



# ANNUAL REPORT

2021-22

# CERES









# OUR VISION

A world where people have fallen in love with the Earth.

CERES is an environmental education centre, urban farm and social enterprise hub consisting of four locations, linked by the Merri and Darebin Creeks on Wurundjeri Country, Melbourne.

Although we are grounded in our local places, our work spreads out across Victoria and Australia, and our stories are global in nature.

At the deepest level of all our work is a desire to counter the prevailing story of separation with stories of connectedness and love. Through experiences of participation and belonging, we are reminded of our fundamental connection with the human and ecological systems that sustain us.

And from that realisation of connection, we are able to find meaning and purpose in service of others and the Earth.

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*We acknowledge the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people as the traditional custodians of the land on which CERES stands. We pay our respect to Elders, past, present and future. We honour their leadership in caring for Country and support their rights to continue to do so.*

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*We acknowledge that we are facing a climate and ecological crisis, and we are grateful to all those who are working to protect our Earth and our future.*



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# CHAIR

In last year's annual report I argued that in the face of the global pandemic, CERES had demonstrated resilience and tenacity, alongside a focus on renewal.

In the last twelve months we have been forced to draw upon all three characteristics. COVID has continued to challenge the board, management, staff and volunteers. The pandemic has affected our capacity to deliver our full range of programs and activities and has directly led to a disappointing financial result. The reality is that the pandemic is not over and that as a result we will continue to be challenged financially.

While we have understandably been focused on the financial bottom line, the last year has also demonstrated CERES' capacity to regenerate and renew. The clearest sign of this renewal was the celebration marking the opening of the revitalised community gardens. The revitalisation process had taken many years but the worth of the investment of many hours by gardeners and staff is plain to see.

We have also renewed our governance arrangements and made the shift to being a company limited by guarantee. The support of members for this change is appreciated and it has already led to improved governance practices.

I would like to pay tribute to board members for their voluntary and

invaluable contribution to CERES, particularly Deputy Chair, Nicole Baker and Treasurer, Tom Dobson. Two board members are stepping down and they merit particular acknowledgment. Rod Duncan's active engagement, in particular drawing upon his professional expertise in planning matters, has been noteworthy. I particularly thank him for his time as Deputy Chair. Tony Marjoram's contribution, drawing upon his many years of experience in tackling climate change, has also been noteworthy and I appreciated his service as Board Secretary.

Last year I described Cinnamon Evans, our CEO, as a practical visionary. She has a remarkable capacity to set a vision which is exciting and inspiring, and to lay out the steps needed to realise this vision. She leads a dedicated and skillful team of staff and volunteers. The board particularly appreciates the professionalism of Chief Financial Officer, Nicolas Porter.

As we move into our second 40 years I am confident about CERES' future, notwithstanding our financial challenges. Our collective vision remains relevant and exciting.

**Andrew Hewett,**  
**CERES Chairperson**

While we have understandably been focused on the financial bottom line, the last year has also demonstrated CERES' capacity to regenerate and renew.





# CEO

As we all continue to adapt to the world changing around us, CERES appears constant and timeless. For 40 years the CERES Park has been a refuge for the bodies, minds and hearts of the people and creatures of the Earth.

Yet like any system, CERES is also changing and responding to influences both intrinsic and extrinsic. Over the last few years the composition of our activities has been dramatically altered, and we are still searching for a new stability, while at the same time seeking to increase our reach and impact.

The context of our times has provoked deep inquiry into our theory of change, and from this process we have found new ways to explain what we do and why it is important.

We invite participation and belonging to people and place through welcoming people to the CERES Park in Brunswick East and Joe's Garden in Coburg.

We facilitate discovery and learning that responds to the climate and ecological crisis through our School of Nature and Climate.

We demonstrate and invite participation in regenerative urban farming through our organic urban farms.

We make locally and ethically produced goods available to our community through our social enterprises.

We share stories of change and hope to inspire others on the journey.

Our overarching intention is that through involvement with CERES, people feel part of something bigger, understand how to lead change, develop skills in food production, live within thriving local economies, and have empathy for each other and the Earth.

I hope that in these times of change, being part of the CERES community can help us all understand our lives within the context of the human and ecological systems that sustain us, and find meaning and purpose in service of others and the Earth.

Thank you to all our community, visitors, members, volunteers, partners, supporters, staff, managers and board members for your constant support.

**Cinnamon Evans,  
CERES CEO**



## This year:

**534,521** ↑17%

interacted with CERES at one of our locations, or were visited by CERES.

**1,048,688** ↑6%

interacted with CERES online.

**1,583,209** ↑7%

were reached in total.



# HOME

This year:

**1,290** **↑5%**

bought or renewed  
their membership.

**936** **↑106%**


volunteered in gardens  
and maintenance.

**9,410** **↑54%**

visited for room hire  
and CERES events.







## We invite participation and belonging to people and place through welcoming people to the CERES Park in Brunswick East and Joe's Garden in Coburg.

Although CERES grew up from the first seed planted into the soil at Brunswick East, for some time we have reached far beyond it. With physical locations across the north of Melbourne and programs run across Victoria, this year we grappled with what it means to create a sense of “home” when we have multiple homes.

How do we create a sense of belonging for all the different communities we reach? How can the lessons we've learnt from 40 years in deep relationship with one specific place, be applied beyond that place and have relevance to other communities?

In amongst tidying the gardens, sweeping the floors and feeding the chooks, we've been reviewing the household chores and responsibilities of our people so that we may better welcome everyone who crosses a threshold into our home, whether that is via the front gate, the back door or the sneaky side entrance.

We want everyone to feel welcome.

**Cass Froese,**  
**Visitor Experience Director**

**Nick Curmi,**  
**Natural and Built Environment Director**





# NATURAL

Our Garden Team uses permaculture principles in the design of the gardens, which consist of a combination of indigenous, native and culinary plants. The team is also responsible for the management and maintenance of several energy, water and waste systems such as composting, worm farms and irrigation.

## This year, we:

**Expanded our closed loop systems with the extension of several Hugelkultur (raised garden bed) terraces** throughout the CERES Park.

All of the 'green waste' accumulated throughout the CERES gardens is either fed to our chickens or added to our Hugelkultur systems where it slowly breaks down to form part of the soil profile throughout the Park.

**Composted up to 4 cubic metres of ground coffee every fortnight,** collected from Melbourne cafes by a local composting hero organisation.

