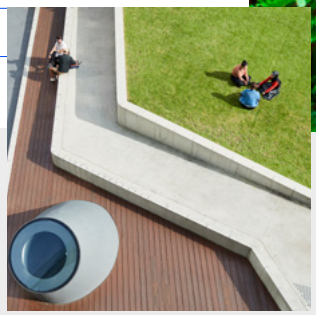
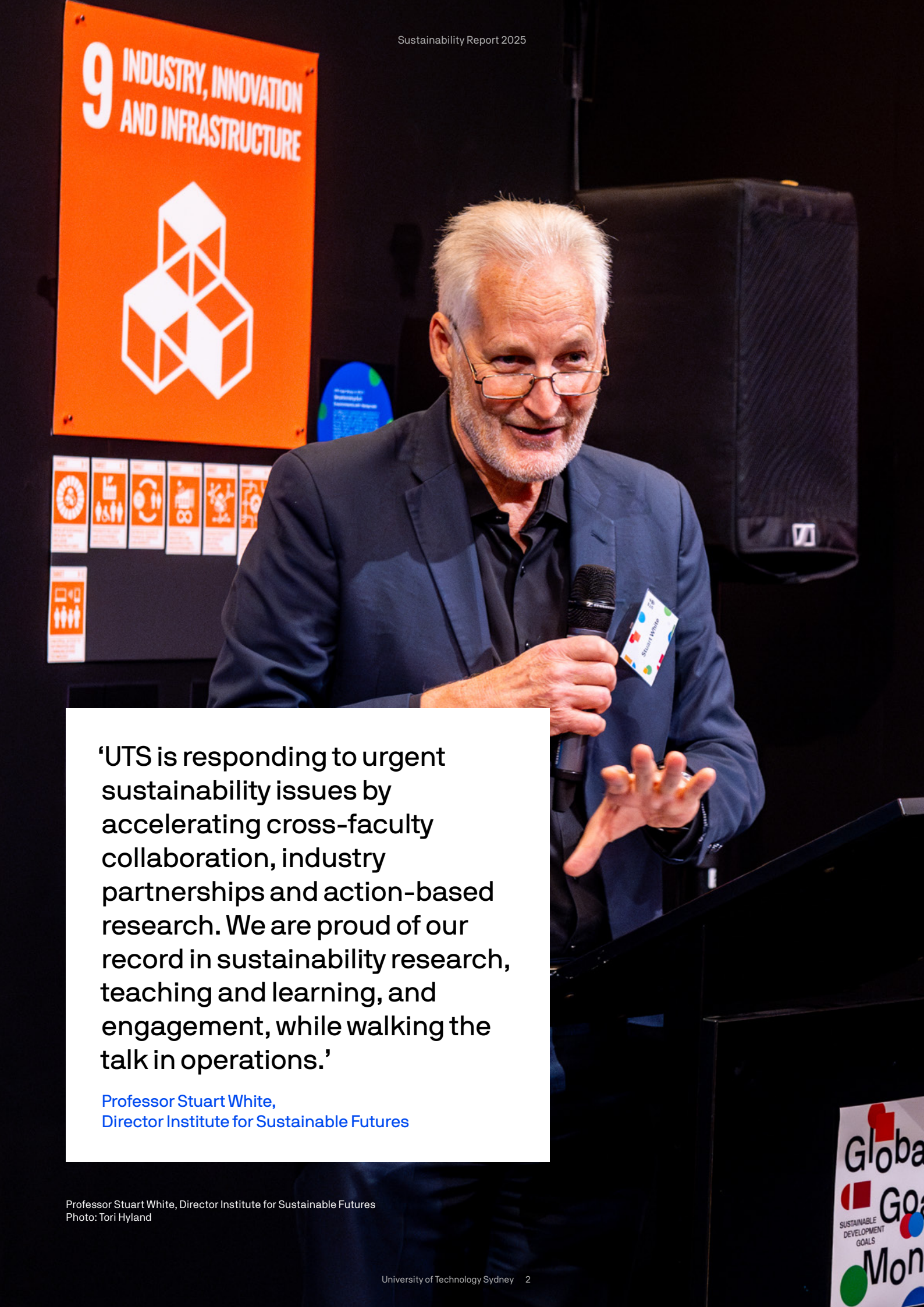
Sustainability Report 2025

Acknowledgement of Country

UTS acknowledges the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation, the Boorooberongal people of the Dharug Nation, the Bidiagal people and the Gamaygal people upon whose ancestral lands our university stands. We would also like to pay respect to the Elders both past and present, acknowledging them as the traditional custodians of knowledge for these lands.





