



BALLARAT – CREATIVE AND INNOVATIVE

Ballarat is an inherently creative city, which has always been home to great ideas and innovation.

In a world where critical thinking and problem solving skills are considered fundamental to our future success, we want to take Ballarat's creative spirit, reward our inquisitive citizens and nurture the development of innovative concepts and ideas within our community.

It is those innately human creative skills that will keep us at the forefront of innovation and enable us to continually find opportunities for growth.

Ballarat - a city of innovation, design and entrepreneurship which is welcoming, supportive and growing.

Ballarat's Innovation and Entrepreneurship Ecosystem

There is a comprehensive system of support for start up businesses, entrepreneurs and innovators of all ages in the Ballarat region.

This includes:

- formal education at a secondary, tertiary and industry level
- start up community support such as meet ups, masterclasses and hackathons
- incubator and accelerator programs for start up businesses
- business ideas competitions, workshops, mentoring and accelerator programs for young entrepreneurs
- small business and entrepreneurial support services and mentoring
- co-working spaces
- fabrication laboratories for prototyping
- technology parks for emerging and existing digital technology-based enterprises.



INNOVATION IN PRACTICE

Education

The **Ballarat Tech School** is a centre of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) excellence that engages students from across Ballarat and region in a high-tech learning environment. Innovative learning programs challenge students to solve problems in a real-world context, using critical and creative thinking, communication and use of technology.

Federation University Australia is located in Ballarat and offers certificate, graduate and post-graduate training and research in science, engineering, information technology and business disciplines, including entrepreneurship.

Upstart offers entrepreneurship educational programs for young people, educators and the business community to equip young people with transferable enterprise skills - problem solving, creative and critical thinking, communication, leadership and teamwork - for jobs of the future.

Start Up Community Support

StartUp Ballarat is a program managed by the City of Ballarat and supported by the State Government (Launch Vic). It provides a series of coworking days, meetups, masterclasses in design thinking and internet of things and other opportunities such as hackathons to introduce community members to other like-minded people, provide them with an opportunity to make new business connections and equip them with skills and knowledge to take their idea to the next stage.

Co-Working Spaces

There are four co-working spaces in Ballarat. They are complementary, with each having a slightly different focus:

- **Platypus CoWorking** offers a range of private and open plan spaces, with flexible lease options starting from one day casual use.
- **Runway Ballarat** offers private and open plan spaces on a medium-term lease period.
- **Ballarat Business Centre** has premises where tenants are provided with their own ongoing workspace to grow their business, whilst the Centre provides a range of support services and networking opportunities.
- **Armstrong House** offers serviced and shared office space and meeting rooms

Incubator and Accelerator Programs

Customised experiential learning programs for entrepreneurs are offered by **Runway Ballarat**, who are funded by the State Government. These include incubator programs to assist in refining an idea and developing it to a business concept, as well as an intensive 6-month accelerator program to launch an early-stage start up business.

The **Upstart Challenge**, also located at Runway Ballarat, is a business ideas competition, mentoring and accelerator program for young entrepreneurs to kickstart their inner changemaker and explore business startup as a viable career opportunity.

Small business and Entrepreneurial Support Services and Mentoring

Commerce Ballarat is a local independent business group supported by City of Ballarat. They provide business development, networking and training events, as well as holding a business conference and business awards annually.

The **State Government** provides a range of low-cost or free resources, services and events to support small businesses at all stages of their lifecycles. This includes small business mentoring, the Small Business Bus, the Victorian Small Business Commissioner, a range of workshops, on-line templates and more. For more, please visit www.business.vic.gov.au

Entrepreneurship Facilitators provide a range of no-cost services, including information, advice and tailored mentoring about starting and running a business.

Fabrication Laboratories ('Fab Labs')

Runway Ballarat boasts Victoria's only Fab Foundation Fabrication Laboratory, where innovators can access the latest technology to take their ideas from concept to reality.

In addition, **Eurekative** assist with prototyping, as well as providing the general community with access to education and technical equipment to develop their science, technology, engineering and mathematical skills, at the **Ballarat Hackerspace** - a community-run space where members can pursue and learn activities such as 3D printing, electronics and programming.

Ballarat Technology Parks

Federation University Australia operates two technology parks in Ballarat, designed to encourage and support the development of emerging and existing enterprises, principally in the information and communications technology sector.



Commerce Ballarat
Your partner in business