**Employed our first Parks and Gardens apprentice.**

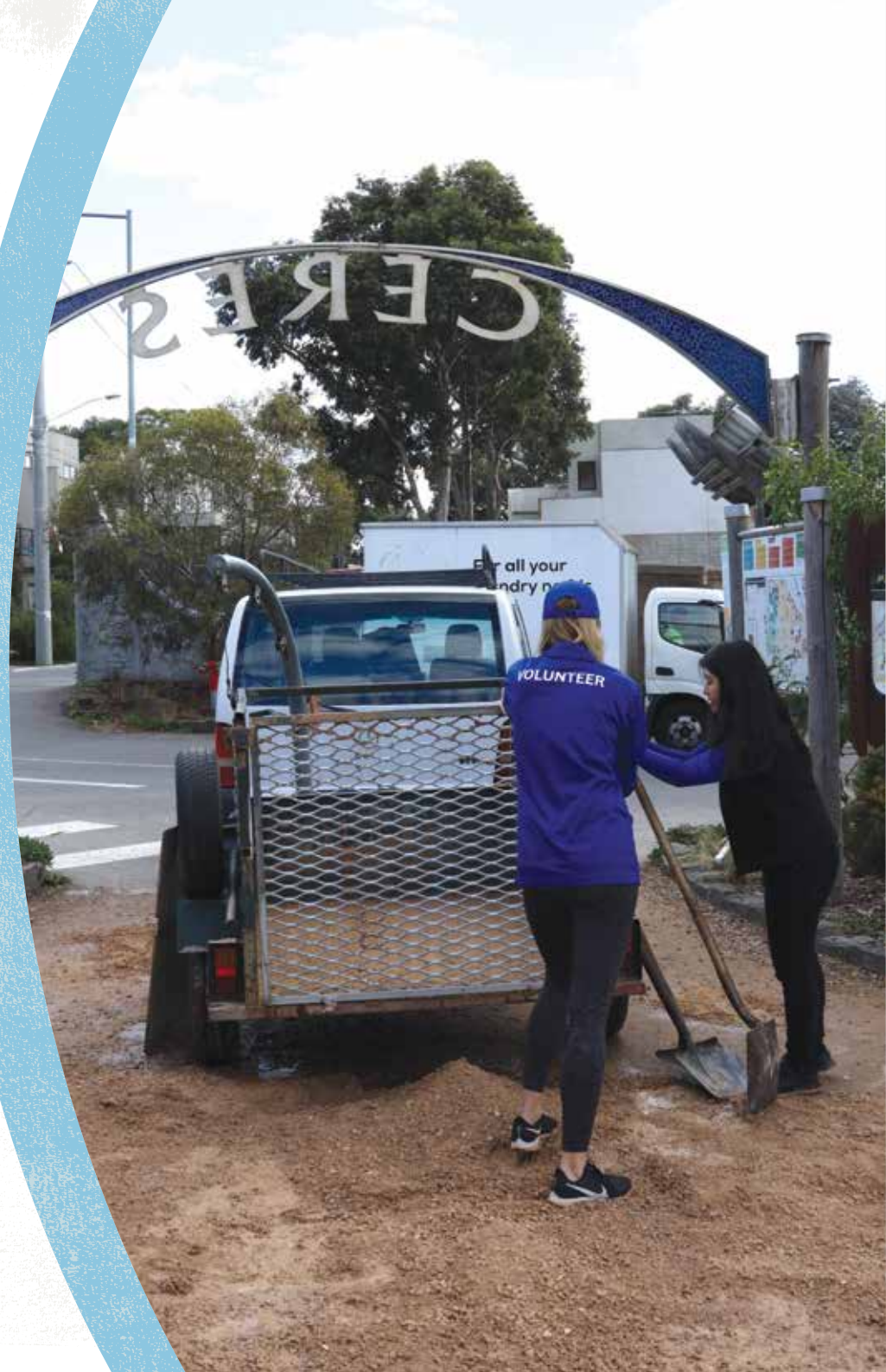
# BUILT

Our Natural and Built Environment Team maintains the 'ruggedness' and uniqueness of the Park while also ensuring the safety and inspiration of our visitors. We design and implement sustainable technology demonstrations in energy, waste and water, repair and maintain buildings, and manage hard landscaping works and waste. Capital works projects are undertaken throughout the year to ensure vital upgrades are completed across the Park.

## This year, we:

**Cut the gas off in our Learning Centre** and replaced all the gas appliances with electric ones, enabling the Learning Centre to be more sustainable overall.

**Sadly said goodbye to the building that housed our team and volunteers** after it was burned down in an arson incident. It was a much-loved space that was built entirely by volunteers, and although insured, was irreplaceable.





# VENUES

The Venue Operations Team coordinates the hire of all venues at CERES and supports the planning and delivery of CERES festivals and events.

As restrictions to meeting-in-person were gradually removed at the end of 2021, we welcomed many groups wishing to return to in-person events in the Park. CERES once again hosts visitors and community members in COVID-safe spaces, providing a wonderful opportunity for the community to connect again.

## This year, we:

**Hosted nine outdoor end of year gatherings** which saw a 2 week period of festivities in the Village Pavilion, creating a warm and welcoming place for celebration and connection.

**Engaged with community hirers** and developed opportunities for them to hold outdoor dance classes, small music performances and mindfulness training.

# SITE GROUPS

Our Park is home to many groups who use spaces to offer classes, skill development, resource sharing and community connections. All these organisations and regular gatherings add to the diversity and complexity of our organisation, though it was difficult for many of these groups to meet in person this year.

Resident groups include:

Bee Group  
The Bike Shed  
Chook Group  
Community Garden Group  
Melbourne Zen Group  
Moreland LETS  
Sophia's Spring  
SOTEMS  
Aozora Shokudo Japanese classes  
Makers & Flea Market  
Rhythm Tree Family Music classes  
Melbourne Insight Meditation Group  
Shambhala Meditation

# VOLUNTEERS

CERES relies on the love and energy of a community of volunteers who work individually and in groups across many aspects of our operations.

For six months of the year CERES had no volunteers but as soon as restrictions eased we were swamped with people wanting to help out and had to cap numbers! Large corporate groups were able to help out again in autumn with a long list of jobs that had accumulated during lockdowns.

## This year, our volunteers:

**Populated dozens of pages** on the new website including sorting through hundreds of blog articles.

**Turned compost and dug gardens** including in the new Honey Lane beds.

**Fulfilled essential governance roles** through membership of the CERES Board, Board Executive, Finance Audit & Risk Committee, Impact Committee and Strategy Working Group.

“I loved that there was a mixture of generations at CERES, from the visitors to the volunteers. It was great seeing everyone keen to learn and benefit from sustainable practices.”