‘UTS is responding to urgent sustainability issues by accelerating cross-faculty collaboration, industry partnerships and action-based research. We are proud of our record in sustainability research, teaching and learning, and engagement, while walking the talk in operations.’

Professor Stuart White,
Director Institute for Sustainable Futures

Professor Stuart White, Director Institute for Sustainable Futures
Photo: Tori Hyland


UTS

Statement from the Vice-Chancellor

Andrew Parfitt
Vice-Chancellor and President

I am pleased to present the 2025 Sustainability Report, which highlights our progress across research, education and operations, partnerships and community engagement.

At UTS, sustainability is central to our UTS 2030 strategy, our decision-making and our contribution as a leading public university of technology. In 2025, we continued to translate research into real-world outcomes, prepare our students to lead in an increasingly complex world, and improve the operational efficiency of our campus as we progressed our Climate Positive Plan.

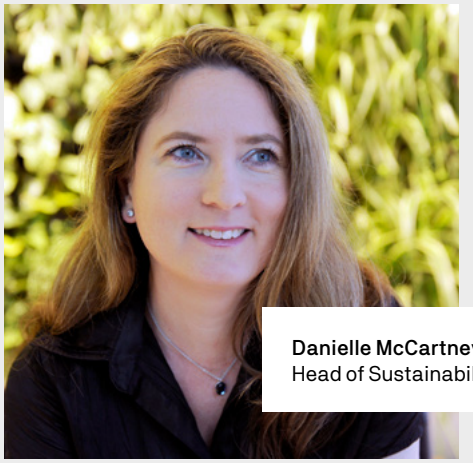
Our researchers continued to receive national and international recognition for their leadership in sustainability-focused research in 2025. Dr Peter Irga and his team were awarded the prestigious World Green Infrastructure Network Award for Academic Work for research integrating green roofs with solar panels to enhance energy efficiency and urban resilience. Dr Jennifer Matthews received the NSW Premier's Prize for Science and Engineering Early Career Researcher of the Year for her work leading the Sydney Coral Project – the first comprehensive mapping of coral distribution in Sydney. Distinguished Professor Jie Lu AO is also leading a $11.7 million industry-led research hub using responsible artificial intelligence to support sustainability and productivity gains in the grains industry.

These achievements contribute to UTS's growing international reputation for research excellence and sustainability leadership, reflected in major global rankings. UTS is now ranked 96th in the QS World University Rankings, which includes a component measuring sustainability performance. It is also ranked equal 145th in the Times Higher Education World University Rankings and 8th in Australia.

UTS's institution-wide commitment to sustainability was also recognised at the 2025 International Green Gown Awards, where it was named Sustainability Institution of the Year.

I would like to thank the UTS community for your commitment, leadership and passion in advancing positive social and environmental outcomes in 2025. We look forward to building on this important work in the year ahead.

Statement from the Head of Sustainability



Danielle McCartney
Head of Sustainability

The 2025 Sustainability Report is testament to the incredible work being done across UTS in research, teaching and operations and the positive impact our university is having on developing solutions for the complex environmental, social and economic challenges of our time and in preparing our graduates for the future.

In 2025, we achieved a major milestone in our sustainability journey and met our **Climate Positive Plan** target, with the university now powered by 100% renewable electricity. This was accomplished by securing two power purchase agreements with solar and wind farms in New South Wales. Along with other initiatives to improve the university's energy efficiency and further reduce greenhouse gas emissions we are well on the way to achieving our Net Zero and Climate Positive goals.

Sustainability engagement remains strong in 2025 with more than 2,300 staff, students and members of the broader UTS community participating in sustainability focused events including Orientation, Green Week, and the Climate Connect Forum. Global Goals Month, which highlights UTS research and projects contributing to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), continued to see strong interest attracting over 500 attendees. The UTS Sustainability newsletter now has over 4,200 subscribers.

In 2025, UTS was ranked number one in Australia and third globally for SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals in the *Times Higher Education* Impact Rankings. This outstanding achievement recognises the university's strength in partnerships with institutions, governments, industry, NGOs and communities, as well as its leadership in sustainability initiatives and social impact.

We were honoured and delighted to be recognised as the International Sustainability Institution of the Year at the 2025 International Green Gown Awards, owing to our commitment to a whole of institution approach to sustainability. Showing the depth of sustainability commitment across the university, ActivateUTS won the Student Engagement category of the Australasian Green Gown Awards and Distinguished Professor Tracy Levett-Jones won the Staff Sustainability Champion category.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge and thank the Sustainability team, members of the UTS Sustainability Steering Committee, the SDGs and Climate Action Working Groups, the senior executive, and all staff, students and volunteers who championed sustainability throughout the year and contributed positive outcomes achieved in 2025.

