

AUSTRALIAN MADE

“GO FOR GOLD!”

Olympic gold-medal swimmer Ariarne Titmus supports local makers and growers.



INSIDE:

- Economic security starts at home
- Aussies chase their business dreams
- Australia embraces the space race
- Myriad products made right here



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Economic security starts at home

Trump's trade war illustrates the benefit of buying Australian, writes **Anders Furze**.

This year's Australian Made Week comes hot on the heels of the US government slapping tariffs on most imports, highlighting the value of local support for Australian manufacturing in times of economic uncertainty.

"Aussies want to help Aussies, that's an evergreen result that we [always] find in our research," says Ben Lazzaro, chief executive of the Australian Made Campaign. "They're more likely to buy products if they know it's Australian."

In early April, US President Donald Trump imposed a 10 per cent baseline tariff on most imported goods, affecting most Australian exporters to the country. Lazzaro says the tariffs are a stark reminder of the importance of Australia's sovereign manufacturing capability.

"We do well when we band together and acknowledge the importance of looking after our own industry ... and the impact of those purchasing decisions," he says.

"It's never been more important to support our Aussie manufacturers, growers and primary producers. These sectors have faced numerous challenges in recent times, and it has just become more challenging for some."

Research from Roy Morgan shows widespread support among Australians for buying locally. Some 91 per cent of Australians want to see more locally made products, while 77 per cent of Australians are willing to pay more for Australian-made products.

Lazzaro is advocating for a more strategic approach to buy-local initiatives, incorporating consumers, businesses and all levels of government. He also wants the federal government to focus on Australian-made suppliers, given the overall value of government contracts was estimated to be \$100 billion last financial year.

"Improving government and business local procurement policies by prioritising Aussie makers will help alleviate the impact of tariffs while strengthening the economy and creating local jobs."

Nathan Park, business development and customer fulfilment manager at local manufacturer Sprockets Australia,



A local presence can give manufacturers an edge, says Sam Czyczelis (top). Australians strongly support buying locally, says the Australian Made Campaign's Ben Lazzaro (above).

agrees with the call for the government to buy from more local suppliers.

"We know for a fact that governments don't always use us, but they want to look like they're promoting us. [Government support] ... helps across the whole economy."

Every year, the Australian Made Campaign runs Australian Made Week to draw attention to the benefits of buying local and changing shopping habits. This year's ambassador is three-time individual Olympic gold medallist and world record-holder Ariarne Titmus.

"As a proud Aussie, I'm super excited to fly the flag for Australian made goods and to recognise and celebrate the hard work, guts and determination that it takes to be

successful as a home-grown producer despite tough competition," she says.

"I'd love everyone to join me on Team Australian Made - because no matter what you're buying, when you buy Australian Made, we all win."

Lazzaro says Titmus "embodies the Australian values of hard work and resilience," which local makers and growers demonstrate every day.

"She is a true champion and a fitting ambassador for our annual celebration of Australian manufacturers."

Manufacturer Litz Australia is one company whose business has been affected by American tariffs. Demand in Australia is surging for its CNC panel processing tools, made locally and developed in partnership with the Australian-owned ANCA. The tools are used for a modern approach to manufacturing furniture that doesn't require large saws or multiple machines.

But exports to the US are down, says managing director Sam Czyczelis. The company is looking to increase its footprint in New Zealand and South-East Asia, but faces tough competition from cheaper products in those markets.

Czyczelis says that in Australia, while cheaper imported tools may look similar to locally made products, they wear out faster and can be difficult to replace.

"Our customers can get what they need, when they need it," he says of the benefits of businesses buying from

locally based manufacturers. "There's no waiting or unpredictable shipping delays. That's a huge competitive edge."

Nathan Park of Sprockets Australia agrees that cheap imports often cost more for businesses in the long run, and that local knowledge saves them time and money. "There's real value in local expertise," he says. "Our customers benefit from faster turnaround times, responsive service and a deep understanding of Australian workplaces."

Park is an advocate for Australian Made Week, and says it's a "fantastic opportunity" to celebrate and spotlight the strength of local manufacturing. "For us, it's a reminder of the value we bring to our customers every day - real products, made right here by real people."

He says it's a "tough environment" for many local manufacturers, and that the government could be doing a lot more to support the local industry. "Local manufacturing isn't just about economic resilience. It's about sovereignty."

Consumer attitudes on buying Australian

91% of Australians want to see more Australian-made products

89% of Australians are more likely to buy a product if they know it is Australian-made

77% of Australians are willing to pay more for Australian-made products

71% of Australians have been looking to buy more Australian-made products in the past 12 months

72% of Australians will be looking to buy more Australian-made products in the next 12 months

Business attitudes to buying Australian

100% of Australian businesses surveyed recognise the Australian Made logo

84% of businesses buy Australian-made goods wherever possible

77% of businesses trust the Australian Made logo

85% of businesses are confident products displaying the logo are actually made or grown in Australia

57% of organisations are likely to consider a tender from a licensed Australian-made business

Source: Roy Morgan

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Founders chasing their business dreams

Starting a new path can have surprising benefits, writes **Owen Thomson.**

Many Australians dream of escaping the nine-to-five grind and turning their ideas and passions into flourishing businesses.

Former journalist and news reporter Glen Moret and artist Nabeela Suleman are two who have made the leap, the former launching his own swimwear brand, TOZA, earlier this year and Suleman converting her original artwork into a variety of printed products.