*Henry Pickering, corporate volunteer*



# SCHOOLS



## This year:

**61,599** ↑41%

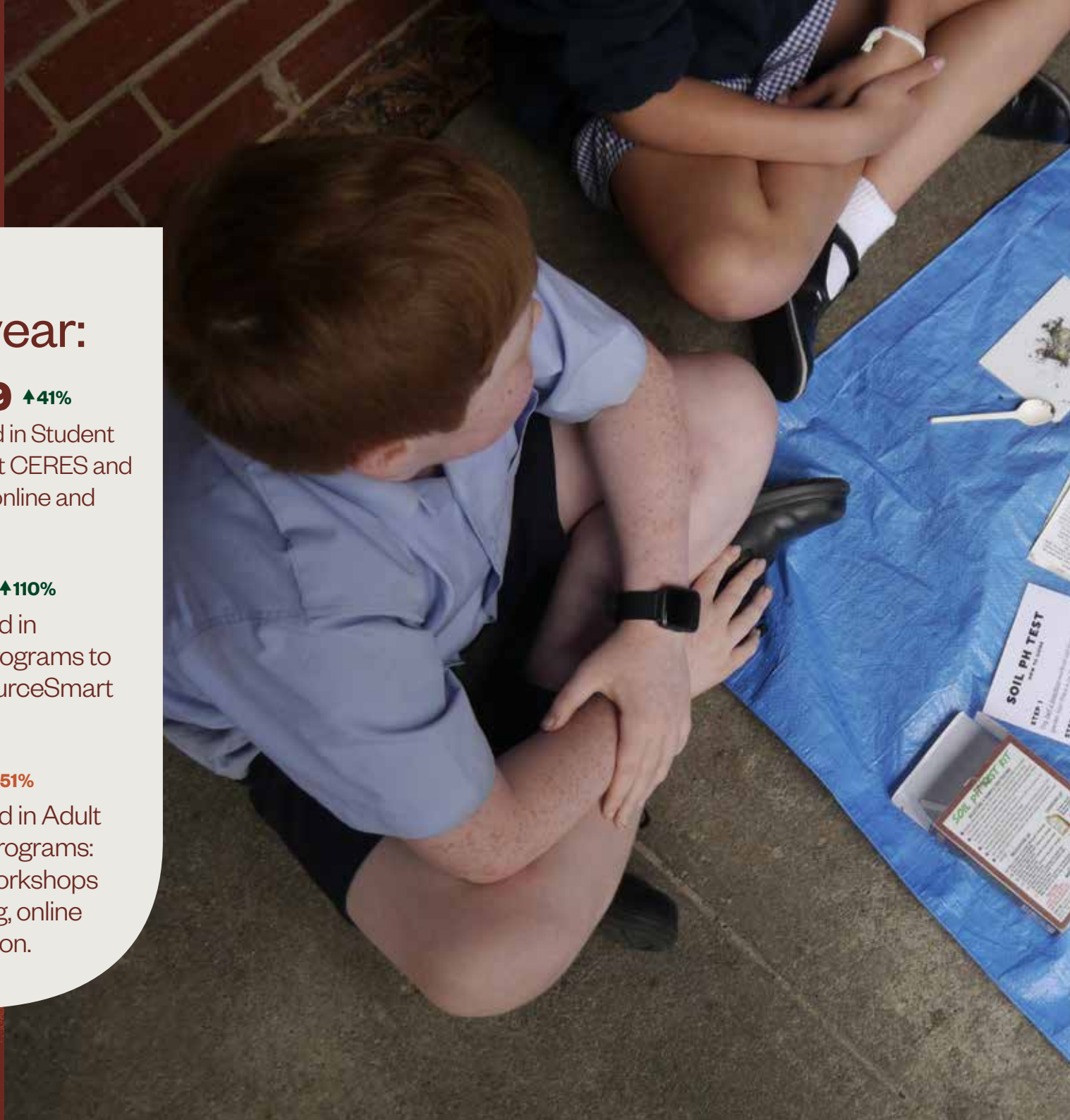
participated in Student Programs at CERES and in schools, online and in person.

**4,596** ↑110%


participated in Teacher Programs to build ResourceSmart Schools.

**1,091** ↓51%

participated in Adult Learning Programs: courses, workshops and training, online and in person.







## We facilitate discovery and learning that responds to the climate and ecological crisis through our School of Nature and Climate.

After a challenging year with no school visits and curating content to keep students engaged via online learning, seeing school kids stepping off the bus at our Brunswick East Park after such a long hiatus was pure joy.

It was wonderful to see staff and students get their groove back, and we connected to nature together - learning from the 'third teacher' - the environment. Students learnt about climate action and food systems, immersed themselves in Indigenous perspectives and built skills in permaculture and regenerative practices.

The challenges of previous years have meant that online learning is now built into our programs, catering to students of all ages. The flexibility is welcomed and it remains an important aspect of our program offering.

We've also honed our learning themes in response to the ecological and climate crisis. Our programs create impact and learning in climate change, culture and community, food systems, systems change, regenerative living and nature connection. Through our programs we aim to build community resilience and empower others to be agents of change

in their lives, communities and the larger systems that govern us.

**Lorna Pettifer,**  
**Learning Innovation Director**





# STUDENT PROGRAMS

Through experiences in our Park and activities in school and online, the Student Programs Team nurtures a love for nature and appreciation of cultures. By engaging hearts, minds and hands we support students to feel empowered, be more resilient in times of crisis and effect positive change.

Student Program activities continue to have a positive impact on our environment by regenerating land and enriching biodiversity. Our Indigenous Perspectives program shares Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung culture through Connection to Country programs and practices.

## This year, we:

**Delivered a multi-school, council funded Leadership Summit**, connecting more than 70 students from 7 schools in the Greater Dandenong Region who discovered ways to advocate for change within society, including through their school and local council.

**Delivered a week long experiential learning program** for year 10 - 11 students. Working with educators at CERES Brunswick East, Joe's Garden and Merri Creek Management Committee, students gained a deeper understanding

of themselves and their surrounding environment.

**Continued to support remote schools** through our online offerings and deep learning program, Schools for Wildlife.

# TEACHER PROGRAMS

Teacher Programs delivers sustainability education to over 200 schools and 17 early childhood centres primarily through the ResourceSmart Schools (RSS) program.

We support schools to minimise waste, save energy and water, improve biodiversity on their school grounds, and cut greenhouse gas emissions. The RSS framework helps guide schools to develop a 'whole school approach to sustainability, weaving it into the fabric of everyday school and community life. It integrates educational, environmental, social and economic outcomes so that schools do not work with each area in isolation but as components of the bigger picture of sustainability.

## This year, we:

**Maintained the active participation of over 192 schools** in the ResourceSmart Schools program.

**Launched the new online system for ResourceSmart Schools** and supported hundreds of teachers with navigating the transition. The new platform is now proving to make it easier to participate in the RSS program.

**Created new on-demand professional learning workshops** available for schools and community groups, topics include Urban Farming, The Outdoor Classroom, Creating and Implementing a Zero Waste Policy, Green Jobs and Nature Play.

**Celebrated the ResourceSmart School Awards** with 15 schools winning in multiple different categories.





# ADULT LEARNING

Our Adult Learning programs create opportunities for people to connect with nature and themselves, learn about sustainable agriculture, permaculture, horticultural therapy and environmental education, and improve their skills to live more sustainably. Our programs create pathways for employment and further education and foster a connected learning community.

This year saw learners back at CERES to complete practical components of courses run online. Adult Programs continued to deliver regular workshops and courses in person, online and with new options to enable people to learn at their own pace.

## This year, we:

**Launched on-demand courses**, enabling people to learn online at their own pace from anywhere in the world.

**Celebrated the graduation of 32 people** from the inaugural year-long Nature-Based Leadership Training, and commenced the second year with another booked-out program.