About UTS

54,405
students and
4,397 FTE staff

The University of Technology Sydney (UTS) is a dynamic and innovative university in central Sydney. UTS has a distinct model of learning, strong research performance and a leading reputation for engagement with industry.

With more than 54,405 students (42,595 EFTSL) and 4,397 FTE staff, UTS offers over 520 undergraduate and postgraduate courses across disciplines such as architecture, built environment, business, communication, design, education, engineering, information technology, law, midwifery, nursing, pharmacy and science.

UTS 2030 draws on a commitment to build a sustainable future by continuing to improve our sustainability performance and by integrating sustainability principles into our key functional areas of teaching and learning, research, operations and community engagement.

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are an organisational framework for action on and progress towards sustainability and provide the framework for this Sustainability Report.

The 17 SDGs have been designed to help guide governments, businesses, organisations and the community towards creating a more just and sustainable world. Below the 17 high-level goals sit 169 targets and 232 indicators to guide and evaluate progress.

In 2016 UTS was one of the first universities in the Asia Pacific region to become a signatory to the University Commitment to the SDGs. In 2017 the UTS Institute for Sustainable Futures, in collaboration with Australasian Campuses Towards Sustainability produced a Guide for Universities Getting Started with the SDGs. The same year, our academics began to incorporate the SDGs into their research and teaching. In 2019 UTS signed the UN Global Compact, the world's largest corporate sustainability initiative, with a mission to support action on the SDGs. As a signatory and member of the Global Compact Network Australia, the UTS Business School is working to deepen engagement with future business leaders on the SDGs and responsible and sustainable management.

In 2020 we established the SDGs Working Group to guide our work embedding the SDGs across the organisation, and the Climate Change Cluster Research Centre began mapping and aligning their work against the SDGs.

In 2021 our Sustainability Report adopted the SDGs framework for the first time and in 2022 we hosted our first SDGs week on campus. This was expanded in 2023 to Global Goals Month, a great opportunity to raise awareness about the SDGs and the great work being done across the university in research, teaching, campus operations and community engagement to address the 17 SDGs.

End poverty in all its forms everywhere

FWCI of university's research outputs	2.09
International collaborations	64.8%
Proportion of pubs in the top 10% of journals according to Citescore	33.7%
Number of publications produced	196
Number of citations produced	3,519

Staff Giving Program

For nearly two decades, UTS staff have raised more than $2.3 million in philanthropic support through the UTS Staff Giving Program. Thanks to this inspiring generosity, and the university matching these funds dollar for dollar, thousands of UTS students have received crucial financial assistance.

In 2025, UTS staff gave generously, raising over $96k through the Program to support students facing financial hardship, Indigenous programs and student support and equity grants for students for thesis completion.

In 2026 and beyond, the Staff Giving Program will continue to nurture a culture of giving at UTS, enabling UTS staff to amplify their shared values and aspirations and make a positive difference through UTS.

Find out more

Over
$96k
raised to support students

The Right to Housing in Australia

Australia is currently experiencing a housing crisis. Housing is increasingly unaffordable, and inequality in housing continues to grow. The human right to housing offers a response to the crisis that centres on human agency, dignity and equality. In **The Right to Housing in Australia** report, Professor Hohmann from the Faculty of Law argues that recognising a legal right to housing can underpin new policy responses and help build a fairer and more just housing system.

Adequate housing shields us from the elements and from external threats and pressures. It gives us a base from which we can take part in the life of the community, and from where we can build a livelihood, take part in education, and contribute to society. Housing also provides a space where the private aspects of our lives are fostered and supported. The way people are housed reflects a social and political agreement about what standards of living, levels of inequality and social exclusion we tolerate or condone. Thus, housing provides not just material shelter but helps set physical boundaries of belonging and community.

Yet too many Australians are homeless, live in inadequate, insecure or unsafe housing, or need to sacrifice other necessities – from food to school uniforms – to keep a roof over their heads. The most recent census recorded more than 120,000 people experiencing homelessness, with many others at risk. Young people, older women, survivors of domestic violence and First Nations peoples are disproportionately affected. Housing inequality drives broader inequalities in health, social participation and contact with the justice system. Recognising a right to housing in Australian law is a vital step toward a more equal Australia, now and into the future.