"I never imagined myself owning a swimwear brand, and it was something that took a while to come up," says Sydney-based Moret, 31. "Also, having a background in marketing, the idea of my own business came from a frustration of working with other people's products and services.

"I thought the only real solution was to have my own product. Swimwear was an industry I thought could be fun, light-hearted, not too serious, and exciting to market visually. Now I'm in it, that is definitely true."

With no previous industry experience, Moret committed to learning everything from scratch – from manually cutting out cardboard patterns, to hunting down label makers and fabric suppliers.

"It took about 14 months of



Glen Moret and Nabeela Suleman have forged their own paths in fashion and art.

experimenting," he says. "After initially trying to get samples made in China, I've now switched to an Australian-made product, which has made things easier and faster."

Moret says a high level of community support has been the biggest reward so far.

"The swimwear business is helping me connect with like-minded people, with the business focused on gay men aged 25 to 45," he explains. "The best part is having customers that are comfortable engaging with me through



social media. It's kind of becoming this little community of people that are into swimwear and who help me choose new colours and new patterns. I didn't expect that."

Gold Coast artist Nabeela Suleman is also a recent convert to full-time self-employment.

The former accountant is the driving force behind To The Moon And Back Prints, which markets bookmarks, cards, wrapping paper, prints and gift tags featuring Suleman's original artwork. The venture represents a

culmination of her life-long love of art and her desire to help facilitate positive human experiences.

"It's not only about drawing or creating something - it's about seeing how it makes other people feel," she says of her motivation. "Whether it's a funny birthday card or a card to encourage a friend who's going through a dark time - it's that whole purpose behind it which really fuels me."

Having taken time away from her artistic endeavours to pursue career and study, Suleman says she ultimately couldn't resist the powerful urge to re-engage with the creative process. After a period of combining full-time accounting and "doing little sketches" for people who requested their own personal drawings, she finally made the full-time switch earlier this year.

"I think it was just a really strong desire to try something new," she explains of her decision to take the plunge.

"I was just completely burnt out in my accounting role, and somewhere inside I just knew there was something significant missing. And I think a creative outlet was really good for my mental health. It's the best thing I could have ever done."

All well as ensuring that her products are made using recycled materials, Suleman has also donated a portion of her profits to organisations including Beyond Blue, Doctors Without Borders, and Share the Dignity.

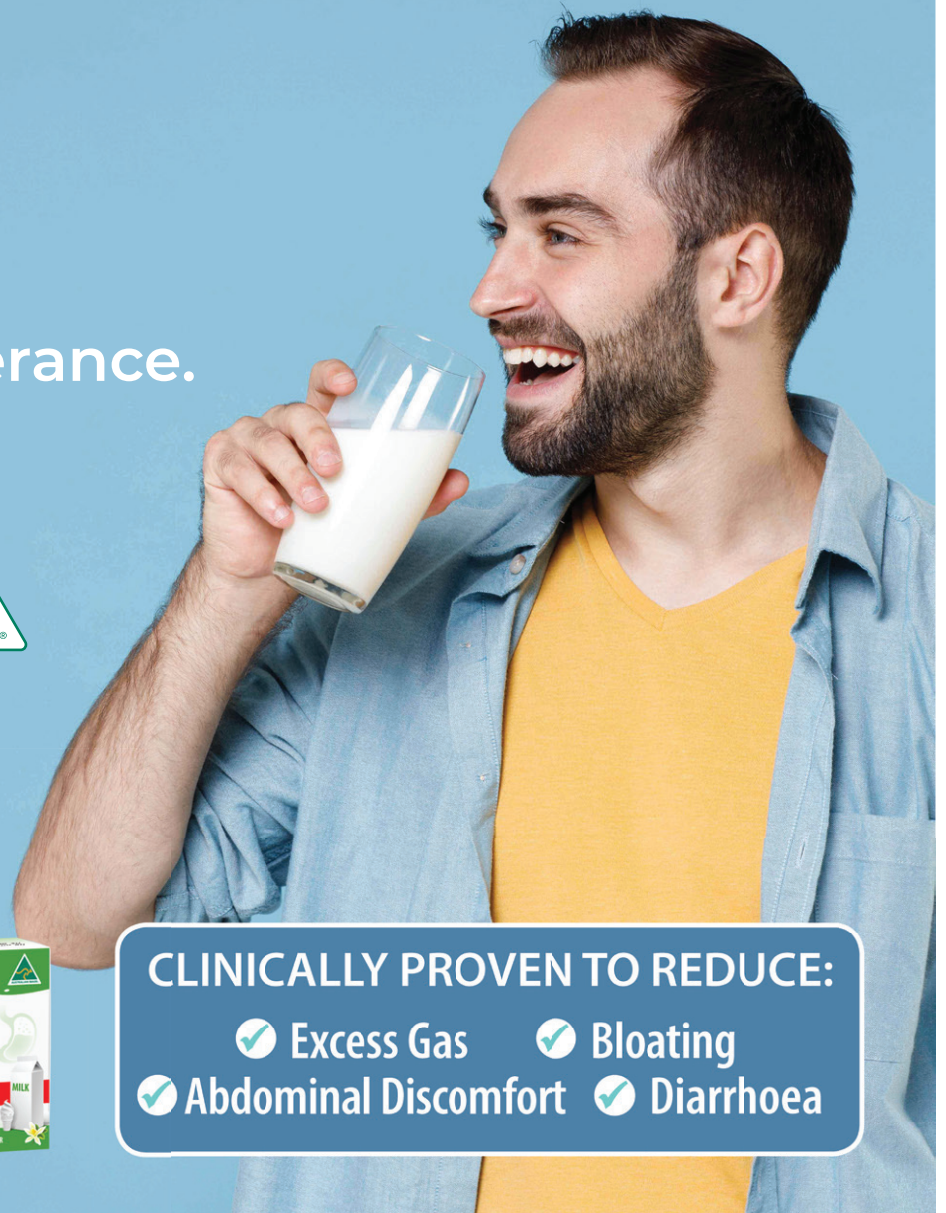
"A big part of this is about giving back, of using art to make a connection," she says.