**Collaborated with Mutti Mutti Woman Annabelle Sharman** to deliver our first 'Spirit Cloth' workshop at CERES.

**Ran our first Weaving and Living on Country workshops** in Arnhem Land since 2019, connecting 30 participants with First Nations elders on their traditional homelands.

“Everything we learnt was relevant to being able to practice therapeutic horticulture. Absolutely loved each of the guest speakers we had... Each week I left full of enthusiasm and new knowledge.”

*April - Introduction to Therapeutic Horticulture participant*





# FARM



## This year:

**28,403** ↑13%

visited Joe's Market  
Garden for farm  
gate sales.

**3,205** ↑1%


ordered Joe's Market  
Garden produce.

**135** ↓27%

volunteered at  
Honey Lane and  
Joe's Market Garden.







## We demonstrate and invite participation in regenerative urban farming through our organic urban farms.

Farm-life is never easy. We are at the whim of the weather, creatively trying to combat pests, and forever toiling to keep up with demand. The impact of climate change will increase the pressures we face - but we just love our work. There is joy in knowing we are regenerating, nourishing and stewarding the land and the more-than-human world that depends on it.

While daily farming life continued through the seasons, disruptions due to restrictions on groups numbers and hence volunteers meant less people visiting and tending to our farms.

As our farmers started welcoming back visitors and students eager to learn about permaculture principles, regenerative practices, chook care and composting, they remembered the joy of sharing their expertise and knowledge, the bustle of groups of corporate volunteers in the farm and watched proudly as a student tended the harvest or learnt a new skill. Yes, the produce grew on those quiet lockdown days, but now with our reopened lives - and more importantly, our reopened community - we grow and share together!

**Melissa Lawson,**  
**Food Systems and Engagement Director**





# HONEY LANE ORGANIC FARM

Covering around a quarter of the footprint of the CERES Park, we aim to demonstrate how urban city farms contribute to the local economy by providing an ethical marketplace, employment and opportunities for farmers, producers, teachers and food workers in an environment where we can celebrate the harvest.

## This year, we:

**Traded some of our food growing garden bed space for beauty** and planted out zinnias, dahlias, cosmos and other flowering plants to sell as cut flowers.

**Started planning for a renewal to make the farm more productive** and more accessible.

**Sold 302 mixed bouquets** of flowers.

**Harvested 627 bunches** of carrots.

**Sold 39,156 eggs** through the Grocery, laid by our flock of chickens.

**Propagated 21,360 punnets** of vegetable seedlings to be sold through the Nursery.

“I always feel “at peace”, and “at home” when I spend time at CERES. Thank you for making the spaces available, and the maintenance, events, and permaculture you make available to everyone.”

*Jessica*





# JOE'S MARKET GARDEN

CERES Joe's Market Garden (Joe's) is a one hectare market garden located in Coburg, beside the Merri Creek. Joe's has been continuously farmed for the past 150 years, and grows produce for Fair Food and the Merri Cafe with the support of volunteers. We operate a popular farm gate stall, cafe and hosts special events and workshops.

## This year, we:

**Sold over 1000 bunches of flowers** at the farmgate and 1500 bunches of flowers wholesale.

**Set up a coffee caravan** and painted it with a colourful mural.

# MICRO GREENS

CERES Microgreens is a vertical urban farm producing certified-organic sprouts for wholesale and retail, as well as a training program for microgreen farmers. Based in Preston with the CERES Fair Food warehouse, we produce certified-organic sprouts for wholesale and retail, as well as a training program for up and coming urban farmers.

## This year, we:

**Prepared to move to Brunswick East** with support from the Farm Appeal.

**Started working on a virtual 3D model** of the new demonstration farm. This model will allow students and farms to explore the farm online and learn about our high-yield, resource-efficient salad cropping system.

# COMMUNITY GARDEN

The CERES Community Garden was one of the first projects at CERES, and for 40 years it has played a key role in educating people about localised urban food growing. The new garden was launched in March and is a beautiful, abundant and creative space. The gardeners have reported significant improvements in practical access along with more engagement with the CERES community through the new, open design.

## This year, we:

**Launched the new garden as part of Harvest Festival**, with local Member of Parliament and the Mayor of Merri-bek Council in attendance.

**Welcome 56 returning and new Gardeners** to the newly-built space and provided with seedlings to help everyone get started.

# 3000 ACRES

3000acres was founded in 2014 with a mission to create a social movement around food growing that strengthens our food system and builds community connection. Today, 3000acres is a regular go-to for local governments and other organisations seeking a reliable partner to deliver inclusive and vibrant community programs. Joining the CERES family of social enterprises in 2022, CERES 3000acres continues to engage with communities through urban harvest activities and local food programs.





# MARKET

This year:

**1,191** ↑89%

ordered sustainably  
sourced timber from  
Fair Wood.

**69,252** ↓19%

ordered groceries  
from Fair Food.

**211,391** ↓8%

bought organic  
groceries from the  
Grocery & Cafe.

**102,246** ↓59%

had an organic lunch  
at Merri Cafe.

**40,705** ↓4%

bought garden supplies  
and plants from the  
Nursery.







We make locally and ethically produced goods available to our community through our social enterprises.

Last year highlighted the value of diversity in the CERES system as a whole, which meant that we could lean on some parts of our system while others had to take a break and recharge. This is still one of our main strengths, as well as diversity of our community, our talents, our offerings, and our staff.

This past year has been about CERES social enterprises finding our feet coming out of COVID, in what many in our sector discovered to be the pandemic's toughest year.

CERES enterprises that had boomed through 2020 and 2021, particularly Fair Food, Grocery and Joe's Garden adjusted back to pre-pandemic levels of trade in 2022.

After a stop-start first half of the financial year the Nursery came back as strong as ever while The Merri Café burst out of COVID with a tight team and a growing customer following.

New enterprises such as the Bakery and Fair Wood have continued to grow with Fair Wood completing CERES' first enterprise acquisition of ReBoxCo, a recycled timber fabricator.

With a challenging economic environment ahead, CERES social enterprises will continue to draw on our ingenuity, our resilience and our community to keep building a vibrant local economy.

**Chris Ennis,**  
**CERES Business Innovation Director**





# FAIR FOOD

CERES Fair Food delivers organic groceries to households across Melbourne, sourced from over 150 farmers and ethical grocery makers. Together we support regenerative farming practices, provide employment and career pathways for new migrants, and return profits to support vital CERES programs.

CERES Fair Food had all systems in place to deal comfortably with extended lockdowns in the first half of the financial year 2021-2022. We continued to take care of workers, producers, and customers in this busy and unpredictable environment, and extend this impact across our community.

## This year, we:

**Filled numerous staff shortages with staff from other areas** of CERES including the CEO, alongside other staff's teenage kids packing grapes and sorting green beans.

**Donated \$10,000 to Open Table**, our Pay It Forward partner, on behalf of our customers and in place of our traditional customer Christmas gift.

**Updated our online store with professional photography** and styling,

greatly improving the look, feel and consistency of our customer's online experience.

