

ballarat
hackerspace

BALLARAT HACKERSPACE • SINCE 2013

Back the workshop where Ballarat learns to **make.**

Sponsorship buys tools and machines that hundreds of people learn on each year, and keeps the doors open for whoever walks in next.

A workshop run by its members.

Volunteers have run Ballarat Hackerspace as a shared workshop since 2013. Equipment bought with sponsorship stays in service for years, used by long-time members and by students on their first project.



We're a not-for-profit for science, technology, engineering, art and maths in Ballarat and the surrounding region. Nobody here is paid. Members elect the committee, and volunteers run the open sessions and the school visits.

23 members use the workshop regularly. More than 100 current and former members are on our self-hosted chat server, and that's where a member stuck on a problem at home gets an answer from someone who hit the same problem last year.

You don't need technical experience to join. You need to be curious.

FOUNDED	2013
STRUCTURE	Victorian incorporated association, standard model rules
WORKSHOP	200 m ² , our home for 7+ years
COMMUNITY	23+ active members · 100+ online
MEMBERSHIP	From \$40 a month

HOUSE RULE

Be excellent to each other.



Most of the people we reach aren't members.

These are conservative estimates from our current records. A new check-in system will give us more precise attendance numbers.

BEYOND OUR WALLS

400+

visitors, workshop attendees and students reached each year

200+

students reached across 10+ regional schools

50+

public events and workshops a year

3000+

festival-goers who used our Heritage Phone and Santa Phone

THE PEOPLE WHO RUN IT

23

regulars who keep the doors open

800+

volunteer hours they give each year

100+

members in our self-hosted online community

13+

years open, since 2013

RESOURCES

200m²

of shared workshop and learning space

\$50k+

in shared tools and technical equipment

1,000+

visits to the workshop each year

~\$25

running cost per person reached each year

~\$10k

RUNS THE SPACE FOR A YEAR

That's rent, power, insurance and repairs for the whole workshop. One Da Vinci sponsorship covers it.

Conversations start over something that's broken.

For some members this is their third place: not home, not work, but the room they come back to every week. Most people walk in with a project in mind, something to fix or a tool to learn, and the talking happens around the work.

That suits people who never found their place in a footy club. Our members differ in age, gender, background and ability. A retired engineer might sit next to someone holding a soldering iron for the first time, and both will leave having taught the other something.

NEURODIVERGENT PEOPLE INCLUDED

When we say all abilities, **we mean neurodivergent people too**. If small talk is hard work, a room where everyone is busy helps. You can talk about the job in front of you, or say nothing and work alongside others. A deep interest in one narrow subject is normal here.

NDIS participants are welcome under our published participation policy. We're a peer-led workshop, not a support service, so anyone who needs one-on-one support brings their own support worker.

Into trains, or an operating system nobody else remembers? Someone here will want to hear about it.

Electronics

Programming

Robots

Trains

Vintage Tech

Fabrication

Science Fiction

Obscure Software

Machines

And many more

Open sessions run on a regular schedule, so people build a routine around them. Members teach each other informally. For a lot of people, explaining something is how they find out they're good at it.

We don't run a wellbeing program. People feel better because they made something and someone noticed.



Turn up every week to the same bench and you **stop being a stranger.**



Tools most people can't own.

A good laser cutter costs thousands of dollars. Our members share ours.



The workshop

One shared machine replaces dozens of cheaper ones gathering dust in garages. When we buy, **we add a process we can't do yet** instead of doubling up on one we can.

DIGITAL FAB

3D Printers

CNC Machine

Laser Cutters

Vinyl Cutter

2D Printer

ELECTRONICS

Soldering Irons

Reflow Oven

Oscilloscope

Function Generator

METAL & WOOD

Mini Lathe

Table Saw

Pedestal Drill

Bench Grinder

Welder

Hand Tools

Public workshops

50+

public events & workshops
a year

100+

workshop attendances
annually

Participants run the tools and machines themselves. Nobody watches a demo from the back of the room.

Ongoing learning workshops:

Intro to 3D Printing

Intro to Laser Cutting

No experience needed. By the end, you should be able to **come back on your own and use the machine.**





— 06 — WHAT WE DO

Students build race vehicles here.

Schools

We work with **more than 10 schools** and reach **over 200 students**. We don't teach classes. Schools come to us when a project needs a tool or a skill their staff don't have.

