



CITY IN THE
COMMUNITY

IMPACT REPORT

24/25



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**I'm proud to
lead a Club that's
deeply committed to
making a difference
where it matters most.”**

**AZIZ
BEHIGH**

Captain - Melbourne City FC and Socceroos Star



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Message from ↓

Head of Community

It has been another rewarding season, with our work continuing to positively impact the lives of young people across Melbourne.

Complementing our most successful season on the field, our reach and impact have grown significantly, and we remain committed to using football in innovative ways to support young people across the state, especially those facing barriers to participation in sport, education, employment and community.

We have focused on consolidating several new initiatives piloted in previous years, developing and refining curriculum, strengthening the capacity of our Young Leaders, and building new partnerships across schools and communities.

Importantly, we've also prioritized research and evaluation of our programs, using evidence-based theories and drawing on ideas directly from young people to strengthen our programs.

Our work continues to be informed and driven by deep collaboration with key stakeholders across all sectors. In particular we've engaged with government at all levels to use our expertise, and the Club's resources and facilities, to contribute to a safer and healthier community where young people can thrive.

Globally, we have supported City Football Foundation projects in Kuala Lumpur, Tacloban City, Mumbai, and Tokyo. The opportunity to implement our programs from Melbourne on an international scale, while simultaneously learning from coaches across a variety of cultures, is something we feel incredibly fortunate to experience.

We appreciate the many partners we work with and value their collaboration and support.

I want to acknowledge the Club's continued support for CiTC as a charity but most importantly, to recognise our incredible CiTC staff and Young Leaders, who have once again worked tirelessly at the grassroots to make a real difference.

I hope you enjoy reading this summary of our work this year and join us in celebrating some of our key successes and achievements.



Sunil Menon

Head of Community

OUR APPROACH



**CITY IN THE
COMMUNITY**

IMPACT

**Empowering healthier lives with city youth
through football**



PILLARS

**Healthy
People**

**Healthy
Futures**

**Healthy
Communities**



OUTCOMES

**Improve
physical
health and
wellbeing**

**Improve
access,
opportunities
and skills**

**Improve
social
inclusion
and safety**



CITY

in



A-League players
dedicating over

100

hours of appearances
throughout the season

Over
70

young leaders
trained

From over
20

different cultural
backgrounds



1,455

Hours of community
programming



Over

118

locations

11K

Young people engaged
in 24/25 (including 4k girls)

Young Leaders
volunteering over

800

hours in
the community

In profile



YOUNG LEADERS



CITY

in

Travis O'Dowd

It has been an incredible year for CiTC with so many highlights.

"Dream and achieve through football."

For me personally, the opportunity to travel to Mumbai and help deliver their Young Leader program with CiTC Manchester and Mumbai City FC coaches was an awesome experience.

Working with young people from across Mumbai, it was clear the power of football to impact lives in a positive manner, helping them to become role models in their own community, inspiring others to dream and achieve through football.

In profile ↓

Abigail Derrett

For the past two years I've been involved in a range of CiTC programs from City Futures, Young Leaders and Twinning Project.

As a student studying teaching, the programs have helped me build confidence in leading large groups, facilitating sessions and creating relationships with a range of participants from a variety of backgrounds.

Here's to another big year ahead.

"C'mon City!"

In profile ↓

Shaun Millett

Our Powerchair team continues to go from strength to strength on the court and we were excited to finally lift the national trophy this year.

"To help advocate and educate groups."

Off the court, I've enjoyed speaking to students and those in correctional settings about my own personal journey - to help advocate and educate groups about the impact people with a disability continue to have in sport and broader society.

HIGHLIGHTS & EVENTS



Blue Ribbon Cup



CITY

in



Blue Ribbon Cup

The Blue Ribbon Cup was successfully held again at Narre Warren South P-12 College.

This annual event brings together students (from the City Futures Program), staff, Victoria Police, and the CiTC team to honour fallen police officers.

The day includes not just football but police displays, guest appearances from professional players, and a celebration of community connections between law enforcement and young people.

Powerchair Football Team

CiTC proudly supports the Melbourne City FC Powerchair Team, who this year were crowned national champions at the club championships in Brisbane.

Undefeated throughout the competition, their achievement is a testament to their resilience, skill, and dedication. The team's victory was celebrated across the Club, particularly by our A-League players, and their journey continues to inspire fans and young people alike.

They remain a beacon of inclusion and an integral part of the City in the Community.

