



**OPTiMA**

ARC TRAINING CENTRE IN  
OPTIMISATION TECHNOLOGICAL  
INTEGRATED METHODOLOGICAL  
AND APPLICATIONS

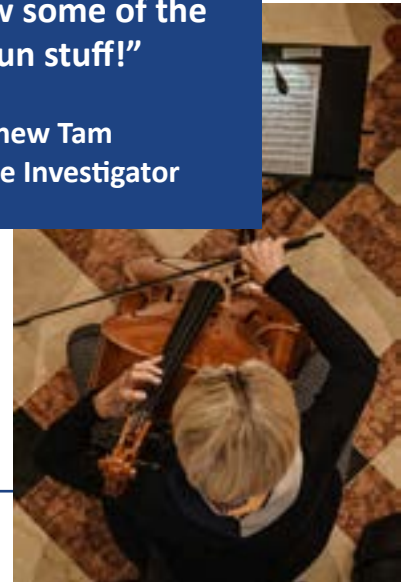
# Getting started with schools

## Key requirements

- Working With Children Check (WWCC)**  
You must have a current WWCC.  
Check if your card is current or find out how to apply for a check here: <https://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au>.
- Notify Centre Manager**  
Please notify the Centre Manager that you are intending to represent OPTiMA in a setting with children or young people, and we will record the event date, any details required by the ARC, and that you have a current WWCC. To do so, please email: [optima-arc@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:optima-arc@unimelb.edu.au).

“Maths can be quite boring in high school I think, it’s like learning scales if you’re playing an instrument, but we have an opportunity to show some of the other fun stuff!”

Dr Matthew Tam  
Associate Investigator



## Contacts

### Your local school

You can contact a local school directly, particularly if you already know a teacher or staff member there. Some schools offer Year 11 and 12 studies in Specialist Mathematics, Applied Computing, or Industry and Enterprise. You can find out which Year 11 and 12 subjects a school offers on the VCAA website.

W: <http://schlprv.vcaa.vic.edu.au>.

### CSIRO STEM Professionals in Schools

CSIRO STEM Professionals in Schools has an online sign-up and they will contact you to arrange a partnership with a school. If you do not have a WWCC, they can cover the cost for you.

W: <https://www.csiro.au/en/Education/Programs/STEM-Professionals-in-Schools>

### School of Maths and Stats Outreach Team

University of Melbourne staff, students or alumni are invited to contact the School of Mathematics and Statistics Outreach team. They are happy to discuss your ideas for workshops and activities and share with you current outreach opportunities they have available.

E: [ms-outreach@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:ms-outreach@unimelb.edu.au)



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## Tips and advice

### Ask about the audience

Find out as much as you can before the event. Is your audience primary students or secondary students? Is the event compulsory or optional? Do they want a hands-on workshop or a presentation about career opportunities?

### Share your interests

Students will sense your enthusiasm, so share something you enjoy, and have fun with it! If you show you are interested, curious, and excited then that will be memorable for students.

### Show, then tell

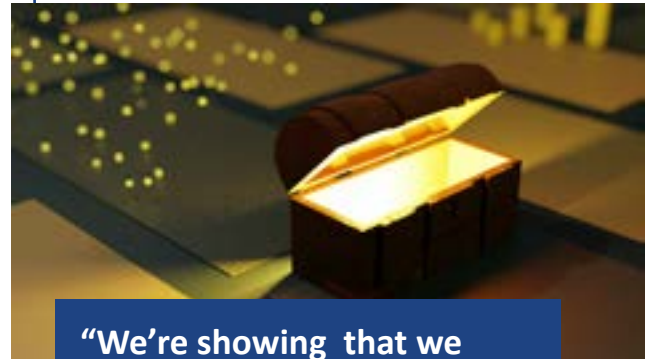
Before you start talking about optimisation, show something first, to get the students interested, wondering, or experiencing something. For a workshop, you could start with a hands-on activity. For a presentation or a talk, try to find an image or story to start with.

### Take a co-presenter

You don't have to go by yourself! We recommend that you find another OPTiMA member to go with you, especially if you're trying to manage a hands-on workshop or keep a large group engaged.

### Focus on the one or two

If you're speaking to a large group, it's very unlikely that you'll engage everyone. That's okay! Focus on the students that are really interested in what you have to say and the one or two students that really need the encouragement or the career pathway information that you're offering.



**“We’re showing that we have this great enjoyment of mathematics, we really love it! The teachers have to teach a certain syllabus whereas we come in and we’re adding to it by just adding some very different sorts of mathematics, and just showing our great enjoyment of it!”**

**Prof Doreen Thomas  
Chief Investigator**

**“There’s **one or two** of them that come down at the end of it and they say “that was amazing, thank you so much! I was going to quit maths and now I’m not going to” and you just think, well, that was worth it then!”**

**Prof Kate Smith-Miles  
Director**

Thank you to the OPTiMA Outreach Committee members, OPTiMA Education and Outreach Officer, OPTiMA members, and members of the M&S Outreach Team that participated in the 2023 Outreach Workshop and shared their tips and advice for this guide. We hope this inspires you to inspire others.