**Included bread from CERES Organic Bakery in our online product range**, which swiftly became some of our top selling loaves.

“I've been visiting CERES for at least 30 years, mainly just for some respite when the urban vibe gets too much. I've been a regular visitor to the Nursery - sometimes to buy gardening supplies but sometimes just to enjoy the layout and get ideas.”

*Brigida*





# FAIR WOOD

CERES Fair Wood connects Australian farm foresters and saw-millers with socially and environmentally conscious consumers, and educates on sourcing ecologically sustainable and ethically sourced timber.

## This year, we:

**Acquired ReBoxCo**, a local business creating new street furniture and planter boxes from wooden pallets and other materials that would otherwise go to landfill.

**Expanded Carpentry from one person to a team of four**, greatly increasing our capacity to provide expert carpentry services using ethical timber.

**Investigated more salvaging opportunities** in response to climate change, such as storm-fallen timber.

**Doubled our customer base**, growing from 600 orders to just under 1200.

# NURSERY

As a permaculture nursery our aim is to encourage backyard food production. Providing organically-grown vegetable seedlings and a vast range of natives and edibles, the Nursery provides knowledge and support for customers to create their own beautiful, healthy and productive gardens.

The Nursery oscillated between in store and online sales for the first few months of the financial year and re-opened to in-store customers in November 2021.

## This year, we:

**Expanded our bookstore and indoor plant section**, adding extensive shelving and browsing space to house our popular and ever growing bespoke selection of books.

**Welcomed Gardening Australia for a day** to film a “potted food forest” segment highlighting the abundance and diversity of our plant range.

**Sold 90,000 punnets** of vegetable and flower seedlings.

# MERRI CAFE

The Merri Cafe provides seasonal, organic and low mileage food to our customers. Working closely with CERES farmers, the Merri Cafe features weekly specials that include produce grown at Honey Lane Market Garden and Joe's Market Garden.

The Merri Cafe was closed due to prolonged lockdowns for much of 2021 - operating a takeaway service only. We re-opened for indoor dining in early 2022.

## This year, we:

**Introduced a QR code ordering system**, alleviating queues at the counter and allowing for more efficient service.

**Hosted a Harvest dinner** with 60 very happy guests enjoying a farm to table experience.

**Worked with the Honey Lane farm team** to tailor which vegetables and herbs to grow for inclusion on the Merri menu.

**Began using wild greens such as nettle and warrigal greens** from the grounds of CERES in our spanakopita.

# GROCERY BAKERY & CAFE

From the heart of the CERES Park, the Grocery provides local, organic and ethical produce and groceries. With wide open doors that connect visitors to the Isa Brown chickens and Honey Lane Organic Farm, and fresh coffee and food, we offer an opportunity to connect with each other and the Earth whilst shopping sustainably.

## This year, we:

**Continued to provide personal shopping** options for those who were unable to shop in person.

**Reopened dining in**, enabling people to eat and drink coffee together with a beautiful farm view.

**Started baking new delicious pastries** and danishes at the Bakery.



# STORY |

This year:

**29,000** ↑10%

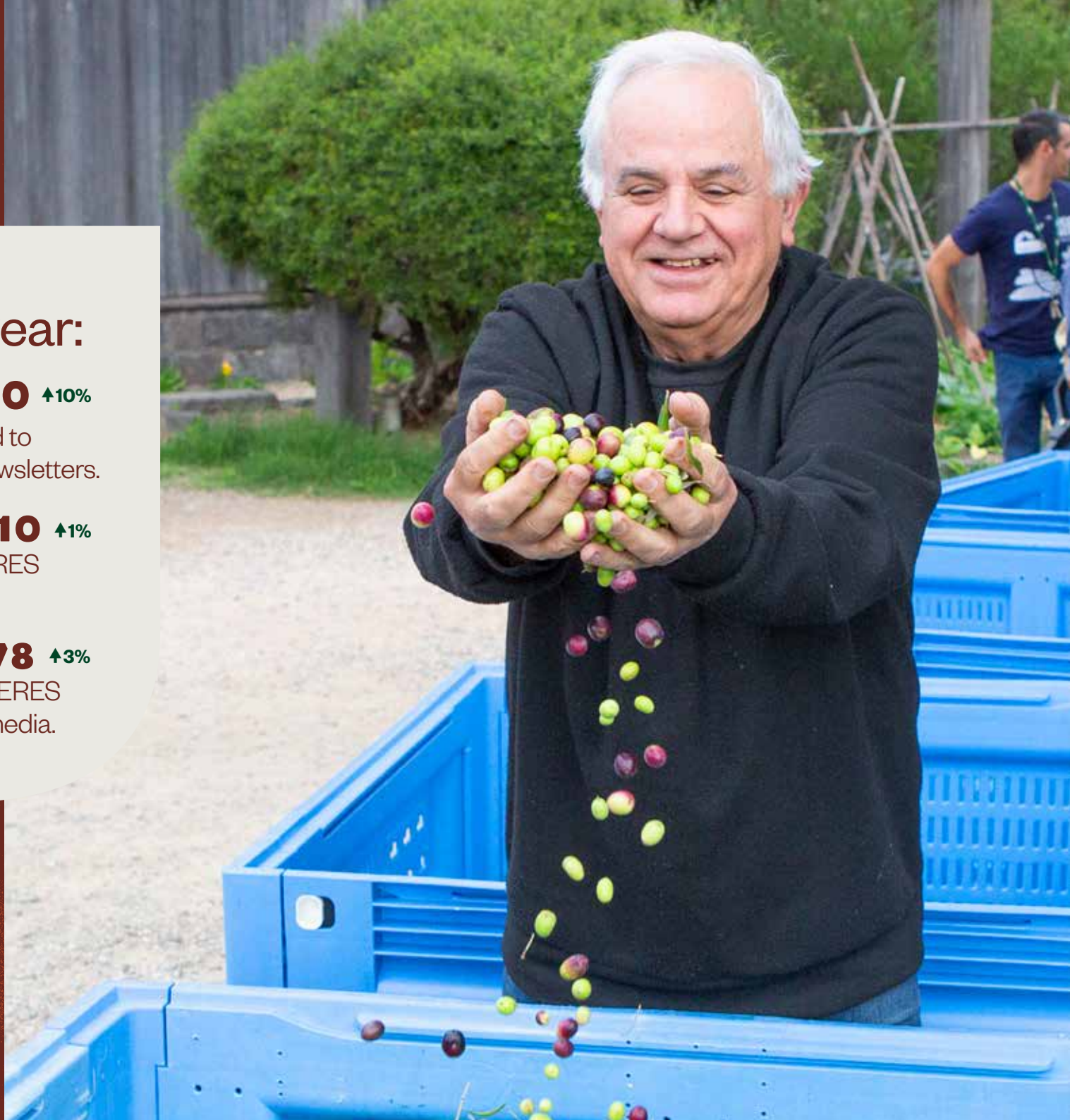
subscribed to  
CERES newsletters.

