



CRAFTED

WITH
CAPRAL

Founded in 1993 as a small family business serving Western Victoria, Westlab has grown into a national leader in laboratory solutions, innovating to meet the evolving needs of science, education, healthcare, and manufacturing sectors across Australia and beyond.

BUILT FOR DISCOVERY: THE LOCAL PARTNERSHIP POWERING SMARTER, MORE SUSTAINABLE LAB DESIGNS



Russell Grace, Projects Director at Westlab, reflects on the company's humble origins: "Westlab started back in 1993 as a small family business. My father had a vision to supply laboratory consumables to Western Victoria – that's where the name Westlab comes from. The first product we sold was a beaker."

From these beginnings, Westlab steadily expanded. Initially focused on consumables and equipment for education—physics, chemistry, biology—they grew into university and research sectors, and eventually developed a division dedicated to laboratory furniture and spaces. Russell explains the turning point: "About 10 years ago, we responded to market demand by developing Westlab Spaces – a modular laboratory furniture system".

This shift marked a commitment to quality, innovation, and local supply chains. Westlab became a design-focused company supporting architects and institutions across the

country, delivering certifiable, flexible, and future-proof laboratory environments.

Westlab's lab equipment and designs cater to a variety of sectors: education, medical research, pathology, manufacturing, and testing, inspection, and certification (TIC) laboratories. These specialised labs require strict



physical containment and certification levels, crucial for safety and accuracy. Russell explains, "We work with labs that need physical containment – what's called PC 1, 2, 3, or 4 levels – meaning they need impervious, wipeable surfaces with no gaps where

bacteria can grow. Our aluminium systems allow us to design profiles that meet these rigorous standards without messy polyurethane fillers. That's a huge point of difference." Their modular system is designed for adaptability and speed – enabling laboratories to quickly reconfigure as technologies and workflows evolve. Russell elaborates,

"Technology moves fast. Today a person might be working at a bench; tomorrow it might be a machine or robot. Our systems help future-proof spaces so clients can innovate without costly rebuilds."

A cornerstone of Westlab's recent success is its close collaboration with Capral, Australia's leading aluminium extruder and supplier. Russell is clear about the value this partnership brings: "Capral is more than a supplier – they're a true partner. They enable us to innovate and commercialise quickly. If we have a great idea that solves a real-world problem, Capral helps de-risk it, fast-tracking it to market." This agility is vital in the niche laboratory market where precision, reliability, and quality are paramount.

Westlab transitioned its bench frames from steel to aluminium, specifically leveraging Capral's custom extrusions: "We custom design all our extrusions with Capral – every groove, every hook is carefully engineered to be wipeable, impervious, and practical for PC2 and PC3 labs. Capral's manufacturing quality and certified powder coating ensure consistency and durability."

Russell highlights the practical benefits: "We cut out middlemen, reduce costs by nearly 40%, and double

the load capacity of our benches. We know Capral's product is consistent – if anything is off, it's fixed fast. That reliability means less risk and better outcomes for our clients."

Moreover, Capral's local manufacturing footprint—close to Westlab's assembly facilities in Ballarat—allows rapid supply and responsiveness, ensuring timely delivery for often time-critical laboratory projects.

Westlab's reputation as one of Australia's top laboratory fitout

suppliers is built on a culture of speed, hassle-free service, innovation, and problem-solving. Russell proudly shares, "We do around 200 labs a year across Australia – from small rooms to seven-story university research buildings like Flinders University's HMRI. Our clients appreciate how we listen, understand their pain points, and deliver tailored, certifiable solutions."

The company's reach also extends to New Zealand and North America through affiliated divisions, supporting





high-tech labs globally. Westlab's sustainability commitments also align with Capral's focus on LocAl, lower-carbon aluminium. Russell states, "We choose Capral's LocAl Aluminium because it reduces carbon emissions and supports environmental goals. Sustainability is a key part of Westlab's ethos, and we see local sourcing as vital to our ESD programme."

The partnership between Westlab and Capral exemplifies a collaborative ecosystem where manufacturers, architects, builders, and end-users come together to advance Australia's scientific infrastructure. Russell sums it up best: "It's an ecosystem of winning – everyone benefits, from the business to the people using the spaces to the architects specifying them. Together, we help Australia innovate and push scientific boundaries."

Westlab stands as a prime example of Australian innovation, quality manufacturing, and strong local partnerships. By aligning their efforts, they are transforming laboratory design and fostering an environment that supports discovery, research, and progress both at home and internationally.



Watch the Westlab Crafted with Capral case study to learn more about Westlab and their long-term partnership with Capral.