Demonstrations

Hands-on Activities

Fabrication Support

Electronics

Mechanical Design

Sensors & Telemetry

Prototyping

Mentoring

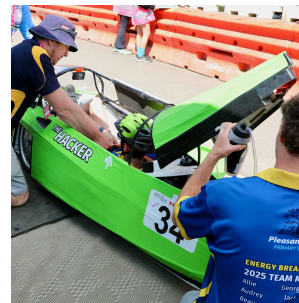
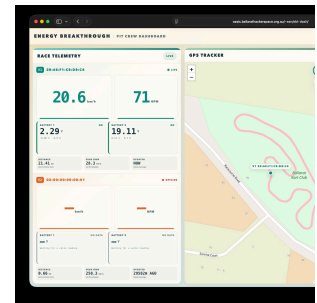
Troubleshooting

We won't build it for them. A student who solves the steering problem with some help **learns more than one handed a finished part.**

SPOTLIGHT

Energy Breakthrough

Over a school year, students design and race a human-powered vehicle. Our members help with fabrication and steering. They also built the electronics that stream live data from the car to the pit.



Projects for the public

Members build things for use outside the workshop, like an interactive heritage telephone and an LED sign that runs live polls at events. Most of these need someone who can solder and someone who can code. We have many people with a wide range of skills to draw from.

Experiments

Plenty of projects here have no business case. Someone wants to know if it can be done. A machinist fixes the bracket, someone else sorts out the firmware, and **it gets finished because both were in the room on the same night.** This experimentation leads to skills, which can lead to bigger and better opportunities - employment in the tech industry, a new discovery, or more.



Echoes on the Wire: the Heritage Phone.

Electronics • embedded computing • audio • woodwork
Ballarat Heritage Festival 2025



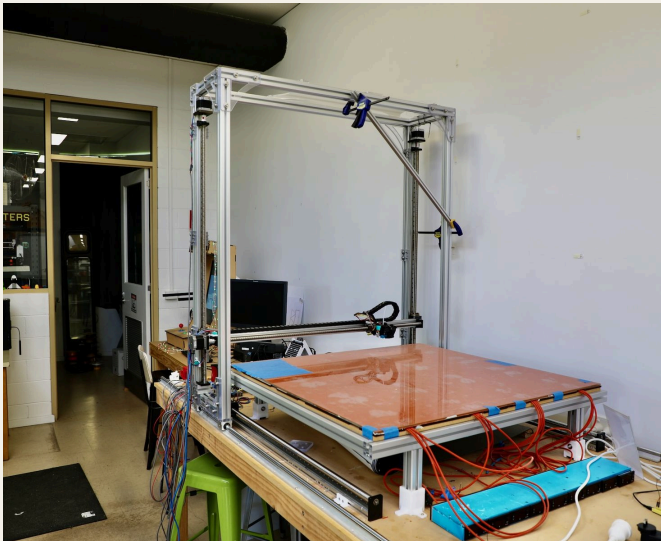
“Dial a year in Ballarat's history between 1800 and 1970 and listen to stories told by local characters from the past.”

- Custom Electronics
- Raspberry Pi
- Audio
- Laser Cutting
- Local History

It began as the **Santa Phone**, a red dial phone in a street-side booth at Christmas. Members later moved the electronics into an antique wooden wall telephone. A Raspberry Pi and a custom board sit inside the original cabinet, and you still have to turn the dial.

Visitors to the 2025 Ballarat Heritage Festival dialled a year and heard stories from it. Our members had to research the history. Another member had to make an antique phone talk to a computer.

Three stories from the workshop.

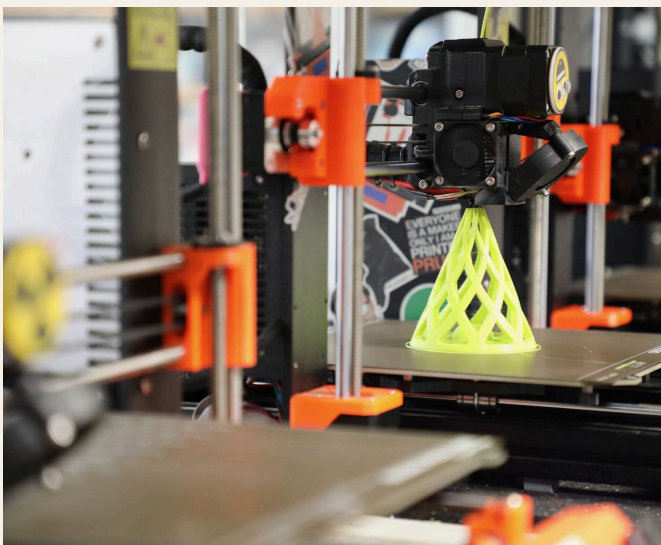


BUILT BY MEMBERS

Megabot

Members designed and built a 3D printer with a one-cubic-metre build volume. No commercial printer we could afford comes close to that size.

