



Welcome to Q2 2025

How is it June already? The RACI Victorian Branch has been busy getting our heads around the new National Office changes, particularly regarding events. As a Branch, we can now obtain National Office support for only 6 events per year. This has meant we have had to focus on those which require National Office support and will service most of our members. Aside from the 6 supported events, the Victorian Branch will be running numerous Independent Community Events throughout the year. Excitingly, these will all be FREE to RACI Members with our first one - [Precision Fermentation: Innovating Dairy and Beyond](#) – being held on 20th August. Please note by clicking RSVP (either through the website or accepting the calendar invite) means you have registered for these events.

Early this month we held the **RACI Vic Branch VCE Teachers Professional Development Day** at RMIT. With a key theme of Computational and Digital Chemistry, 34 visiting teachers (including members of the Victorian RACI Chem Ed Group) were presented with seminars on contemporary biomedical research using computer-aided simulations and basic computational biophysics. Teachers completed hands-on activities that they can take back to their classroom - all using freely available (yet extremely powerful) resources that are accessible to all schools and communities. Teachers were then taken on a guided tour of the NMR and analytical labs at RMIT to learn more about our state-of-the-art teaching and research facilities. Big congratulations to our Chem Ed Group for their amazing work. You can read more about the group in our Branch Spotlight Below.



I also had the opportunity to attend both a virtual **Retiree's Lunch** (as a speaker) and an in-person lunch at Graduate House in the last quarter. This was the highlight of my quarter. I absolutely loved talking with the exceptional wealth of Chemistry knowledge we are so lucky to have here in Victoria. This group is not just for retiree's so if you have a free hour, I encourage you to attend. See Upcoming events for more details, including the next virtual session where the invited speaker is the current RACI National President – Amanda Ellis.

Finally, I note there has been much discussion regarding the new bylaws. These have been endorsed by the board, and I encourage all to take a look at these bylaws. If you have any ideas, suggestions, or comments about these or anything else, please email us at raci-viccmmt@raci.org.au or pop a post on the community board of MyRACI.

Look forward to seeing you at our upcoming events,

Jessica Holien (RACI Victorian Branch President)

RACI Victoria Branch Chemical Education Group, represented by Louise Macfarlane.

Can you tell us about your day job or committee day job

Head of Science at Kilvington Grammar

Tell us a bit more about the Education Group & Committee

1. What is the mission of the RACI Victoria Education Group?

To support and educate chemistry teachers.

2. Who makes up the committee, and what roles do they play?

Several high school chemistry teachers and university lecturers form the committee.

3. How did you first get involved with the Education Group?

Another chemistry teacher invited me to join the committee as a way to network and learn more about chemistry teaching.

4. What do you enjoy most about being part of the committee?

Sharing experiences in teaching and learning new experiments to make the teaching space more fun.

5. What challenges has the group faced in recent years, and how have you overcome them?

High workload for chemistry teachers makes finding time to be on the committee a challenge for all involved.

How about the Education and Outreach Activities in the group?

1. What kinds of programs or events does the Education Group run throughout the year?

The RMIT chemistry teacher lectures and workshop professional development day.

2. How do you support chemistry teachers across Victoria?

By mentoring student teachers, new teachers and helping trial and demonstrate the new experiments.

3. Are there any partnerships or collaborations you're especially proud of?

RACI appreciates the support of RMIT and VCAA.

4. Can you tell us about an activity or resource that was particularly popular or well-received?

I am most excited about the new experiments we will present this year on 4/6/25, which match with the new chemistry curriculum.

The Group Highlights & Vision

1. Can you share a story about a student or team that stood out during any activities?

Being a part of the RACI chemistry education committee means I have lots of friendly contacts with ideas about SACs, ways to approach curriculum and fresh experiments. This collegiate support is invaluable.

2. What advice would you give to schools or teachers new to these competitions?

The ICQ is a fun way for students to challenge themselves. There are past year papers for the students to practise on.

3. How can new volunteers or educators get involved with the Education Group?

Contact myself: MacfarlaneL@Kilvington.vic.edu.au



Upcoming Events

Retirees Group – Our very active retiree's group (headed by Richard Thwaites) meet monthly alternating between in-person and online (with guest speaker). Schedule is below. Please note – aspiring retirees are very welcome to attend! Registration on the RACI website.

IN PERSON LUNCHES (in the Bistro at Graduate House, starting at 12 noon): August 5th; October 7th; December 2nd

VIRTUAL MEETINGS (on zoom, starting at 12 noon): July 1st; September 2nd; November 11th

Titration Competition – Registrations close on 21st July [RACI Vic Titration Competition | Sticky Tickets](#).

If you are a teacher- get involved. If you are a parent – prod your school to get involved!



Precision Fermentation Innovating Dairy and Beyond

Join the RACI Food, Nutrition and Analytical Chemistry (FNAC) group for an exciting event on "Precision Fermentation: Innovating Dairy and Beyond."

Discover how this breakthrough technology is transforming alternative foods – dairy, flavourings, plant-based meats – and explore the science, challenges, and innovations shaping the future. Enjoy product tastings and network with industry leaders.

Keynote speakers:

Dr Netsanet Shiferaw Terefe
Principal Scientist, CSIRO.

David Bucca
Founder and CEO, Change Foods.

Dr Birgitta Ebert
FaBA Future Academic Leader in Fermentation, UQ.

Dr Roman Buckow
Professor of Food Science and Director of the Centre for Food Science, La Trobe University.



Register online before **Monday 18th August**

Where: [Trajan, 7 Argent Place, Ringwood](#)
When: [Wednesday 20th August, 2025, 3–6pm](#)

Enquiries: Dr Lidia Konkol (FNAC Committee Secretary)
LKonkol@trajansclmed.com

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