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Local products bolster housing supply

Using quality local materials is key to solving Australia's housing shortage.

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Behind every Australian home is a construction industry that annually contributes \$156 billion to the economy and employs over one million people across various construction sectors.

With the housing shortage a dominating topic at the federal election, and the recent announcement of the National Housing Accord, where a government commitment will see 1.2 million new homes by 2029, the pressure is on to build houses faster to meet demand.

A key part of the solution to achieve this – that minimises the risk of compromising standards, quality, durability and style – is to use Australian-made building materials.

James Hardie has been proudly providing Australian-made building products for over 100 years

“We remain committed to manufacturing quality Australian-made building products and supporting local jobs and the communities we serve,” says James Hardie Asia Pacific president John Arneil.

The company produces a wide range of innovative fibre cement building materials across manufacturing facilities located in Rosehill, NSW, and Carole Park, Queensland.

“By producing locally, we deliver products engineered specifically for our climate and building standards, providing homeowners with high-quality materials they can trust,” he says.

It is for these reasons major players within the industry partner with James Hardie when building our homes.

prefabAUS is the peak body for Australia's off-site construction industry and acts as the hub for building prefabrication technology and design.

The body's executive chairman, Damien Crough, says: “Our partnership with James Hardie is a perfect example of how global capability and local manufacturing can come together to drive scalable,



A new home by passive house designers Altereco and built with James Hardie's Stria cladding (top) and (above right) James Hardie's Asia Pacific president John Arneil.

sustainable solutions in offsite construction. Their technical leadership and product innovation are a major asset to our ecosystem.

“Our members are looking for certainty – in supply chains, in product performance and in long-term value. Working with Australian Made partners like James Hardie helps ensure we deliver on all three.”

Melbourne-based SAW Constructions, who specialise in building townhouses, enjoy similar benefits through their trade partnership with James Hardie.

Co-founder of SAW Constructions and director of sales and marketing, Steve Vranesic, explains: “Our mission is to deliver homes that are not just well built, but thoughtfully built homes that stand the test of time and serve the people who live in them for generations. That starts with using



premium materials we can trust. James Hardie's reputation for durable, high-performance products makes them a natural fit for our projects and the communities we help bring to life.”

An example of such products is James Hardie's newly released Stria Cladding Fine Texture. A convenient and versatile product, the cladding's 14 millimetre-thick stackable boards come pre-primed and have interlocking edges, which allow for quick and easy installation, are suitable for timber or light-gauge steel frames, and do not require face fixing or patching.

“We are constantly looking for smarter, more efficient, and more sustainable ways to deliver value — and partnering with those who are equally invested in pushing boundaries allows us to stay ahead of evolving expectations,” adds SAW Constructions co-founder and CEO Andrew Allen.

With the pandemic's supply chain disruptions still fresh in the memory and current uncertainty about the potential impact of the tariff war on international shipping, buying locally manufactured products reduces the risk of supply chain delays impacting delivery times. “Australian made helps keep our projects moving and our promises delivered,” he says.

Being Australian made gives James Hardie's partners greater confidence in reliable and consistent lead times and assured compliance.

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“With Australian-made products, we know they meet local standards — no guesswork, no shortcuts. That's a big deal when it comes to council approvals and long-term performance,” says Todd Devine Homes' general manager Wayne Walsh.

Todd Devine himself adds: “It's about delivering homes that are safe, certified, and built to go the distance. For bushfire zones and some compliance categories, Australian certification becomes essential. It's a big advantage knowing your materials meet those standards.”

Australian made for Australian homes



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Find out more



Innovation and a commitment to quality built in our backyard

By setting high standards, Australian firms are taking on the world, writes **Elissa Doherty**.

From Bondi Beach to King's Park and even the local playground, Australia boasts some of the world's most enviable outdoor spaces.

And the equipment we enjoy in our leisure time has also put our home-grown manufacturers on the map.

Take Christie Barbecues, whose public barbecues have been synonymous with Aussie summers for nearly 60 years.

The award-winning gas and electric grills are now popping up along the River Thames in London, in Dubai skyscrapers, and even firing up in the Swedish snow, giving the world a true taste of Down Under.

Head of sales Paul Conradie says the Victoria-based company started in 1965 as an electrical engineering service before launching the first community barbecue in 1974.

"We constantly get inquiries from all around the world and it's driven pretty much by people that come here on holiday or see it on social media and go: 'This is a fantastic product,'" says Conradie.

"People love them, and they are safe – first and foremost, we are in the safety business."

The third-generation family company estimates there are 50,000 of the energy-efficient barbies in public parks, universities, aged care facilities and apartment towers across Australia.

The range has evolved from a coin-operated electric model to a stainless-steel push button today, with safety, accessibility and durability at the forefront of the design.