Photo: Mural by Christopher Statton and Megan Wilson, by Ponderosa Templeton licensed by CC by 4.0

End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

FWCI of university's research outputs	6.76
International collaborations	76.2%
Proportion of pubs in the top 10% of journals according to Citescore	56.0%
Number of publications produced	282
Number of citations produced	10,974

Blue food systems as nature-based solutions for climate resilience

Blue foods play a critical yet under-recognised role in global food systems, particularly in Pacific Island Countries and Territories where fish account for 50–90% of protein intake in coastal communities. Despite their importance, blue foods have historically been marginalised in food security and climate policy discussions.

This project, led by the Institute for Sustainable Futures and funded by the World Wildlife Fund for Nature, explored the extent to which blue food systems can function as nature-based solutions (NbS) that simultaneously deliver food security and livelihoods, biodiversity conservation, and climate resilience outcomes. Focusing on small-scale coastal communities in Fiji, the research examined mangrove oyster farming and seagrass restoration using systems thinking and participatory methods.

Findings show that community-led aquaculture and ecosystem restoration can strengthen livelihoods—particularly for women—while incentivising ecosystem protection, improving habitat for marine species, and providing indirect climate resilience benefits such as shoreline protection and carbon sequestration. The study also highlighted governance and market challenges that must be addressed to balance trade-offs and sustain long-term outcomes.

Find out more

Photo: Institute for Sustainable Futures

Bluebird Pantry, Bluebird Brekkie Bar and Night Owl Noodle Bar

Ongoing cost-of-living pressures continue to affect student wellbeing, particularly for those balancing study, employment and living expenses. Food insecurity remains a significant challenge, impacting academic engagement.

In response, the UTS Students' Association (UTSSA) runs a suite of sustainable food initiatives designed to support student wellbeing while aligning with broader environmental and social sustainability objectives.

The Bluebird Pantry provides regular access to fresh produce, pantry staples and frozen meals through a model that supports dignified access and the redistribution of surplus food. This approach reduces food waste while ensuring students can meet their basic needs in a consistent and sustainable way.

Complementing this, the Bluebird Brekkie Bar and Night Owl Noodle Bar offer free, nutritious meals during peak study periods, supporting student health and engagement. These initiatives are delivered through a combination of student volunteers and UTSSA staff, strengthening peer connection and fostering a culture of care across campus. By embedding food security into its welfare strategy, the UTSSA helps ensure students are supported to succeed academically without compromising their health or financial stability.

End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

Advancing EarthSense AI-driven livestock farm management for climate-resilient food security

This project, led by Dr Arnick Abdollahi from UTS's Transdisciplinary School, addresses a growing and under-recognised challenge in Australian agriculture: the increasing frequency and rapid onset of flash drought within complex grazing systems. Unlike conventional drought, flash droughts develop quickly, often at localised scales and unexpected times, leaving livestock producers with little opportunity to respond. Existing monitoring systems are generally coarse in resolution, reactive rather than predictive, and poorly aligned with farm-level decision-making.

In response, the project develops an integrated drought intelligence framework that combines satellite Earth observation, climate data, and machine learning to identify flash drought risk exposure in near real time. The model examines how flash droughts emerge differently across bioregions, shaped by variations in climate regimes, soils, vegetation dynamics, land-use practices, and environmental management. By translating complex environmental signals into actionable early-warning insights, the project supports livestock producers to make timely, climate-adaptive management decisions. The methodology is designed to be transferable across regions and adaptable for international application in diverse grazing systems.

Several factors contributed to the project's progress and impact: interdisciplinary integration of remote sensing, climate science, and agricultural systems modelling; collaboration with industry partners and producers; and active engagement with a global research team. The incorporation of First Nations methodologies and Indigenous/Traditional Knowledge strengthens the environmental stewardship dimension of the research and ensures culturally informed land-management perspectives are embedded within the analytical framework.

Overall, the project delivers significant benefits by improving early detection of rapid-onset drought and strengthening resilience planning in grazing systems. By providing timely, actionable intelligence, the research supports food security, sustainable land management, and effective climate adaptation under increasing climate variability and extreme weather risk. Ultimately, the project supports the development of resilient livestock production systems and reinforces the long-term sustainability of agricultural landscapes.

Find out more

Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

FWCI of university's research outputs	3.31
International collaborations	68.2%
Proportion of pubs in the top 10% of journals according to Citescore	38.5%
Number of publications produced	3,723
Number of citations produced	100,138

UTS Health Service

In 2025, UTS Health Service delivered 11,830 medical consultations, continuing to provide accessible, high-quality primary health care to students and staff. During 2025, UTS Health Service introduced an infusion clinic and expanded skin cancer check promotions to support preventative health and chronic disease management.