Player Volunteering - Meals with Impact

Just prior to Christmas, six of our A-League stars gave up their time for an important cause. →

→ Meals with Impact is a social enterprise dedicated to creating culturally relevant food relief for local communities, whilst providing employment opportunities to women from migrant and refugee backgrounds.

Our players contributions in the kitchen provided over 80 meals for those in need across Melbourne.

Visit to Canberra

Our Young Leaders once again had the opportunity to visit Parliament House in Canberra.

They played football with parliamentarians and met with MPs including local members Cassandra Fernando (Member for Holt) and Julian Hill (Member for Bruce), as well as key political advisors. This visit provided a unique opportunity for young people to engage with decision-makers and share their perspectives on issues affecting their lives.



City Futures ↓

The City Futures Program has expanded, with more schools embedding into their curriculums in 2025.

The program integrates football coaching and personal development into the school experience for Years

7-10. Students at Narre Warren South P-12 College, Gleneagles Secondary College, and Timbarra College enjoyed on-field training and classroom sessions focused on leadership, respect and personal growth.

A highlight for many students are visits to the City Football Academy,



”

City Futures goes beyond the classroom and the football pitch, students are exposed to core principals around teamwork, respect, leadership in a structured environment from Melbourne City coaches.”

Joanne Sayer, Principal

Gleneagles Secondary College

watching A-League training, hearing directly from Head Coaches, and staff from a variety of departments about their roles and career journeys.

Additionally, students are also further motivated by the tournaments and competitions run throughout the program.

Teachers and students have reported improved attendance, better behaviour, and stronger peer relationships, demonstrating the powerful impact of combining sport and education. Next year, the program will be formally evaluated by Federation University's Collaborative Evaluation and Research Centre.

Twinning

Project ↓

Last year we piloted Australia's first-ever Twinning Project, a rehabilitation initiative originating in the UK that uses football to support the social reintegration of prisoners.

With the support of Corrections Victoria, the program expanded this year to include the Metropolitan Remand Centre, Marngoneet Correctional Centre, and the Dame Phyllis Frost Centre (women's prison).

This eight-week program uses football to teach values such as teamwork, leadership, and respect, supporting rehabilitation and aiming to reduce reoffending. Sessions are delivered using CiTC's Young Leaders with support from Club staff and players from the A-League Men's, A-League Women's, and Powerchair teams.

The initiative has been recognised for its positive impact on participants' confidence and relationships, contributing to safer communities across Victoria. Our Young Leaders too have grown in confidence and developed strong communication skills through their involvement in this challenging but rewarding setting.

"City in the Community have been exceptional in their partnering with the Twinning Project in Melbourne. CiTC has truly embraced this global football based criminal justice intervention and delivered provision that will create safer Victorian communities whilst simultaneously changing lives."

Hilton Freund MBE

Global Chief Executive, Twinning Project



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What I love most about being a footballer is the chance to connect with people through the game...

BRYLEE HENRY

Melbourne City FC and Matildas



Healthy

Goals ↓

Building on the success of CiTC's Beautiful Game initiative – which used football and art to promote health and activity CiTC is now supporting the City Football Foundations Healthy Goals campaign.

This global initiative promotes physical well-being by providing safe spaces for young people to play. In local communities, this has included the creation of murals at various schools, including Rangebank Primary School, shaped by student input on culture and connection to traditional owners of the land.

Man Up: ↓

Creating Respectful Relationships

This two-year pilot, funded by the Federal Government's Safer Communities Grant, concluded this season after being delivered across schools and community groups in Melbourne.

Combining football with classroom discussions, the program promoted respectful behaviours, gender equality, and emotional resilience. An evaluation by Dr. Pam Kappelides (La Trobe University) found that participants demonstrated improved communication and respect across school, home, and team environments.

"Before, I'd get angry and shut people out. Now, I try to talk things through and listen to their side."

CiTC now incorporates this curriculum into other areas and is actively seeking funding to expand the program to meet the increasing demand from schools.



Young Leaders

Program →

The Young Leaders Program continues to inspire, develop, and train young people across Melbourne to become leaders in their communities.



Significantly, Young Leaders contribute to City's matchday activations and community programs. The program also serves as a strong pathway into employment –

many participants have secured jobs within CiTC and other departments of the Club, including in football operations, merchandise and events.



**CITY IN THE
COMMUNITY**



**WE BUILD 24
WE GROW /25
WE CONNECT**