

Laneway Learning Background and Fact Sheet

Background and beginnings

Laneway Learning was started in March 2012 by four friends with a passion for learning – Tom Ding, Kim Hay, Mark Gregory and Lucie Bradley.

After discovering the Brooklyn Brainery in New York, USA, they fell in love with the idea of offering fun, affordable classes in random subjects, taught by ordinary people from around the city. Nothing like this existed in Melbourne so they pitched the idea to the people at The Little Mule Cycle Co. & Cafe. Luckily, they loved it too and The Little Mule became the first home to Laneway Learning.

Since then Laneway Learning has been in many different venues around Melbourne CBD and inner suburbs and has even spread to other cities in Australia and overseas.

After a year and a half of running Laneway Learning, Tom and Kim moved to London, UK, and two teachers came on board as new team members – Maria Yebra and Michael Patterson. Michael moved on at the end of 2015 and Mark stepped back from his day-to-day role to manage the newly formed board of directors.

Maria and Lucie continue to run Laneway Learning in Melbourne, hosting approximately 16 classes per week across Melbourne.

How it works

People from the community approach Laneway Learning with ideas for their own classes. These people might be small business owners, university academics or amateur hobbyists, but all of them love their skill and have a passion for sharing it. The community focus is a wonderful way to get to know some people in a big city and support local businesses.

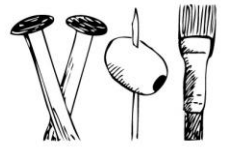
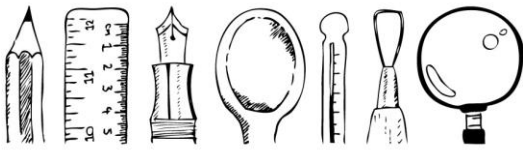
All of the team have taken to the front of the class as teachers from time to time. Tom and Mark taught the very first classes – Cryptic Crosswords and the Chemistry of Life, both on March 20, 2012.

As a not-for-profit organisation, Laneway Learning has a board of directors who work with Maria and Lucie.

Outside of Melbourne

Passionate people elsewhere in Australia and further afield have taken Laneway Learning to their own communities. Sometimes these people are former Melburnians and Laneway Learners themselves, eager to start Laneway Learning in their new homes.

Laneway Learning has become established in Sydney, Brisbane, Auckland, New Zealand and Singapore. Pop-up classes have also been run in Adelaide and Perth.



Fact sheet

Laneway Learning started in Melbourne in March 2012.

By the start of 2017, Laneway Learning in Melbourne had:

- Run over 1,750 classes
- Taught over 31,500 attendees
- 10,000 likes on Facebook
- Approximately 400 teachers
- Run classes in 20 different venues.

Laneway Learning outside Melbourne:

- Sydney – started in July 2013, with 300 classes and 6,000 attendees.
- Brisbane – started in March 2014, with 70 classes and 1,000 attendees.
- Adelaide – ran as a pop-up in September 2014 with 16 classes.
- Singapore – started in September 2014, with 45 classes and over 500 attendees.
- Auckland – started in March 2015, with 29 classes and over 330 attendees.
- Perth – ran as a pop-up in August 2016, with 9 classes.

Most unusual classes:

- [How to Become an Astronaut](#)
- [Sex: Pleasure Physiology](#)
- [Extra Terrestrials: What Does Science Say?](#)
- [Self-Love 101](#)
- [Kitchen Cosmology.](#)

Most popular classes:

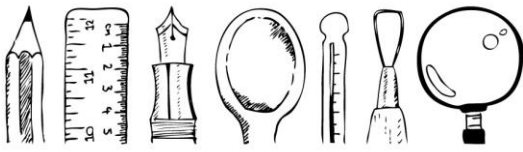
- [Braiding: It's As Easy As 1, 2, 3](#)
- [Make Your Own Silver Ring](#)
- [Wine: A One Night Palate Trainer.](#)

Most surprising class:

- [Yo-yoing with Russel Howcroft.](#)

Special events (selection only):

- [Sunday Spectacular](#), 16 June 2013
 - 1-day event to support Australian Youths in rural areas via the *Change It Up* program.
 - 8 classes, walk-up stalls, self-guided learning.
- [Science Spectacular](#), 23 August 2015
 - 1-day event as part of National Science Week
 - 8 classes, walk-up stalls, demonstrations, chemistry lab.
- [Enlightening Philosophy](#) series.



Testimonials

Joi Goldman, 14 February 2017 – 5 star

I've been to many classes at different locations, CBD/Northcote/Brunswick. There is always something of interest from philosophy, making bacon, even understanding the Palestinian conflict. I've been to 2 classes so far in 2017 at the new location in Bennetts Lane, and another booked for Brunswick. Love Laneway Learning and thank you to LMMNP that run it.

Alvaro della Fonte, 5 December 2016 – 5 star

Great way to learn about interesting things of all kinds of topics!

Dotty Bee, 7 September 2015 – 5 star

For the last 3 years going to Laneway Learning I have been very pleased with the random classes provided. Keeps my brain stimulated

Elizabeth Mackey, 23 August 2015 – 5 star

Science Spectacular 2015 was fabulous – thank you to the enthusiastic scientists for many wonderful science experiences!

Lynda Deans, 5 August 2015 – 5 star

Went to the pelvic floor class with Sara on Monday evening – great education every woman should hear about!! So glad I went thanks Sara awesome job!!

Katherine Kay, 21 July 2015 – 5 star

Loved our silver ring making course. So much fun

Celeste Golightly, 4 July 2015 – 5 star

Done Acro yoga & Improv, really fun and enjoyable! Can't wait to attend more!

Clare MacDonald, 25 March 2015 – 5 star

Loved the experience of teaching. Lucie and Co were a dream to work with.

Wai Ying Tham, 7 October 2014 – 5 star

Fabulous and informative break from my routine! The bee dance is awesome. Thank you.

Alicia Foreman, 17 October 2013 – 5 star

This is the BEST! The classes are random and cool and they guys are lovely!