"The biggest challenge is working in the Australian business environment and making sure that the product is fit



Australia's biggest manufacturer of goal posts and flag poles, PILA, says Australian Made represents a "commitment to quality, integrity and community".

for purpose and meets Australian user expectations, but also to keep manufacturing here," Conradie says.

"The temptation is to go overseas for components or materials to reduce the cost, especially when you have a premium product like ours, which is designed to last forever in our harsh climate.

"But this is, first of all, an Australian

invention, an Australian product. The Christie family is very proud of that. And once you take that away, you're stripping it of its identity, and you're losing the quality control."

Another family business making huge strides both domestically and internationally is Moduplay.

From humble beginnings in Unanderra NSW in 1989 making

Learning the ropes of making circus equipment

A fifth-generation circus performer saw a growing market, writes **Elissa Doherty**.

Circus skills have escaped the big top to take centre stage in suburban studios, dance classes and social feeds.

And the growing mainstream appeal of the daredevil sport has taken businesses like Trix Circus to new heights.

The Queensland equipment manufacturer supplies everyone from Instagram acrobats to the acclaimed Cirque du Soleil amid increasing demand for safe, high-quality products.

Rodleigh Stevens, a fifth-generation circus artist, started the business in 2001 as a school for circus performers.

But he soon realised his students didn't have proper equipment, and began making it himself.

"It became a business purely by accident, and it has grown in a way I never expected because circus as a recreational sport has grown so rapidly," he says.

"A lot of dance studios now, for example, have brought in aerial dance."

Trix Circus supplies everything from trapeze, silks, hoops, hammocks, nets and slings around Australia and overseas, with all products manufactured professionally on the Gold Coast from mostly locally sourced materials.

He says like many circus performers, he grew up learning how to make his own gear out of necessity before gaining his advanced rigging certificate.



Trix Circus operations manager Amanda Lynch (above), and employees Talia Donoghue and Ellie Dunning.

"A lot of circus artists become a Jack of all trades when touring," says Stevens.

"You learn to fix what's broken so, for example, at 13, I attempted my first safety net for the flying trapeze."

Trix Circus operations manager Amanda Lynch says the quality and standard of equipment has improved as the industry has evolved.

The business sells thousands of products a year, and Lynch says they have "to a certain extent, become a benchmark for others".

The former singing trapeze artist says Trix Circus is as much about education as designing and manufacturing sturdy, tailor-made equipment.



"Now that it's a recreational sport, and more people are doing it, there's more oversight and thought about how things should be done," she says.

"We educate our clients about the safety and engineering aspects, including the force that equipment can handle. I'll get mums, dads, and grandparents calling me saying, 'I want to hang a thingy from a thing'. And we have to have a big discussion because they often don't understand the loads involved... this is high-risk equipment."

Lynch says she is proud to have a female-forward hiring policy to support and empower women, and develop a truly progressive business.

"I come from a women's circus

background and believe deeply in having women in the workshop," she says.

"It builds their confidence and gives them access to knowledge about tools and equipment that they are not often exposed to."

She says being certified Australian Made is critical to the team as well as their customers.

"To manufacture here in Australia, to know the staff are treated well and to know the materials used are of the best quality makes a massive difference to consumers.

"Our equipment is some of the most expensive on the market but we have amazing quality and customer service that people are willing to pay for."

AUSTRALIAN MADE



Head of sales Paul Conradie (top) alongside newly installed Christie Barbecues in Bournemouth, UK. Moduplay is a leading manufacturer of top-flight playground equipment (left).

children is to make it more inviting to get outside. The biggest help we got for that was COVID as it shifted everybody's focus to what they can do outside."

The Australian Made accreditation gives them a distinct advantage, but was not the sole reason they were awarded projects by councils and government departments.

Quality, street appeal and the ability to service a product throughout its lifetime were among the factors that won them clients.

"Being Australian Made and locally sourced has a lot of upsides for councils, because the shorter lead times and the longevity of the product and company give credibility when they buy our product," Quinsey said recently.

PILA, the nation's biggest manufacturer of goal posts and flag poles, says Australian Made isn't just a badge - it's a "commitment to quality, integrity and community".

"It means we support local jobs, preserve essential manufacturing skills, and build products that meet Australia's strict safety and compliance standards," says general manager Sian Wooldridge.

The business is literally kicking goals with tens of thousands of products used at Australian schools, clubs, regional and community grounds, government and military facilities, elite training venues, and major stadiums including AFL, VFL, NRL and Rugby grounds.

"Local manufacturing can come with higher upfront costs, but that's the price of doing things right - and buying cheap imports often leads to expensive replacements," Wooldridge says.

"We pay fair wages, use high-quality materials and meet Australia's strict compliance standards."

backyard playgrounds, the company is now one of the biggest commercial manufacturers in the country.

Co-founder Athol Quinsey, who was the company's first employee, says Moduplay is competing in a saturated market that demands high standards.

He says the industry has undergone significant changes in recent decades, including shifts in safety standards and

urban planning, an increased focus on inclusive design, and sensory offerings for neurodivergent children.

"A big positive change has been the shift to inclusivity, and what we now call 'invisi-clusive play products'" Quinsey says.

"Earlier, inclusive products looked like they were made for children with wheelchairs. What we are making,

through clever design, is products that are 'invisibly inclusive' - so that kids of all abilities are able to join in without any stigma attached."