It works. It's also slow, because doubling every dimension of a print means eight times the plastic. **Members here build equipment as well as use it**, and the next person inherits a better workshop.

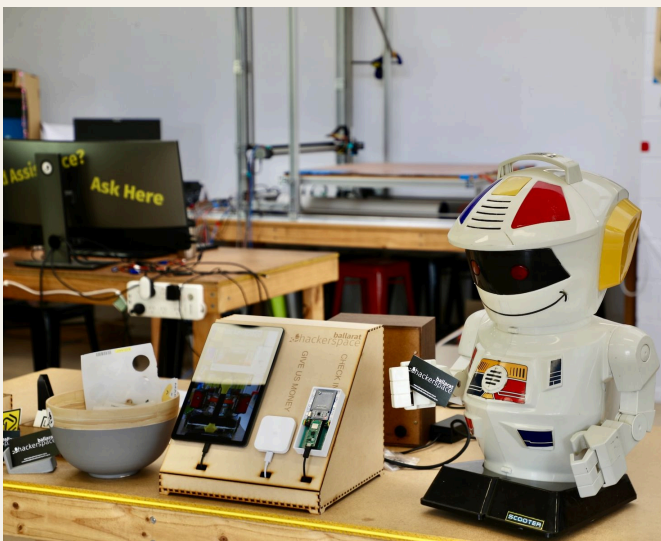


FROM BEGINNER TO PAID COMMISSION

A seven-metre dinosaur

A local artist joined with no 3D printing experience. They learned on our tools and machines and got good quickly.

Later they won a commission to reproduce a dinosaur roughly seven metres long for display at the University of New England in Armidale. **That was paid professional work, and it started on our printers.**



SUPPORTED BY THE CITY OF BALLARAT

Accessible digital fabrication

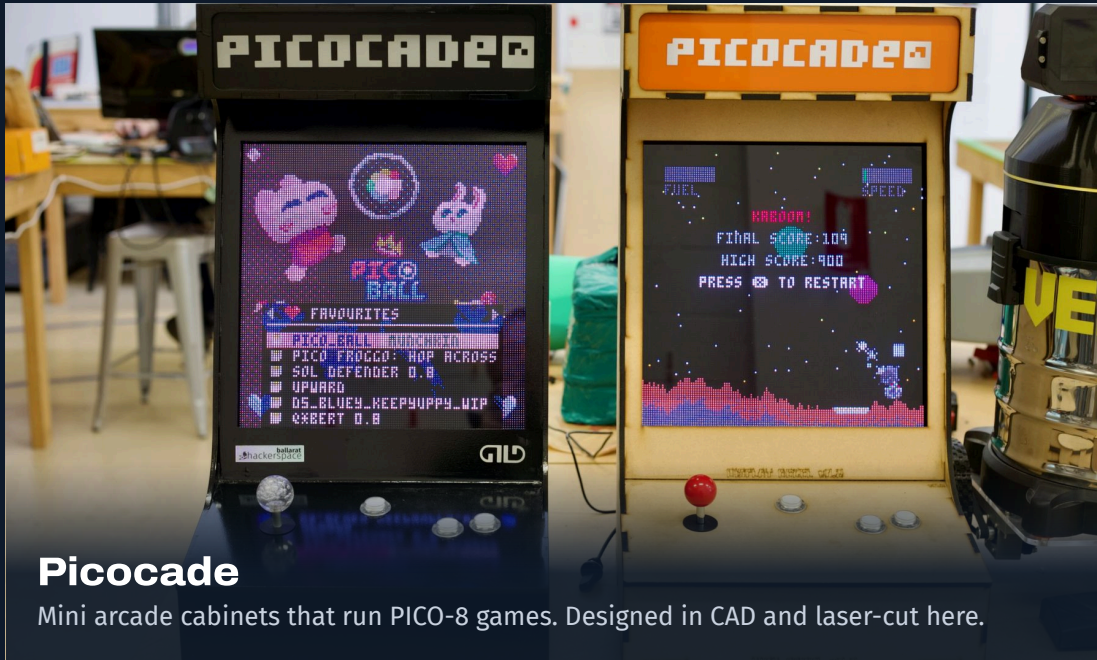
The City of Ballarat funded a run of introductory 3D printing and laser cutting workshops. Over a 3 month period, participants ranged from children with their parents to older people trying the tools and machines for the first time.

