

Media Release



International education sector is of the largest contributors in Australian economy. The international education activity arising from international students studying and living in Australia contributed \$28.0 billion to economy in 2016-17 which was over 15% increase of earning from reported last financial year 2015-16. Higher education sectors generated export income of \$19.1 billion, The VET sector generated \$4.8 billion in earning, while ELICOS, school and non-award had substantial contribution as well^(a). Various industry

such as travel, hospitality and related sectors have also been largely benefited through increase in international education related activities

Although the international students are contributing the host country economically or by fulfilling the country's skill shortages, their wellbeing is seen be mostly at risk. International students are at increased risk of experiencing poor mental health, with isolation from families and culture, language barriers, financial stress, and academic pressures among the key drivers. Moreover, there have been reported cases where international students are routinely hired by employers who exploit their lack of knowledge of workplace laws and underpay the students. Due to fear of losing jobs and limited knowledge of their entitlement, students are underpaid and overworked. Exploitation and bullying of these natures can put students at greater risk of being financially and mentally affected. Likewise, in unprecedented circumstances such as catastrophic Bushfire and COVID-19 has not only affected economy at large but has raised serious concern of safety, health, mental and financial implication on international students.

SCCM foundation, therefore, aims at addressing all the issues that international students are facing or could possibly be facing in host countries. The inception of SCCM foundation although started to address the ongoing issues SCCM students were experiencing especially post COVID 19 surged, the objective of SCCM foundation is broader i.e. to reach out to overall international students from various institutions and countries. By educating students of their entitlements and rights, spreading awareness of potential risks, promoting workshop on coping mechanism to such risk, increasing preparedness for unforeseen challenges through campaigns and by supporting financially, SCCM Foundation is committed to contribute to the wellbeing and livelihood of international students.

^(a)Sourced from Research snapshot "Export income to Australia from International education activity in 2016-17" released by Australian Government Department of Education and Training in December 2017