He says COVID-19 has also been a turning point with more attention on outdoor activities. "We've spent the past 15 to 20 years educating government departments that the best way to address the increase in screen time among

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Space technology innovations

These Aussies are innovating rockets and rovers, writes **Owen Thomson.**

With space technology development occurring at an unprecedented rate, two Australian companies are establishing themselves as key players on the global stage.

Spearheading the development of Australia's first home-grown orbital launch vehicle, Gilmour Space Technologies has spent the better part of the last decade developing new cost-effective capabilities for launching satellites into space.

The culmination of its efforts is the Eris rocket – a 23-metre-long, 34-tonne, three-stage vehicle that is due to launch from Bowen in Queensland's Whitsunday region for the first time this month.

"By launching Eris we will be demonstrating a sovereign launch capability that Australia hasn't been seen in 50 years," says company founder James Gilmour.

"This is pretty significant and really exciting. Essentially, we've designed this launch system from the ground up.

"With some slight tweaks, we will mass-produce these launch vehicles at scale. We will produce these rockets in Queensland and launch these rockets from Queensland."

Gilmour says the Eris rocket is set to become a space-age product with a global market.

"We want to be the FedEx or TNT of space delivery – on-time, on-demand, and cheaper than the known competition," he says.

"We intend to carry satellites for communication, earth observation, remote sensing, fire detection and many other applications."

Since starting in 2012 under the stewardship of Gilmour and his brother Adam, Gilmour Space has grown to become the largest space technology employer in the country, with over 217 full-time employees.

"My background is marketing and communication and my brother's background is banking and finance," Gilmour says.

"Both of us grew up loving and being very inspired by science and space technology, with plenty of trips to Cape Kennedy and whatnot. We just saw an opportunity in the space industry and decided to make that bold step."



Top and above right: James (left) and Adam Gilmour, and Gilmour Space Technologies' Eris rocket.

Above: Lunar Outpost Oceania is adding to ELO2's moon rover fleet.

Gilmour is proud of the contribution his company makes to the local Bowen area and the broader economy.

"I think it's important what we do, particularly in-region," he says. "In Bowen we've probably invested about \$10 million into the community to build the launch site and increase our supply chain to fuel the operation.

"We're also stopping the brain drain and we've been able to hire locally. Having that opportunity in regions is something that hasn't really been seen before. I think we need to make more noise to support the Australian space

industry because it is so important for jobs, growth and innovation."

Another Australian company is assisting in the quest to enable a sustainable off-world human presence. Lunar Outpost Oceania is co-leading national efforts to design, construct, and operate the first Australian-made rover – Roo-ver – on the lunar surface.

Winner of the start-up of the year award at the AusSpace24 Australian Space Awards, the company is co-leading the ELO2 consortium – an unparalleled collaboration bringing together leading industry partners and

research institutions to deliver technologies and capabilities that will shape the future of space exploration.

Once deployed, Roo-ver will be remotely operated from Earth but will also have autonomous capabilities.

"ELO2 being selected by the Australian Space Agency to build, test, and operate Roo-ver on the moon is an enormous opportunity – both for us and for the broader Australian space industry," says Lunar Outpost Oceania technical director Katie Doyle.

"While developing a vehicle that will operate in an extreme environment hundreds of thousands of kilometres away is the main objective, this project will also pave the way for the related technologies to be deployed into global supply chains, as well as within other Australian industries like mining, agriculture and defence."

Importantly, the project is part of a broader collaboration with NASA and other partners under the Artemis program, which aims to establish long-term human presence on the moon.

"Space used to be the domain of a small set of government agencies with large amounts of capital," Doyle says. "Now it's a place where a lot of people can play and drive innovation. That's opened up a lot of opportunities for start-ups like us."

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AUSTRALIAN MADE

A truly Australian-made home - outdoors

What makes for a truly Australian-made home? Surely it's one that would reflect the unique climate of the country and the lifestyle of the people. An Australian-made home should be equipped to handle all the elements, and designed to provide comfort and relaxation in style. **Shae Wiedermann** profiles local manufacturers who are experts at creating fixtures, designs and elements for use both inside and outside the house.

Crusader Hose



Yves Steverlynck and his son Francois started their family business in Bayswater in 1985, setting out to be leading Australian-made manufacturers of hoses and reels. From driving to businesses all around the country, to providing layflat hoses to firefighting, industrial and mining sectors, Crusader Hose continues to grow. Their Excalibur Fire Hose Kit is lightweight, easy to use and can connect easily to your home firepump for quick and simple setup in emergencies.

LaTink



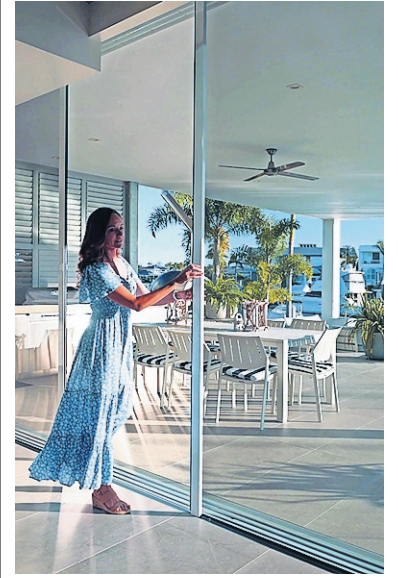
These quality pieces from LaTink are sure to brighten up your home, and your day. Latinka Cubitt started by making custom Christmas wreaths for friends, which then grew into a range of decor products suitable for the indoors and the outdoors. The pieces are artisanally crafted from mild steel, corten, modwood and timber, making them durable and resilient against the elements.