**853,010** ↑1%


visited CERES  
websites.

**166,678** ↑3%

followed CERES  
on social media.







## We share stories of change and hope to inspire others on the journey.

Wrapping around and interweaving all our work at CERES across home, school, farm and market, are stories.

We humans are storytelling organisms that both individually and collectively, lead storied lives. Stories can help orient us to ourselves, culture, nature, and the context of the times we live in. They can also transport us to a place of greater focus and vision that helps us to navigate life well, and enables us to co-author a narrative rather than being at the whim of it.

One of the central questions we aim to respond to in the stories we share is: "What are we longing for?" Rather than contributing to the ever-growing mountain of stories about what is going wrong with our world, we share stories from our experience that highlight all the ways we can write a new story of humanity that is embedded in place, located within relationships and respectful of all life.

This year we dove into some of the stories of our farm and the broader food system it's embedded within. We explored how the global economic system has separated us from where our food comes from, and eroded diverse ecosystems and cultures. And how by remembering that

we are part of nature and connected to everything around us including our food, we can create a regenerative story and a hopeful future.

**Sieta Beckwith,**  
**Narrative Director**





# COMMUNICATIONS

The Communications Team supports the good work of all the different areas of OERES with digital, design, marketing and social media expertise.

This year we worked with a design agency on a new face for the website, and launched this in June 2022. We shared dozens of photos of the last 40 years of OERES through social media and the website, supported enterprises to grow their engagement and tell their stories through web, signage and social media, and assisted with communications support for major events such as Harvest and Olives to Oil.

## This year, we:

**Worked with a group of students from the University of Melbourne** to audit social media activity and accounts.

**Saw Grace Tame, Michael Rowland and hundreds of other supporters** share, tweet, and create their own bee-related puns - for the Backyard Bee Census.





# EVENTS

Events, festivals and creative engagements are an opportunity for us to share our work with our community, to reflect on the seasons and our connection to the earth, and to celebrate together with music, colour, food and heart.

## Highlights:

**We welcomed the community to bring their olives to our Olives to Oil event for the second year in a row**, with a total of 3.5 tonnes of olives dropped off by the community across three locations in Melbourne. This haul produced 500L of delicious fruity olive oil that participants took home to enjoy.

**Harvest Day successfully went ahead in its downsized format as it did the previous year**, with over a dozen small and diverse events taking place throughout the Park. These events still capture the spirit of Harvest Festival, with activities offering cooking, dancing, singing, cultural displays and the chance to learn about, connect with and celebrate the harvest.

“One of my ‘Melbourne Happy Places’. You can always find a quiet spot to reflect, a community with which to engage, a playground for the kids or a delicious bite to eat in the cafe. CERES, you’ve been here for forever it seems, but you get better and better.”

*Laila*

# CONSULTING

Consulting is a new CERES social enterprise that works with schools, councils, local organisations, developers and place-makers to help grow communities that are strongly connected to each other and their places. Through collaborative facilitation, education and creative processes we draw on 40 years’ experience to help organisations create sustainable and connected places, communities, and a future for all..

## This year, we:

**Developed net-zero and climate positive roadmaps** to guide schools and businesses towards their goal of reducing their environmental footprint and empowering their community to take ambitious action on climate change.

**Worked with Aboriginal cultural consultation teams** to give a Woi Wurrung language name to a significant environmental, social and cultural project.

**Provided expert advice** on low-carbon living, community & cultural engagement, and social enterprise development for a residential city.

**Supported a local government** in consulting with the community and shaped an initiative for communities to connect to each other and to places in nature.





# PARTNERSHIPS

We're fortunate to have a strong network of partners, all taking an active role in delivering transformational projects for the community, building our organisational capacity and increasing our impacts.

## KEY PARTNERS

Inner North Community Foundation  
John T Reid Charitable Trusts  
Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation  
Optimising  
Perpetual  
Telematics Trust  
Google  
SENVIC  
Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic  
Schools (MACS)  
Ross Trust

## IN-KIND

Aussie Broadband  
Holding Redlich  
Noisy Beast  
Pinsent Masons  
Thornbury Picture House  
RRR  
Merri Creek Management  
Committee  
Murgo Constructions  
Jimmy Williams and Company

## STRATEGIC

Moving Feast  
Whitebox Enterprises  
Wood 4 Good  
Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural  
Heritage Aboriginal Corporation  
180 Degrees Consulting

## GOVERNMENT

Department of Jobs, Precincts  
and Regions  
Department of Education and  
Training  
Sustainability Victoria  
Parks Victoria  
Merri-bek City Council  
Darebin City Council  
Yarra City Council  
City of Whittlesea

## Highlights:

The opening of our Community Garden Renewal Project earlier this year was a significant outcome for our community gardeners and the wider CERES community. The space is transformed - more beautiful, safer, inclusive and lively.

It was a vision and collaboration with the community that took five years to realise. It wouldn't have been possible without a network of supporters including John T Reid Charitable Trust, Merri-bek Council and our community of grassroots supporters who understood and contributed to the vision.





# FUNDRAISING

We're incredibly grateful for the generosity of our major supporters in this past year.

Alongside hundreds of people making a donation while buying a workshop ticket, their Fair Food box or dining in the Merri Cafe, these supporters helped us to reach over a million people in the Backyard Bee Census and achieve our \$80k goal for our Urban Farm Renewal this year.

“I support CERES ...  
because I know we need  
to pay what it takes to  
preserve places like this  
into the future.”

*Sara*

## MAJOR SUPPORTERS

AL&T Brorsen Foundation

Alpha Magnetics Pty Ltd

Anne Coulson

Brendan Kissane and Irene  
Lawson

Chris Grose

Crina Virgona Virgona

Heather Barr

John & Marsha Merory

Josephine Barraket

Kat Brazenor

Leslie Glick KC

Lucas Turner

Lynette Moore

Michael Agar

Michael Kane

Rosaleen Conroy

Simon Watters

Tahl Kestin

Tony Morton

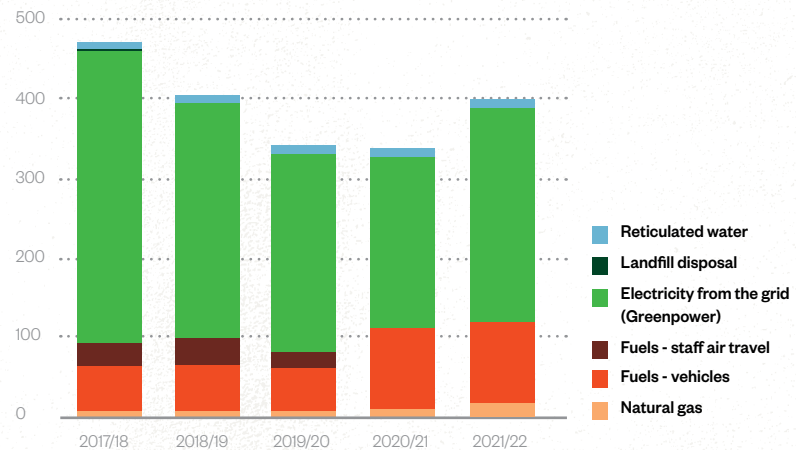


## CARBON EMISSIONS

Overall, carbon emissions have decreased by 15% since our baseline year, mostly due to increased solar capacity. To aim towards achieving zero emissions by 2025, we offset all our electricity use through purchasing greenpower. In the past 2 years, carbon emissions from vehicle fuel have increased due to the increase in deliveries by Fair Food.

