

Business Plan 2024 Executive Summary

The University of the 3rd Age movement started in France at the Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Toulouse in 1973 by Prof. Pierre Vella. In Australia, it began in Melbourne in 1984.

Who We Are

U3A Colac Otway (U3ACO) was established in 2005. As of 31 December 2023, we had 251 members. We are an incorporated entity that is fully autonomous, self-supporting and a voluntary organisation which seeks to:

- establish and maintain educational, cultural and physical health programmes
- provide a creative use of leisure time to minimise any sense of social isolation
- broaden our intellectual horizons irrespective of educational background and
- become a model for inclusiveness and equality amongst women and men to strengthen and enhance our sense of identity as members of our local U3A

According to 2021 census figures published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, there are 5,347 citizens of Colac Otway Shire aged 50 and above in both the 3249 and 3250 postcodes which includes both Colac and Elliminyt. The total population of the Shire at the time of the 2021 Census, is 22,423. This represents an increase in total population of 1,457 compared to the 2016 Census.

U3ACO is an Organisation of Volunteers

- From 1 January 2023 to 31 December 2023 all Activity Leaders and Volunteers contributed a total of 3,972 hours for the operation of U3ACO
- This represents a total value to the local community of \$186,366.24 (based on an hourly rate of \$46.92 as indicated by Volunteering Victoria's current 2024 valuation)

What We Do

With a significant proportion of people aged 50 and over, within the Colac Otway Shire, our U3A offers the following groupings of courses and activities to enhance our Members enjoyment of life and promotion of intellectual stimulation:

- Arts & Crafts
- Brain Food
- Health & Wellbeing

- Languages
- Music
- Social Involvement
- Technology

In all, there are 52 regular courses through the year and short courses such as 1 day excursions to art exhibitions, industry visits and other cultural experiences. There are at least 4 classes of computer short courses, photography skills, Tai Chi and Line Dancing to name only a few. Delivering these we have 37 activity leaders or co-ordinators.

Typically there are between 7 and 11 classes operating each week day. There are also 10 further courses or activities which are planned but yet to be delivered.

- 18 classes are weekly
- 13 classes are monthly
- 3 are twice a month
- 16 are regular but unscheduled

U3ACO frames our membership, courses and activities around these core organisational values:

- Adaptability - We seek to provide an engaging and positive experience for all stakeholders
- Commitment - we seek to operate in with the highest standards in all relationships and provide a variety of courses and activities for members
- Friendly interaction - we aim for members of all backgrounds and cultures to enjoy their membership
- Fun learning environment - we encourage life-long learning through the development of knowledge and skills in a social environment

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