Freedom Modular



There's quite a few perks to choosing a modular home: it's quick, flexible, reduces waste, and has minimal site disruption. Freedom Modular takes these qualities in their stride, offering high-quality, adaptable, energy efficient and durable structures. The homes can be permanent or relocatable for short-term use, and all are made off-site. These modern methods of construction might just transform the way Australia builds.

Freedom Retractable Screens



Seamless indoor-outdoor flow is essential to an Australian home, but bugs aren't. Freedom Retractable Screens keep the insects out and the home looking stylish, without compromising views. The new ZLX range of screens have precision-engineered latches, elegant handles and powder-coated metal housing end caps. They also fit onto modern and retrofitted doors, and have a brake system to eliminate slamming. Entertaining in the summer will surely be a breeze.

Regional pottery looks to reshape future

Bendigo Pottery is confident it can get its products out into global markets.



Visitors to Bendigo Pottery can enjoy a hands-on experience.

Vintage collectors will tell you it's the thrill of the hunt. When rummaging through op-shops and second-hand markets you'll definitely score a dopamine hit if you chance upon a Bendigo Pottery piece out in the wild.

As Australia's largest and oldest working pottery, using traditional production methods and locally sourced clay, the distinct brown hues of Bendigo Pottery pieces have turned them into collectors' items.

However, while this Australian success story has a six-generation history, it also has an exciting future, with plans for global expansion and new product designs.

Raymond Laurens is the owner of Northcote Pottery Supplies, an industry leader supplying clay, glazes, tools and kiln products to professionals, schools and amateur artists. Three years ago, Laurens

acquired one of the largest clay manufacturers in Australia and, seven months after that, bought Bendigo Pottery.

"It was a great opportunity to relocate all of our manufacturing up to Bendigo, and see the entire process through from clay production to finished ware," Laurens explains.

The Bendigo Pottery site is already an established major tourist attraction, offering visitors the opportunity not only to purchase these iconic pottery pieces but also explore historic kilns, learn more in the museum and even try their hand at pottery through a range of hands-on activities.

"We want to enhance this even further as an artistic hub," he says. "We already have quite a few different resident artists from different disciplines, like a metal sculptor, glass



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AUSTRALIAN MADE

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These ladders from AM-BOSS can help you make the most of the storage space in the attic. High-grade materials combine with precision engineering to ensure they're safe, long-lasting and easy to use. Established in 1979, AM-BOSS were the first to introduce an Australian-made pull-down attic access ladder. The team behind the ladders can customise each one to fit unique spaces, and they even offer a 20-year warranty on their residential range.

Bambi



The bedding range at Bambi is as cute as the fawn that shares the name, and will surely make you much happier than the film. Bambi began with Peter Witney, who started making woollen car seat covers in his garage, and grew into one of Australia's leading, family-owned bedding manufacturers. The wool is sourced from the best growing regions in Australia and the products are manufactured on the Central Coast. Fit your bedroom with a Bambi pillow, mattress topper, quilt and blanket.

Bluelab



Whether you're entertaining in the evening or getting up early on a dark winter morning, the lighting in your home is essential to creating the perfect ambience. Bluelab Design can help you set the mood, with their timber lighting that's stylish and sustainable. The reclaimed timber is sourced locally and designed for upcycling, so that they can be renovated or repaired at the end of the LED operational life.

Design Furniture



One-of-a-kind furniture is hard to come by, especially if you're spending hours digging through flea markets, and even then, it might not be exactly what you're after. Design Furniture will actually work with you to make bespoke, upholstered furniture that's unique to your style and your home. The family-owned business is committed to making sustainable pieces that last long and look good.

Classic Blinds and Shutters



No Australian home is complete without something to keep the rays out on a hot day. From plantation shutters to curtains and blinds, Classic Blinds and Shutters have something for every type of home. After manufacturing quality-made blinds and shutters for 21 years, the team are now launching SleepMax, their 100% block-out shutter, perfect for those who need to catch some z's during the day.

Just Cushions



Craft a comfortable home by adding these cushions to your beds and sofas. Just Cushions began in a backyard boat shed, where Sarah Edwards started sewing cushions and delivering them in her Ford Wagon. The Ford was upgraded to a van, and the shed upgraded to a small factory, and then to a larger one. Now, Sarah and her son Matthew continue to run a team of cushion crafters to make durable cushions for the Australian home.

artist, painters, so we are really wanting to make Bendigo Pottery a destination for people interested in all types of creative endeavours."

For treasure hunters, there's also a large bazaar with 30 stores in the antiques and collectables centre.

When it comes to the pottery pieces themselves, Laurens says Bendigo Pottery's famed heritage shapes and characteristic finishes won't be going anywhere. "Each piece reflects a commitment to Australian-made artistry, with highly skilled potters shaping, glazing, and firing in kilns that have stood the test of time," he says, adding that some of their artisan employees have been working there for more than four decades.

However, in the coming months and years, there will be an "evolution" within the range. "We're working on new designs, using different clay



bodies, which will create some new aesthetics," he says.

Expect to see more contemporary muted shades and natural finishes, plus

expanding the line to include vases and homewares. They have also developed a clay with a vibrant whiteness, which will be the basis for a premium range.

The pottery is releasing a new range of products in coming months.

"This will allow us to get more vibrant colours that aren't necessarily available with the standard clay," he explains. "It's really an exciting time for us. There's nothing negative about what we've been making, and we will continue with the historical product, but it's always nice to develop new things," Laurens says.