UTS Health Service continues to work closely with the Faculty of Health to support Clinical Practice Unit requirements. UTS Health Service will also continue its close collaboration with Medibank to promote health services for overseas students, with a particular focus on mental health and sexual health initiatives.

UTS Counselling

The UTS Counselling Service offers free and confidential counselling to help with personal, psychological, study related and administrative difficulties. In 2025, the Counselling Service provided 4585 occasions of service to the UTS community.

The service also provided 149 occasions of case management to improve students' welfare and wellbeing. Additionally, the Service oversaw the wellbeing coaching programme which was located at the Student Wellbeing Space which aimed at helping students accessing support at UTS.

The Counselling Service also liaises closely with the Safety Casework Team in providing emotional support to students who had experienced gender-based harm.

SuperParent Powers

The Kidman Centre has launched SuperParent Powers, a free, interactive online training program to help parents support pre-teens and teenagers. Developed by psychologists and co-designed with parents, the program offers evidence based strategies to strengthen family connection and manage the challenges of adolescence.

SuperParent Powers is 100% digital and self-paced, and features mobile friendly video modules and simple at-home exercises. The program is backed by a national pilot trial that showed positive outcomes such as reduced adolescent anxiety and depression, improved parent–child communication, greater parental confidence and less family conflict. By helping children feel heard and supported, SuperParent Powers aims to build stronger relationships and protect young people's wellbeing.

Find out more

Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

Bioengineering protein nanocages into multi-target vaccines for Alzheimer's disease

Alzheimer's disease (AD) is characterised by the clumping of abnormal proteins in the brain, which increases over time and leads to worsening cognitive decline. Vaccines could prevent the onset of Alzheimer's by stimulating a patient's immune system to selectively target and degrade AD-causing proteins. Previous clinical trials showed that vaccines could clear some problematic proteins from the brain but failed to stop cognitive decline. These clinical failures may be due to these vaccines targeting only one abnormal protein at a time, even though multiple proteins interact to progress AD, and that their identities and prevalence differ between patients and change over time.

Researchers from the School of Life Sciences, and their collaborators, have begun to transform AD vaccine development using tiny unique nanoparticles, called protein nanocages. These modifiable nanocages can be readily adapted into vaccines capable of simultaneously targeting multiple abnormal proteins in the brain. This unique therapeutic strategy comprehensively combats the entire spectrum of AD-causing proteins, promising enhanced efficacy and protection against the disease.

In this project, Associate Professor Care and his team are developing and manufacturing a large set of nanocage vaccines that target different abnormal proteins associated with AD. They then test the capacity of these nanocage vaccines, alone or in combination, to prevent the onset of AD in a clinically relevant humanised mouse model.

This research is poised to represent a major breakthrough in the fight against AD. It will pave the way for the development of a vaccine that is safe, effective and affordable, offering significant benefits to millions of individuals at risk of AD.

Find out more

UTS Wellbeing Lounge

In 2025, the ActivateUTS Wellbeing Reps opened a new space in Building 2 dedicated to wellbeing and mindfulness. On top of low-sensory relaxation spaces and guidance for accessing mental health support on campus, the Wellbeing Lounge also hosts daily events, including free clothing swaps, and mindfulness activities. The lounge provides a hub for students to check in on their wellbeing throughout busy university sessions.

Green Gown Award 2025

Winner Student Engagement ActivateUTS's Wellbeing Program

Photo: Andy Roberts

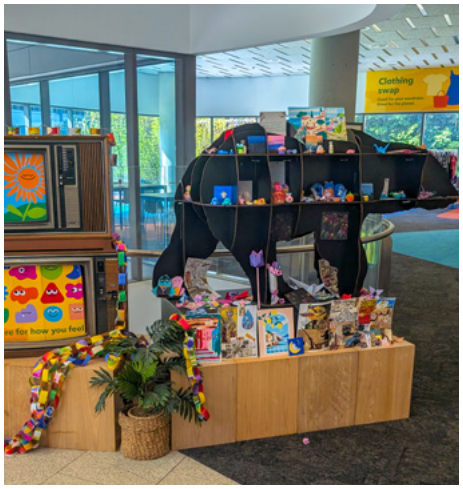


Photo: Joe Dullard

Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

FWCI of university's research outputs	2.03
International collaborations	46.8%
Proportion of pubs in the top 10% of journals according to Citescore	36.8%
Number of publications produced	474
Number of citations produced	7,567

Green Gown Award Winner: Sustainability Institution of the Year

This achievement celebrates years of effort by many within the UTS community to make a positive difference and incorporate sustainability in our learning, teaching, research and operations. It also shows the importance of strategy and long-term planning in crafting an effective commitment to sustainability.