44+ PARTICIPANTS → **6** BECAME MEMBERS

For six people, one workshop turned into a membership.

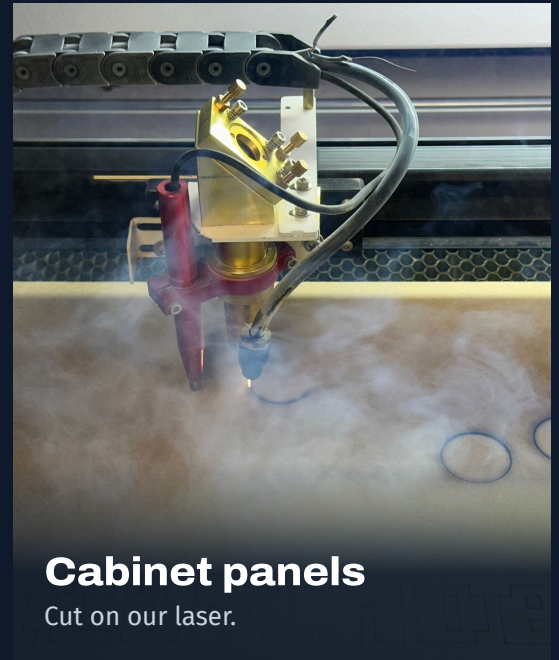
Made here.

Recent member projects. Most combine woodwork or metalwork with electronics and code, and none of them came from a kit.



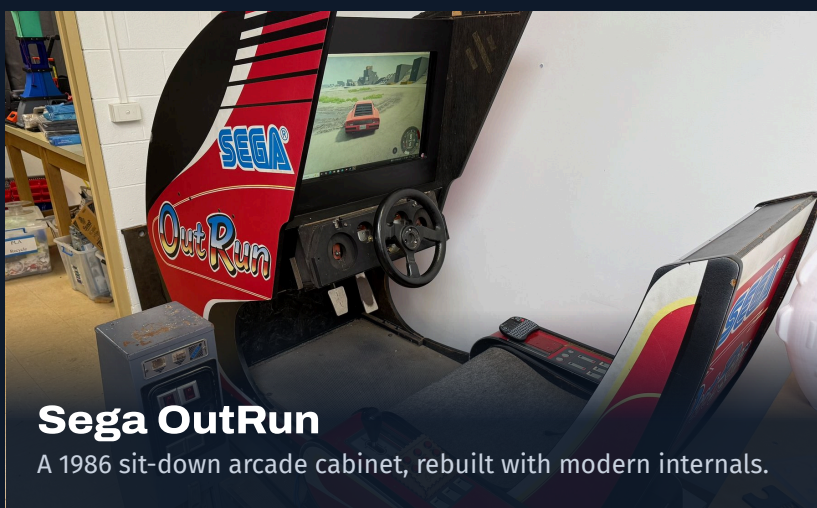
Picocade

Mini arcade cabinets that run PICO-8 games. Designed in CAD and laser-cut here.



Cabinet panels

Cut on our laser.



Sega OutRun

A 1986 sit-down arcade cabinet, rebuilt with modern internals.



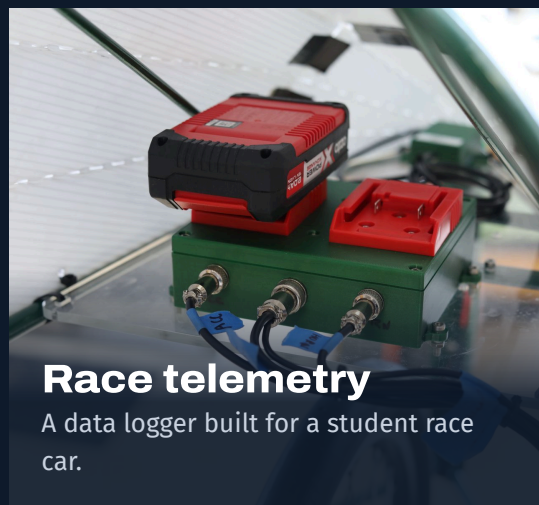
A vs B

An LED sign that runs live audience polls at events.



