

8 October 2021

**Committee for Melbourne welcomes planned return of international students: now let's make them feel welcome**

Committee for Melbourne (the Committee) applauds today's State Government announcement to welcome back international students, under the Victorian Government's Student Arrivals Plan. The arrival of international students by the end of this year is vital for Victoria's economic recovery.

Martine Letts, CEO, Committee for Melbourne said "international students have contributed to Melbourne's transformation into a truly global city. They will play a significant role in helping Melbourne emerge from the COVID-19 crisis".

"International students have brought vibrancy to Melbourne and Victoria, making us highly liveable and attractive for businesses and enriching our communities. However, we are playing catch up and must bring international students back at scale, safely, quickly and efficiently," said Ms Letts.

We need collaboration between State and Federal Governments, industry and community to bring back students and to re-energise the pipeline of talent they provide to our community.

In May, the Committee submitted a three-step approach to government for the return of international students:

**Step one** is the urgent establishment of a robust, dedicated quarantine system, including consideration of a specific hotel quarantine facility. We are pleased to see work on the Mickleham Quarantine Facility progressing and are aware that government is working on it.

**Step two** is to engage with the community on the importance of Victoria's international education sector. It is not difficult to highlight the contribution international students make to our community. Melbourne's reputation for hospitality would be enhanced by greater inclusivity and the provision of a safe, welcoming environment.

**Step three** is to work more closely with relevant industry and community bodies to provide an experience which is even better than that experienced by students before the pandemic.

Melbourne continues to be a most attractive international student city as we emerge from the crisis. Our great strengths have not changed. We offer a world-class education system, an enviable lifestyle, a multicultural society.

However, local international education providers and policymakers need to work hard to make up for lost time and rebuild our competitiveness.

We can start by making the students welcome and making their return as smooth as possible.

– ENDS –

Martine Letts, Committee for Melbourne, CEO, is available for interview.

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**ABOUT COMMITTEE FOR MELBOURNE**

Committee for Melbourne (the Committee) works towards shaping a better future for Greater Melbourne. Together with our members, we make a difference by challenging the status quo and encouraging thought leadership to create change through confident and influential advocacy.

With over 150 member organisations drawn from across Greater Melbourne's major corporations, small and medium businesses, academic institutions, local government and not-for-profit entities, the Committee is an active connector.

The Committee's work embraces four key pillars: Future Economy, Infrastructure, Urban Optimisation and Liveability. Working with, and on behalf of our members, the Committee aims to ensure Melbourne's challenges and opportunities are addressed in ways that keep our city vital, inclusive, progressive and sustainable.

**The Committee is a proud supporter of the Melbourne International Student Week coming In May 2022.**

For more information on the Committee's Road to Recovery agenda, click [here](#).