Watch our video submission here

Education ranking

UTS is now ranked 96th in the QS World University Rankings which includes a component on sustainability performance. UTS ranked equal 145th in the Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings.

UTS is now equal 33rd in the world and 8th in Australia in the 2025 THE Impact Rankings which assesses universities against the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. UTS ranked equal 69th in the world and 7th in Australia in the 2026 QS Sustainability Rankings.

Transdisciplinary Electives Program

Through the Transdisciplinary (TD) Electives Program, all undergraduate students at UTS engage creatively with complex social and environmental challenges. By undertaking one of eight unique transdisciplinary subjects as part of their core degree, students build ethical, sustainable and socially responsible practice, systems thinking, creativity and change making capabilities. They work across different perspectives, connect local challenges to global agendas, and learn to take meaningful action aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In contrast to programs offered elsewhere, TD electives provide a unique opportunity for students to develop sustainability capabilities not through discipline specific content alone, but through transdisciplinary collaboration with peers from across diverse disciplines, and in partnership with industry, community and government organisations. This distinctive approach was recognised with an international Gold Award in the Power of Partnerships category at the prestigious global QS Reimagine Education Awards 2025. Selected from more than 1,600 submissions across 94 countries, the UTS's TD Electives Program was awarded Gold and ranked among the top five entries globally. This achievement is a testament to the power of partnerships to enable meaningful, sustainability-centred learning across boundaries.

Photo: Kwa Nguyen

Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

Thrive project: helping all young Australians finish school well

Completing high school well is a critical milestone that shapes young people's future opportunities. Yet many students, particularly those facing social, economic, or personal disadvantage do not finish school well. Despite significant investment in education programs and policies, gaps between advantaged and disadvantaged students persist or have widened according to data from the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority. One reason is that the factors influencing school engagement and completion are complex and interconnected, including academic support, mental health, family context, and students' sense of belonging at school. Therefore, there is no one-size-fits-all solution and effective support needs to be tailored to the diverse needs of students.

The Thrive program partners researchers from UTS's Human Technology Institute, Western Sydney University and educational experts from the NSW Department of Education, combining the expertise of youth and education specialists with the development of new causal machine learning methodologies, rich longitudinal datasets, and qualitative and co-design research methods. Thrive researchers explore the complex web of needs and circumstances shaping students' outcomes.

Building on these insights, Thrive aims to empower schools and communities to take ownership of their unique challenges and opportunities. Rather than prescribing a single model of support, Thrive's approach fosters a shift in mindset, encouraging local leaders, educators, and communities to use evidence and lived experience to identify what works best in their context. By supporting locally driven innovation and continuous learning, Thrive seeks to enable practical, sustainable solutions that can adapt over time and drive meaningful, ongoing change for students.

Find out more

Gold Award

QS Reimagine Education Award 2025 Winner Power of Partnerships TD Electives Program

5 GENDER EQUALITY

Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

FWCI of university's research outputs	4.15
International collaborations	62.3%
Proportion of pubs in the top 10% of journals according to Citescore	27.6%
Number of publications produced	422
Number of citations produced	9,115

Photo: Tori Hyland

Respect.Now.Always.

UTS continued its strong commitment to the national Respect.Now.Always. campaign in 2025, delivering a year of high-impact prevention initiatives, student engagement activities and sector leadership. The RNA team led a full calendar of visibility and education events across campus life, including a major presence at O'Day, O'Fest, Winterfest, Wear It Purple, Mardi Gras and Fair Day, engaging over 3,800 students and staff in conversations about consent, respectful relationships, and active bystander action. Across these flagship engagements alone, RNA reached more than 2,600 students and mobilised a dedicated cohort of volunteers who supported event delivery and peer to peer education.

Strengthening student voice remained a priority and the team facilitated student representation on governance bodies, co-led workshops and delivered targeted student-facing activities such as the UTS Housing x RNA consent activation, UTS Has Your Back, and multiple collaborations with UTS Engage, ActivateUTS and UTS Sport. In parallel, RNA strengthened staff capability-building through an ongoing program of Active Bystander Training delivered with the Centre for Social Justice & Inclusion.

UTS continued to play a leading role in the higher education sector. As chair of the NSW-ACT Universities Prevention Connection, RNA coordinated meetings, resource-sharing, and professional development across institutions, including hosting an in person symposium attended by more than 60 practitioners. The team also presented at major national forums sharing UTS's prevention, student engagement and community voice approaches with sector peers.