To that end, Bendigo Pottery have their eye on Asia next. "We're very confident that we can get our product out into global markets," he predicts.

"Our pieces are special because they are Australian made. The product is from the ground here, so there's certain qualities of the materials that aren't available anywhere else in the world. So we know we've got a special product that not just Australians deserve the opportunity to buy, but everyone around the world does."

Joanne Brookfield



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AUSTRALIAN MADE

Looking after your skin (and your dog's)

Australians are spoiled for choice when it comes to high-quality, locally made products that enhance our daily life. This really rings true in the realm of skincare, with so many natural and local ingredients at our fingertips, and a desire to keep our skin safe under the harsh sun. These seven homegrown brands will make looking after your skin - and even that of your dog! - effortless and enjoyable, writes

Shae Wiedermann.

St Saj



After working as a beauty therapist and makeup artist, single mum Emmylou MacCarthy put her entrepreneur skills to the test and assembled a team of skincare specialists to create the brand, ST.SAJ. The results were immediate. Selling out within a day after their launch in September last year, ST.SAJ continues their growing success by offering high-quality skincare for all skin types. Get your hands on their Supreme Skin Kit, which features seven products from their debut collection.

Denu



Feeling fed up with foreign-made and mass-produced products that dominate the skincare market? Well, so was Sarah Fisher, before she launched her brand Denu. Offering body, hair and home products made from high-quality and locally sourced ingredients, Denu seeks to transform everyday routines into sensory rich, self-care rituals. The products aren't just good for the skin, they're good for the planet too, with most of the bottles and jars made from recycled material, and packaged with compostable address labels.

Aromababy



Founded by Catherine Cervasio, Aromababy launched in 1994 as the first of its kind to provide natural and organic skincare for mothers and babies. Catherine handpicked ingredients such as evening primrose, calendula and chamomile oils to create gentle and eczema-friendly products that are perfect for sensitive skin. Aromababy products are used in select maternity hospitals and there's even gift delivery services to babies and mums in hospitals and homes. The bestseller Barrier Balm is great for lips, sunburn, chafing and nappy rash.

CJP Beauty



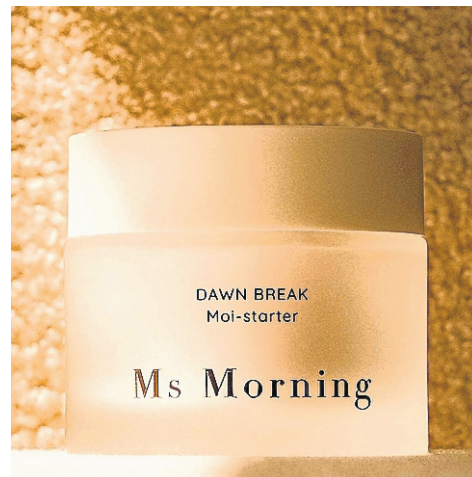
Feeling that so much of the Australian beauty industry is focused on skin and hair care products, Celina Pereira decided to launch a brand that would put makeup on the (Aussie) map. CJP Beauty is renowned for its handmade, cruelty-free and vegan products, including eyeshadows, lipsticks, blushes and skincare-infused primers and setting sprays. The brand aims to be all-inclusive and diverse, creating products for all ages, races and genders, so that everyone can get that quintessential, sun-kissed Australian glow.

Dermalume



Founded in 2015, Dermalume is Melbourne's first scented skincare brand. With over 40 years of experience in the industry, formula designer Margaret Smith teamed up with perfumer artist François Merle Baudoin to create a skincare line that's both hydrating and fragrant. Made with natural and local ingredients and through a cruelty-free process, Dermalume's products include hand creams, face masks and essential oils, all that is needed to nourish and protect every skin type.

Ms Morning



A stress-free morning can really determine a good day. Ms Morning was born out of Candice Feng's desire to create an effective skincare procedure that didn't take up all of her time before work. Packing the morning skincare routine into a simple, one-minute procedure, Ms Morning is for those who are always on the go. Dawn break Moi-starter was the first product by the brand, and works as a serum, hydration booster and makeup primer all in one.

... also, Sandy Snoots



In the hot climate we live in, sun protection is always on our minds. But what about our furry friends who love the beach just as much as we do? Sandy Snoots was created out of love for Bailey, a sun-loving and sunburnt prone dog. This female-owned business has a collection of dog rashies and bucket hats that provide sun protection, plus dog life jackets and bandanas to make beach days safe and stylish. They even have matching rashie and sarong bundles so you can look as good as your pooch.

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AUSTRALIAN MADE

The woolly bears that put an outback town on the map

Thanks to royalty, these teddy bears have become a cherished treasure for many, writes **Elissa Doherty**.



Tammy Johnson (left) and Alison Shaw took over the business in 2014.

They are the cute-as-a-button teddy bears fit for royalty – with Prince William and Princess Kate among their celebrity owners.

And the story behind Tambo Teddies has a touch of the modern fairy tale. What started as a community initiative to support the wool industry and attract tourism has turned the fluffy toys into a national treasure – and put a tiny outback Queensland town on the map.

Tambo Teddies has been handcrafting the 100 per cent natural sheepskin teddy bears since 1992, with 75,000 toys gracing homes, offices and even royal palaces.

The business shot to fame when a bear was chosen by the Queensland government as a royal gift for William and Kate in 2014, and again for Harry and Meghan in 2018, during their respective tours of Australia.