We have also expanded our businesses and electricity use, e.g. Fair Wood and CERES Bakery. Fair Food in Preston has an 80kW solar array on our warehouse roof in Preston and the CERES Park in Brunswick East has a further 80kW on the roofs of numerous buildings.

Carbon Emissions (Tonnes CO2-e)

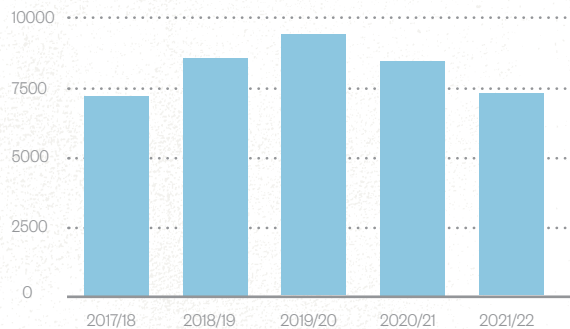




# WATER

Water use reduced this year to close to the baseline year. Joe's Garden continued to be the primary water user, with the largest crop growing area. Different rainfall averages and temperatures across the year greatly affect water use.

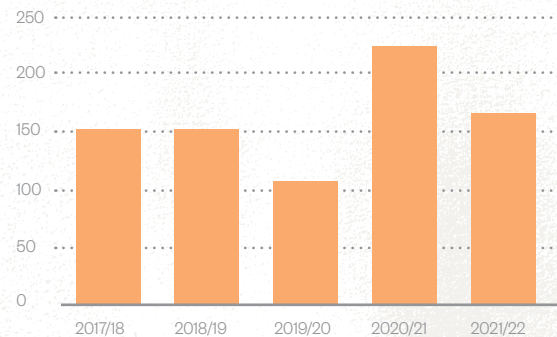
Mains water use (KL)



# WASTE

We started soft plastic recycling this year in February. All our enterprises reduced soft plastic going to landfill by minimising supplier packaging. We reinstated our policy of no take away cups at enterprises. Building projects also added to landfill where waste could not be salvaged or recycled.

Waste to landfill (tonnes)



# BIODIVERSITY















Measures taken to enhance biodiversity throughout the Park include expanding the indigenous plantings around the dam. This is an ongoing project which has already seen the bird life surrounding the dam increase along with a healthy population of pobblebonk frogs and some quite large yabbies. Throughout the year the Garden Team continued to expand the wildlife corridor between CERES and the Merri Creek. Several Pardelote and possum boxes were installed into trees throughout the Park. There is a growing number of tiger snakes and blue tongue lizards calling CERES home. The life beneath our feet is ever expanding with a visible increase in the amount of invertebrates, insects, bacteria and fungi in the soil.





## THE BOARD

CERES is a not-for-profit organisation and is managed by a voluntary Board elected from the membership. The Board appoints a CEO to oversee the activities of the organisation. CERES activities are divided into six portfolios, each with a Director and several Managers who oversee each enterprise and project.

	<b>Andrew Hewett</b> Chairperson	<b>Nicole Baker</b> Deputy Chair	<b>Sophie Newing</b> Secretary	<b>Tony Marjoram</b> Secretary	<b>Thomas Dobson</b> Treasurer	<b>Ashley Clarke</b> General Member	<b>Rodney Duncan</b> General Member	<b>Amanda Lawrence</b> General Member	<b>Emrys Nekvapil</b> General Member	<b>Giselle Pinto</b> General Member	<b>Lambros Tapinos</b> Moreland City Council Rep.	<b>Dennis Wollersheim</b> Site Group Rep.	<b>John Burne</b> Staff Rep.	<b>Cinnamon Evans</b> CEO
														
Number of meetings attended	7	7	0	6	6	3	7	3	4	2	1	1	3	7
Number of meetings held during the time the member held office	7	7	3	7	7	4	7	3	7	4	7	3	3	7
Appointed						Nov 21				Nov 21				
Resigned			Nov 21					Nov 21				Oct 21	Nov 21	





# EXECUTIVE MANAGERS

**Cinnamon Evans** Chief Executive Officer

**Sieta Beckwith** Narrative Director

**Jane Burns** Consulting Director &  
School Programs Manager

**Nick Curmi** Built & Natural  
Environment Director

**Chris Ennis** Business Innovation Director

**Cass Froese** Visitor Experience Director

**Melissa Lawson** Community Food  
Systems Director

**Lorna Pettifer** Learning Innovation  
Director

**Nicolas Porter** Chief Financial Officer

**John Burne** Infrastructure

**Luisa Cardamone** Adult Learning

**Laurel Coad** Nursery

**Emily Connors** Joe's Garden

**Hayden Cronin** Fair Wood

**Tim Dyson/Lester Rajapakse** IT

**Isabelle Fouard** Fair Food Marketing

**Cass Froese** Venue Operations  
& Events

**Wendy Grenfell** People & Culture

**Hema Gurung/Jesse Hull** Fair Food  
Operations

**Chloe Horner** School Programs

**Ben Manassah** Partnerships

**Emma McCann** Merri Cafe

**Maria McConkey** Communications

**Kate Mills** Finance

**Beck Morley/Frida Komesaroff**  
Grocery & Bakery

**Dan O'Farrell/Jess Holland** Microgreens

**Nola Pollard** Fair Food Human  
Infrastructure

**Meg Stewart** Propagation



## While CERES' overall revenue held steady year on year, our net result deteriorated dramatically.

We are disappointed with our FY22 financial result. After the challenge of the pandemic in FY20/FY21, emergence was always going to be a delicate balance and there were four key variables that further impacted our operations:

Slowing growth in CERES enterprises which had broken trading records during COVID restrictions (incl: low-touch grocery delivery and bricks & mortar essential retail which offered respite from lockdowns and stay-at-home orders)

- Sluggish recovery of some enterprises severely hampered by lockdown restrictions and in which CERES had deliberately invested significant resources to protect core delivery capability (incl: Education, Student Programs)
- Difficulty preserving employment positions that had been made possible through the Working For Victoria program
- Reduced pandemic-related Government support (incl: JobKeeper/WFV).

While CERES' overall revenue held steady year on year, our net result deteriorated dramatically to a \$231K deficit from FY21's \$618K surplus (which was boosted by JobKeeper support). Our revenue from Services grew 31.5% (+\$534K) and

almost back to pre-pandemic levels but revenue from Trade decreased by 1.7% (-\$257K). Also of concern and already receiving attention now in early FY23 was the drop in Grant related revenue (down 28%, -\$675K). We recorded a donations increase but still only 0.7% of our overall revenue which we consider too low for an organisation with our reach and reputation. The final key impact on the results was that Employee Benefits increased 5.4% (+\$442K). This is up from 41% to 44% of CERES total revenue and there is a lot of work underway to ensure this is at the right level.

