fellowships scheme supports excellence in research by attracting world-class researchers and research leaders to Australia.

* Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2018

NEW SOUTH WALES (NSW)

- Charles Sturt University
- Macquarie University
- Southern Cross University ♥
- University of New England
- University of New South Wales ♥
- University of Newcastle
- University of Sydney
- University of Technology Sydney
- Western Sydney University
- University of Wollongong
- *Australian Catholic University*
- *Central Queensland University*
- *University of Southern Queensland*
- *University of Tasmania*
- *Torrens University*
- *Charles Darwin University*
- *Curtin University*
- *University of Notre Dame*
- *University of Divinity*

QUEENSLAND (QLD)

- Queensland University of Technology
- Bond University
- Central Queensland University ♥
- Griffith University
- James Cook University
- University of Queensland
- University of Southern Queensland ♥
- University of the Sunshine Coast
- *Australian Catholic University*
- *Torrens University*
- *Southern Cross University*

NORTHERN TERRITORY (NT)

- Charles Darwin University ♥

TASMANIA (TAS)

- University of Tasmania ♥



To learn more about studying in Australia visit www.studyinaustralia.gov.au

VICTORIA (VIC)

- Deakin University
- Monash University
- RMIT University
- Federation University
- University of Melbourne
- La Trobe University
- Victoria Univeristy
- Australian Catholic University ♦
- University of Divinity ♦
- SwinBurne University of Technology
- *Central Queensland University*
- *Torrens University*

SOUTH AUSTRALIA (SA)

- Flinders University
- Torrens University ♦
- University of Adelaide
- University of South Australia
- *Australian Catholic University*
- *Central Queensland University*
- *University of Divinity*
- University College London
- Carnegie Mellon University

WESTERN AUSTRALIA (WA)

- Curtin University ♦
- Edith Cowan University
- Murdoch University
- University of Notre Dame ♦
- University of Western Australia
- *Central Queensland University*

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY (ACT)

- University of Canberra
- Australian National University
- *Australian Catholic University*
- *Charles Sturt University*
- *University of New South Wales*

♦ INDICATES MAIN CAMPUS LOCATION
ITALICS INDICATES NON-MAIN CAMPUS LOCATION

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Our final thanks go to the Australian Alumni – to those that shared their story in this publication and to the many more also striving each day to build a better future.

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