Vernon

A robot with a cordless vacuum for a body.



Race telemetry

A data logger built for a student race car.



Precision parts

Machined aluminium steering parts.

When a member builds a better tool, everyone uses it.

Sponsorship pays for the materials and tools these projects depend on. The laser that cut the Picocade panels wears through tubes and lenses. The machines that made those steering parts need new cutters. A first project usually burns through a sheet of acrylic before it works, and nobody should be told to stop because the stock ran out. Fund the bench and you fund whatever gets built on it next.

Where the money goes.

Most of it buys things that last.

Sponsorship pays for servicing, spare parts, workshop materials and new tools. It keeps the workshop open for the people who use them.

A machine you pay for this year **will still be teaching people years from now**. Each person who learns it can show the next.



ALREADY IN PLACE

- An established physical workshop
- A committed volunteer community
- Shared technical infrastructure
- Experienced members across many disciplines
- Governance and operational structures
- Proven public workshop experience
- Relationships with schools and community organisations

WHAT SPONSORSHIP PAYS FOR

- 01 **Servicing and repairs** on tools and machines used by hundreds of people a year
- 02 **Materials** for public workshops
- 03 **Parts for school projects**, such as an Energy Breakthrough vehicle
- 04 **A new machine** for a process we can't do yet
- 05 **Rent, power and insurance** for the workshop

Buy a tool once, and people are still learning on it years later.

WHY IT
LASTS

Four sponsorship tiers.

Each tier runs for twelve months, and each is named after someone whose work spanned more than one field. One-off sponsorships are welcome too, with the same recognition as the matching tier.

TIER 1

Lovelace

\$1,000 /yr

Pays for consumables and tool upkeep.

TIER 2

Hopper

\$2,500 /yr

Covers equipment servicing and replacement tools.

TIER 3

Turing

\$5,000 /yr

Funds major equipment and school programs.

PRINCIPAL PARTNER

Da Vinci

\$10k+ /yr

Can cover a full year's running costs, or buy a major new machine.

BENEFIT	LOVELACE	HOPPER	TURING	DA VINCI
RECOGNITION				
Recognition on the Ballarat Hackerspace website	Listed	Prominent	Prominent	Principal
In-space sponsor board acknowledgement	●	●	●	●
Annual sponsor communications & use of “Sponsor” designation	●	●	●	●
Recognition at public events and workshops	—	Selected	Priority	Major Events
Logo placement across prospectus and BHS materials	—	—	Prominent	Highest
Approved promotional material at selected events	—	●	●	●
ENGAGEMENT				
Invitations to selected community events	●	●	●	●
Guided tour / organised staff visit	Tour	Tour	Staff visit	Tailored + Demos
Take part in workshops or STEM activities	●	●	●	●
Recognition tied to a funded program or equipment purchase	—	—	●	●
Joint storytelling and partnership content	—	—	●	●
Direct engagement with the committee on where to invest	—	—	—	●

● Da Vinci sponsors can tie their support to a specific tool, machine or program. In-kind contributions may be recognised at an equivalent tier. Exclusivity and naming rights are available by arrangement.



12 — LET'S BUILD TOGETHER

Beyond the tiers.

IN-KIND & PROJECT SPONSORSHIP

We accept in-kind support when it's something we'll use. If we agree on its value, we can recognise it at the matching tier.

Equipment

Materials & Consumables

Professional Services

Software & Technical Services

Freight & Logistics

Event Support

Computing Infrastructure

Specialist Expertise

You can also fund **one specific thing**, like a machine or a school's Energy Breakthrough build.

GOOD MATCHES

We'll shape a sponsorship around what your organisation cares about, as long as it fits what we do. Sponsors who suit us usually care about:

Practical STEM & STEAM

Regional Skills

Community Participation

Accessible Infrastructure

Youth & Schools

Innovation

Wellbeing & Connection

Knowledge Sharing

PAST AND CURRENT SUPPORTERS



CURRENT SPONSOR



GRANT PROVIDER



PAST SPONSOR



REGIONAL ADVISORY
PAST SPONSOR

Become a sponsor.

Email the committee and tell us what you would like to fund.

WEB

ballarathackerspace.org.au

EMAIL

sponsors@ballarathackerspace.org.au

VISIT

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