



Simon Strahan from Australia Post is a team member of the Growing Up program.

## GROWING UP: ROOFTOP GARDENS

A group of young Melburnians is attempting to tackle climate change through a new program called 'Growing Up', designed to promote rooftop gardens atop inner-urban buildings. Program team member SIMON STRAHAN explains the initiative.

As you look out onto a vista of concrete-topped roofs of multistorey buildings, a number of young Victorian businesspeople want you to imagine a sea of green, with every available roof space covered in plants. This is a vision shared by many building owners, tenants, government departments and educational institutions. It is, however, a vision best achieved through a consolidated approach to the promotion and industry development of green roofing.

The group program, operating under the apt title of 'Growing Up', is the result of a Committee for Melbourne initiative to develop young business leaders. The committee provides opportunities for the creation of projects to benefit Melbourne.

So why did the group choose to tackle a largely unfamiliar climate change solution project?

According to Renae Gasmier, head of CPA Australia's procurement and facilities team and a member of Growing Up, green roofs, considered in combination with other measures, can make a real difference to minimising the effects of climate change.

"Green roofing, a sustainable measure in the fight against climate change, has a long and proven history in Europe, North America and parts of Asia," Gasmier says. "Yet it is only recently that Australia has considered the numerous benefits of green roofs in its response to climate change.

"This is a real opportunity for government, big business, building owners and universities to work together to trial and adopt green roof applications for the benefit of the whole community. The effects of climate change are becoming more evident every day and we want to raise

awareness of how green roofs can play a part - they may not be as glamorous as other measures, but they are an easy and sustainable means to help combat climate change."

To accelerate the green roof industry in Melbourne, Growing Up is leveraging the Committee for Melbourne's network to ensure awareness of the project. Already, Melbourne Water, Sustainability Victoria and the City of Melbourne have come on board as key partners.

Growing Up is not just about promoting green roofs. With plans already under way to have a green roof installed on an inner-city building, this group is working hard to make their vision a reality. To do so, they are calling on building owners, architects and students to get involved.

### COMPETITION

A competition has been created to allow the successful architect or designer to watch their design come to life as it is installed on a building rooftop in the Melbourne CBD. With the competition getting support from the Australian Institute of Landscape Architects (AILA) and the Australian Institute of Architects (AIA), the design standard will be extremely high, and the winning bid expected to become the benchmark for environmental and aesthetic green roof design.

Gasmier says Growing Up is excited about the prospect of involving design students in the competition, with a special cash prize for the winning student proposal.

"Educating the next generation of architects and designers about the importance of green roofs in any mid-to high-rise design is essential and the competition is a great vehicle to kick-start that interest," she says.

Melbourne City Council's CH<sub>2</sub> building in central Melbourne features an energy-saving rooftop garden.