The town of Tambo, located 860 kilometres north-west of Brisbane and home to just 283 people, is now considered the teddy bear capital of Australia.

Director Alison Shaw says loyal customers visit the store from far and wide with their bears, including retirees caravanning around the country.

“I was in the shop recently and a man brought back his teddy called Ben to see the other bears, and say hi,” Shaw says. “There’s a lovely softness with the brand, we are really creating something people will love forever.”

Shaw took the helm with Tammy Johnson in 2014, when the brand was “a bit in the doldrums”, expanding the reach with a boosted online presence and opening a regional sewing hub in Toowoomba

They hired three Syrian refugees in their hunt for new sewers when the workshop opened in 2019, and they are still lovingly creating the bears today.

The range has expanded into different animals including possums, kangaroos, echidna, wombats and hens, all named after people they know, including customers or even the local publican.

Shaw says their eyes are now fixed on the 2032 Olympic Games in Brisbane, with hopes their mini koala will be chosen as a gift for athletes and dignitaries.

“People aren’t just buying them on a whim, they’re buying a connection,” she says.

A typical three-dimensional toy takes about three hours to make, including drawing up the skins, cutting out the animals by hand, stuffing, stitching and sewing them on the machine.

Shaw says the cost of living crisis had been a challenge for stockists, but “challenges are there to be met”.

“We are very active on social media, and keeping the noise happening,” she says.

“One of our key targets at the moment is corporate sales, too.”



A typical Tambo Teddy stuffed toy takes about three hours to make.

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VCV AUSTRALIA

AUSTRALIAN MADE

Paving a way to make research real

Australia's got the ideas – it must do more to back them, writes **Anders Furze**.

When farmer and inventor Dr Nick Berry introduced the Seed Terminator to market in 2016, he found himself in the odd position of being in competition with himself.

While undertaking research for a PhD, he developed technology enabling farmers to mechanically kill weeds at harvest – an important approach, given increasing levels of resistance to herbicides.

But after trying and failing to win the rights to turn his breakthrough into a sellable product, Berry was forced to strike out on his own, developing another process for killing weeds that was faster, more efficient and more cost effective.

"I think the only reason that there are mills out there killing weeds is because I've dedicated my life to it," he says. "That's the reality. You need someone that's just crazy enough to really focus on it."

Across Australia, world-class researchers and innovators make new discoveries every day. But they often struggle to take the next step – turning these discoveries into products and services that make a difference outside of the laboratory.

This process, commonly known as commercialisation, faces widespread barriers. They include a low risk appetite among businesses and a mismatch between commercial and university research endeavours.

"Australia consistently produces and is a major global contributor of fundamental research, yet as a nation we're still developing our capacity when it comes to leading new-to-market innovations and business-university collaboration," says Professor Julie Cairney, deputy vice-chancellor of research at the University of Sydney.

"When Australia gets it right on innovation, we really get it right – and any barriers we face are not due to lack of ideas, thinking or hard work, but the broader environment for translation."

In 2021, the federal government launched a research commercialisation review and subsequent action plan, spurring ongoing efforts to break down these barriers.

"Too often, research that could be used to benefit our economy and



Dr Nick Berry (above) developed the Weed Terminator. The deputy vice-chancellor of research at the University of Sydney, Professor Julie Cairney, says when Australia gets it right on innovation, "we really get it right".



communities is not taken through to innovations which can create new products and services, create jobs and lift productivity in businesses," the action plan found.

"In addition, most incentives for universities place greater emphasis on the number of research publications and citations over research outputs and commercialisation."

The problem is not just found in universities. Small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) make up the vast majority of Australia's economy, but

often struggle to invest in innovation due to limited resources and an unwillingness – or inability – to take on risk.

One program attempting to address this problem is the CSIRO's Innovate to Grow program.

The eight-week online program gives select businesses free access to research and development experts, industry mentors and learning modules to help them turn an early-stage idea into an actionable research plan and funding roadmap.

"Australian SMEs are at the frontier of our digital and AI opportunity," says Michelle Armistead, program manager for Innovate to Grow. "Our role is to connect founders with the science, data and people they need to turn good ideas into investable R&D projects."

At the University of Sydney, the 2024-2027 Innovation and Enterprise Strategic Framework is supporting "a cultural and structural shift toward entrepreneurship, deep tech and industry engagement," says Cairney.

"We've created clear pathways for researchers and students to develop market-ready solutions including pre-accelerators, accelerators, startup mentoring, pitch competitions and investor connections."

The university recently unveiled a \$25 million pre-seed launch fund, to invest in translating academic

research into high-growth companies. It's already backed new treatments for cardiovascular disease, type 1 diabetes and technologies that capture carbon dioxide from the air.

"It's been designed to help bridge the gap between proof-of-concept funding and private venture capital, providing support for promising ventures that are associated with the university."

The initial funds for Seed Terminator were partly provided by farmers themselves, who received prototype machines in return for their support, Berry says. "Not only did they bring capital to the table, but the first prototypes that we built were absolute disasters! By having them as shareholders, they had skin in the game [and] gave us that window to make it better."

There are now some 750 machines operating on farms worldwide, and Seed Terminator is running ongoing trials with universities locally and overseas to continually refine their weed-killing abilities. Throughout it all, Berry has found widespread interest from Australian farmers, who he says take a long-term view of their work.

"Farmers here are very innovative. The words they use are that they're farming for the future generations – they want to leave their farm in a better state than they found it."

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