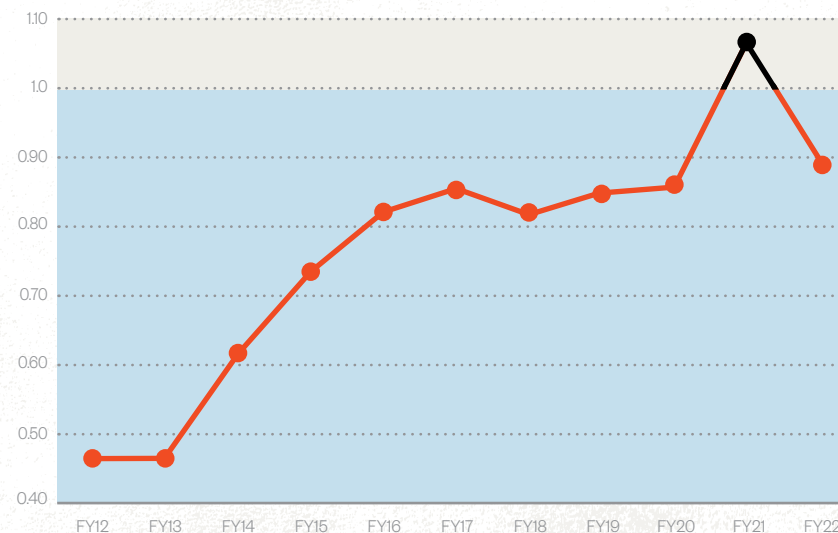
We were so proud last year that our Working Capital Ratio (proxy for the ability to cover short term liabilities) was above 1 for the first time in at least 17 years. This proved too good to last and it dipped back to 0.88 which is still a slightly better position than FY20 or FY19.

Improving our working capital position is a clear focus for FY23. CERES will also need to carefully balance our forecasts against a backdrop of continuing economic challenges faced by our customers and community

**Thomas Dobson**  
Treasurer

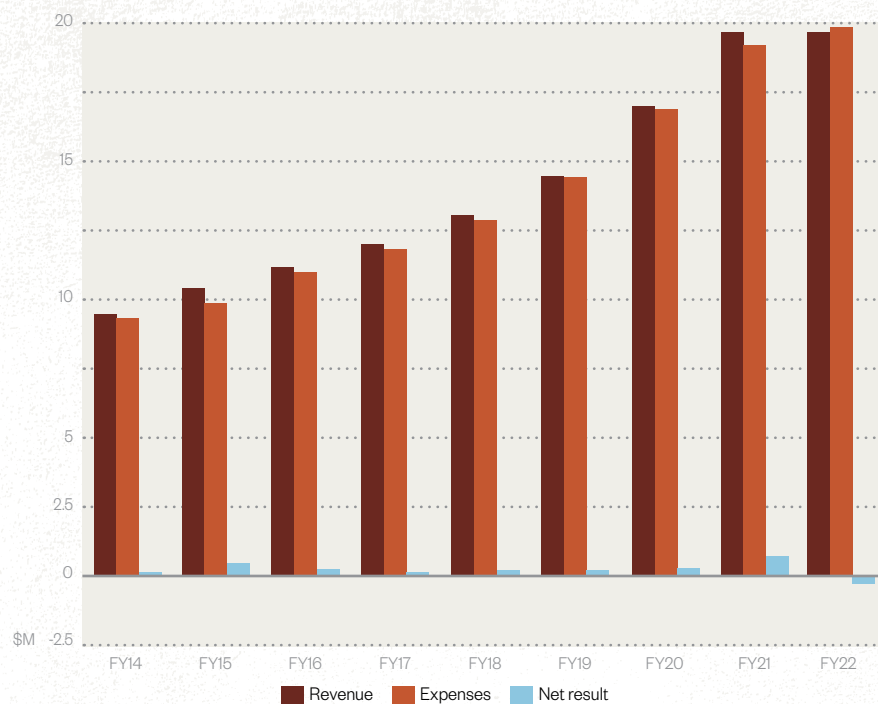
**Nicolas Porter**  
Chief Financial Officer

Working Capital Ratio





## Financial Performance



## Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income for the year ended 30 June 2022

	2022 \$	2021 \$
<b>Revenue</b>	<b>19,573,923</b>	<b>19,837,289</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Cost of Goods Sold	8,433,337	8,549,309
Employee Benefits Expense	8,623,640	8,181,958
Professional Services	315,060	358,515
Occupancy Expenses	415,068	346,826
Depreciation Expense	277,590	296,720
Other Expenses	1,740,385	1,486,193
<b>Surplus for Year</b>	<b>(231,157)</b>	<b>617,768</b>
<b>Total Comprehensive Income for the Year</b>	<b>(231,157)</b>	<b>617,768</b>

## Statement of Financial Position as at 30 June 2022

	2022 \$	2021 \$
<b>Assets</b>		
<b>Current Assets</b>		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	1,419,134	2,356,454
Accounts Receivable	363,842	716,023
Inventories	762,781	825,563
Prepayments	122,568	129,847
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>2,668,325</b>	<b>4,027,887</b>
<b>Non Current Assets</b>		
Buildings, Plant and Equipment	4,626,968	4,330,562
<b>Total Non Current Assets</b>	<b>4,626,968</b>	<b>4,330,562</b>
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>7,295,293</b>	<b>8,358,449</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>		
<b>Current Liabilities</b>		
Accounts Payable and other Payables	1,190,613	1,140,519
Provisions	797,599	804,325
Borrowings	24,328	23,142
Hire Purchase Commitments	67,538	101,350
Contract Liability	955,833	1,712,374
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>3,035,911</b>	<b>3,781,710</b>
<b>Non Current Liabilities</b>		
Provisions	91,100	84,224
Borrowings	-	25,538
Hire Purchase Commitments	201,703	269,241
<b>Total Non Current Liabilities</b>	<b>292,803</b>	<b>379,003</b>
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>3,328,714</b>	<b>4,160,713</b>
<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>3,966,579</b>	<b>4,197,736</b>
<b>Members' Funds</b>		
<b>Retained Surplus</b>	<b>3,966,579</b>	<b>4,197,736</b>
<b>TOTAL MEMBERS' FUNDS</b>	<b>3,966,579</b>	<b>4,197,736</b>



# GET INVOLVED

## Donate

[ceres.org.au/donate](https://ceres.org.au/donate)

## Become a member

[ceres.org.au/membership](https://ceres.org.au/membership)

## Volunteer

[ceres.org.au/volunteer](https://ceres.org.au/volunteer)

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### CERES

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Brunswick East VIC 3057

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web [www.ceres.org.au](http://www.ceres.org.au)

# CERES