Throughout 2025, RNA strengthened partnerships with government and specialist organisations, ensuring UTS remained aligned with best practice and contributed to national efforts to prevent gender-based violence.

Student Safety Caseworkers

Established in 2024, the Student Safety team continued its work throughout 2025 and expanded in response to increased demand for student safety support. The team was responsible for responding to student disclosures and reports of gender-based violence, providing trauma-informed, person-centred case management and support.

The expansion of the team strengthened UTS's capacity to provide timely, holistic and wrap-around support, including referrals both within and external to UTS, while continuing to deepen collaboration across the University. Building on foundational work undertaken in 2024, the Student Safety team contributed to UTS's preparation for the implementation of the National Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender-based Violence which came into effect on 1 January 2026. This work included ongoing improvement of response pathways, continued policy and procedural alignment, development of resources and guidance, and continued training and consultation to support consistent, survivor-centred practice.

Through both increased casework capacity and ongoing strategic readiness work, the Student Safety Casework team will seek to ensure that all members of the UTS community feel supported and empowered to speak up, report all forms of gender-based violence, and be connected with the appropriate support.

Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

Preventing violence against women through social marketing evidence

Violence against women (VAW) remains a persistent and complex social problem in Australia and globally, with only modest reductions over recent decades despite significant policy, programmatic, and awareness-raising efforts. While public education and communications campaigns have played an important role, there has been limited synthesis of evidence on how social marketing and behaviour change approaches can most effectively contribute to primary prevention of VAW.

This project, commissioned by Our Watch and delivered by Change for Good at UTS, undertook a comprehensive literature review to identify best-practice social marketing approaches for preventing violence against women. Using rigorous systematic review methods and internationally recognised social marketing benchmark criteria, the research examined global evidence from behaviour change interventions, alongside a complementary review of mass media and communications campaigns.

The project produced a robust evidence guide and a practical set of recommendations to inform the design, implementation, and evaluation of future VAW prevention initiatives. It highlights the importance of a clear behaviour change focus, strategic and systems-based approaches, co-design and value co-creation with communities, theory-informed practice, multi-component interventions, and trauma-informed, inclusive use of language and imagery.

Key factors supporting the project's success included close collaboration with Our Watch, strong transdisciplinary expertise in social marketing and public health, and a critical social marketing lens attentive to power, equity, and lived experience. The outputs which include a project final report and a toolkit of recommendations, provide actionable guidance for policymakers, practitioners, and funders, strengthening the evidence base for more effective and sustainable prevention of violence against women.

Find out more

UTS's sustainable Mardi Gras celebration

UTS's Mardi Gras celebration is all about celebrating our LGBTQIA+ people and allies and highlighting the university's values. From the planning committee, Fair Day, working bees and Parade, the team collaborated with many units and faculties across the university and the sense of community built through Mardi Gras has been sustained through the ongoing relationships and partnerships.

This year, the Pride@UTS team carried UTS's sustainability priorities through to the parade by partnering with Freedom of Assembly Sound to utilise a bike for their sound system in the parade, rather than a standard vehicle. Powered by recycled electric vehicle batteries, the speakers and amplification system is designed to be as efficient as possible and is towed on a bicycle trailer behind an electric bike.

Photo: Tomas Masso Tomassoni

5 GENDER EQUALITY

Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

My Blue Sky: supporting people at risk of forced marriage

My Blue Sky is Australia's national service supporting people who are in, or at risk of, forced marriage. Operated by Anti-Slavery Australia, a specialist legal and research centre within the UTS Faculty of Law, the service provides legal advice, immigration assistance, and guidance on reporting cases to relevant authorities.

UTS Rapido partnered with Anti-Slavery Australia to redesign and redevelop the My Blue Sky website as a secure digital platform for both people at risk of forced marriage and those seeking to support them. The goal was to ensure that information and services are accessible in a safe, confidential and culturally sensitive way.

The platform was developed through consultation with three key user groups: young people with lived experience of forced marriage, experts in the field, and frontline workers. Insights from these consultations informed the design of a user-friendly website offering targeted messaging for people at risk, clear navigation tailored to different audiences, and educational information for friends, family members and professionals supporting those affected.

Rapido's R&D team defined, designed and built the platform in close collaboration with Anti-Slavery Australia. High fidelity prototypes were developed and refined through iterative feedback before being implemented and tested.

The website provides a secure way for individuals to access information, understand their rights and seek support. Built on a secure content management system, the platform enables Anti-Slavery Australia's researchers and legal specialists to continually update information and resources as policy, research and community needs evolve.

