



AIP continues UOM MFPI internship program – Australian Paper-Based Packaging Alliance

As a part of the AIP partnership with the University of Melbourne students from across the Master of Food & Packaging Innovation and the Master of Food Science are able to apply for an industry-based internship.

In January 2026 Apurva Sunil Ramteke, who is a student of the Masters Degree In Food Science, undertook an internship program with Zipform Packaging and Tetra Pak working as a Research Associate.

The internship was established to support the Australian Paper-Based Packaging Alliance (APBPA) during its formative phase, particularly in the collection and analysis of industry data to inform the Alliance's strategic direction and priorities.

The placement comprised a minimum of 200 hours completed over a four-month period.

Representing the Australian Paper-Based Packaging Alliance (APBPA), John Bigley MAIP, Chief Executive Officer, Zipform Packaging and Flavia Vaz AAIP, Corporate Affairs Director, Tetra Pak Oceania, Japan & Korea, acted as Apurva's supervisors during the internship.

During the internship, Apurva contributed to projects focused on sustainable material recovery, packaging systems, and industry alliance coordination. Working at the intersection of research, stakeholder engagement, and sustainability, the internship provided valuable support to the Alliance while offering practical industry experience and professional development opportunities.



Key responsibilities and deliverables included:

- Conducting desktop research and data analysis on industry trends, market developments, and potential Alliance priority projects.
- Supporting the development of reports, presentations, and evidence-based strategic insights to inform Alliance activities and decision-making.
- Engaging and coordinating with external organisations, including founding Alliance members and industry stakeholders, to facilitate data collection and the timely delivery of research outcomes.

The internship delivered significant value to the Alliance by increasing its capacity to gather and analyse industry intelligence during a critical establishment period.

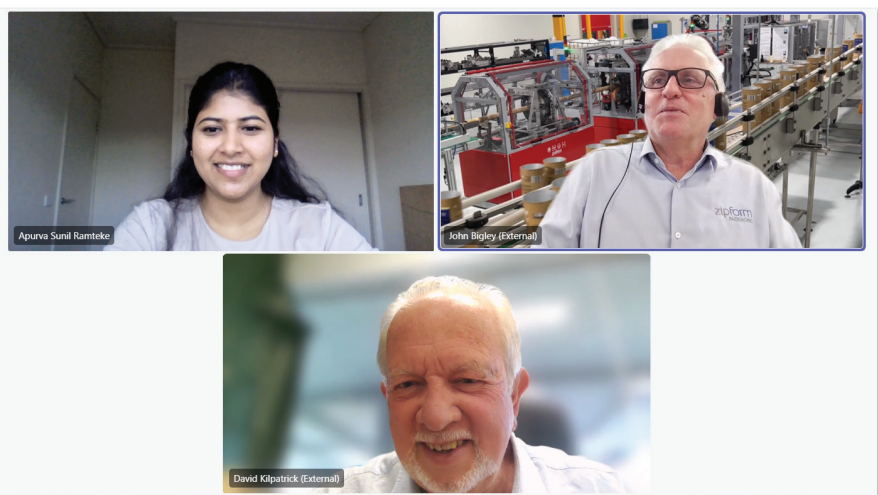
The research and stakeholder engagement activities undertaken contributed to building a stronger evidence base, supporting member engagement, and informing future initiatives aimed at improving the sustainability and circularity of paper-based packaging systems in Australia.

For Apurva, the internship provided hands-on experience in sustainability, industry research, stakeholder management, and project coordination.

It enabled the application of academic knowledge in a real-world setting while developing practical skills in data analysis, professional communications, and collaboration across multiple industry stakeholders. As a result, the internship offered meaningful learning outcomes while also advancing the objectives of an emerging industry alliance.

According to the internship supervisors ***“Throughout the internship, Apurva demonstrated a strong work ethic, excellent analytical skills, and a high level of professionalism. She worked effectively with a variety of stakeholders, showing initiative, adaptability, and a collaborative approach. Her engagement with senior leaders across the paper and packaging value chain was particularly noteworthy, helping build positive relationships and support Alliance activities,”***

“Apurva was a pleasure to work with, and the internship proved mutually beneficial. While the Alliance gained valuable research and project support during a critical growth phase, Apurva gained practical industry experience and applied her postgraduate studies in a real-world setting. Her contribution highlights the value of industry internships and the benefits they deliver to both students and organisations.”



Internship Reflection – by Apurva Ramteke

One of the most enjoyable aspects of my internship was the mentorship and support I received from both John and Flavia.

From the outset, John established a culture of trust, flexibility, and accountability. He was supportive of my hybrid working arrangement and always encouraged open communication, which helped me to realise that professionalism is not only about being physically present, but also being reliable, transparent and delivering meaningful outcomes. His openness to questions, helpful suggestions, and trusting me with real industry problems, helped build my confidence to take ownership of my work, whilst upholding a high standard of research integrity.

Flavia also helped me by providing clear guidance and helping me understand the bigger picture of the work. She was always generous and open with her knowledge, making sure I was aligned with the goals of the project and encouraging me to think critically about complex issues in the industry.

“John and Flavia led well by example, practicing patience, clarity and authentic mentorship. They showed me that good leaders create opportunities for learning, not just work to be done.”

It wasn't just a matter of their technical advice. I learned stronger professional communication, stakeholder awareness, time management, and to be confident in acknowledging uncertainty rather than overstating conclusions from their example.

“They taught me how to think in an evidence-based way, how to have honest discussions about limitations in data and how to reflect continuously, which fundamentally changed the way I approach research and problem-solving.”

Overall, this internship has been one of the most meaningful learning experiences of my educational career. John and Flavia have created a supportive environment that has enabled me to grow as a researcher and as a young professional. I leave the placement with a greater understanding of industry research, more confidence in my abilities and with genuine appreciation for their guidance, patience and encouragement throughout the internship.

“The investment they made in my development has had a lasting effect on how I will approach future professional opportunities.”

Apurva Sunil Ramteke
Master of Food Science
The University of Melbourne