To better reach culturally and linguistically diverse communities, which are statistically more exposed to forced marriage risk, the platform includes automated translation into 15 languages, reducing language barriers and improving access to critical information and support pathways.

Find out more

Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

Gender equity in the built environment workforce

Gender equity in construction remains a critical challenge for achieving inclusive and sustainable workforce outcomes. The sector continues to exhibit strong gender segregation, with women representing only 21% of the workforce, compared with 31% in architectural, engineering, and technical services. This imbalance reflects persistent structural and cultural barriers that limit women's participation, progression, and representation in leadership.

Addressing these challenges is essential to advancing gender equality, reducing inequalities, and promoting inclusive and decent work in line with the Sustainable Development Goals. Mona Salam and Jua Cilliers from the School of Built Environment examine how gender equity is reflected in workforce composition, pay, career progression, and governance practices across the construction sector. Drawing on Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) data and a sample of Tier 1 contractors and leading architecture firms in Australia, representing more than 60,000 employees, it provides a comprehensive evidence base to assess when and how equity initiatives translate into measurable change. The findings reveal persistent structural disparities.

Women remain underrepresented across all levels, particularly in leadership, and are disproportionately concentrated in lower-paid roles. In construction, women account for only 2% of CEO roles and 4% of Head of Business positions, compared with 17% and 33% respectively in design firms, highlighting a sharp decline in representation at senior levels. Governance patterns reinforce these gaps. Within the sample, women represent only 17% of governing body members in construction firms, with no women in chair positions, compared with 34% board representation and 17% chairs in design firms.

This imbalance is also reflected across pay quartiles, where women are concentrated in lower-paid roles and remain significantly underrepresented in the highest remuneration bands. These findings highlight a clear gap between policy presence and impact, reinforcing the need for measurable targets, stronger accountability, and structural change to drive meaningful and sustained progress.

Celebrating leaders

With the support of an esteemed ARC Industry Laureate Fellowship, Distinguished Professor Jie Lu is leading a project that will pioneer new computational technologies to achieve personalised machine learning that supports women's lifetime health journeys, analysing things like IVF, pregnancy, menopause, and other health data over a woman's whole life to improve their health outcomes. Professor Lu hopes the project's research outcomes will potentially lead to higher impact and lower cost women's healthcare service in the future.

Find out more

6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION

Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

FWCI of university's research outputs	2.62
International collaborations	83.0%
Proportion of pubs in the top 10% of journals according to Citescore	69.0%
Number of publications produced	1,068
Number of citations produced	36,574

Water consumption

Water consumption on campus was 160,478kL in 2025, a 7% increase compared to 2024 mainly due to a 9% increase in student enrolments. Despite increases in student and staff numbers, our 2025 total is 21% lower than pandemic levels. UTS's potable water reduction strategies include water efficient fixtures and fittings, leak detection and the use of non-potable water supplies such as recycled water from Central Park and rainwater for irrigation and toilet flushing.

Water consumption

Year	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Water [kL]	203,000	145,000	117,000	128,000	148,000	149,500	160,478

6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION

Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

Financial Review AI Award

Sustainability Category

Dynamic prediction of raw water quality in catchments

Delivery of consistent high-quality drinking water is crucial to public health. However, it is facing growing risks as the intensity and frequency of both acute and chronic climate events increase. Rapid changes in raw water quality due to extreme weather events within the catchment can lead to lower treatment performances and production rates at water treatment plants, minimising the outflow and impacting operations throughout the entire water supply system.

There is an urgent need for a solution to quantify the impact of extreme events brought on by climate change on raw water quality in real time, enabling timely and appropriate operational response. A research initiative has been co-designed in partnership between the UTS Data Science Institute, Sydney Water, WaterNSW, Melbourne Water, and TRILITY, investigating the feasibility of developing and applying advanced AI methods to the problem of building predictive models of water quality from catchment source waters. A generalised data-driven solution for dynamic raw water quality prediction has been developed to achieve a sustainable future for the water industry. The proposed solution involved a robust spatial-temporal machine learning approach, incorporating weather and upstream effects to predict multiple water quality indicators. A water quality prediction toolkit has been implemented to assist the water industry in improving operational resilience in adapting to the evolving landscape of potable water quality management.

The solution benefits over half a million people in Sydney and 80% of water users in Melbourne. It has made a further step towards properly using this vital natural resource. This research received a 2025 Financial Review AI Award in the Sustainability Category.

Find out more

Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

Improving sanitation and lowering emissions in Indonesia

The Institute for Sustainable Futures is working with international sanitation experts to support Indonesia to improve sanitation systems and reduce associated emissions. Sanitation systems have a crucial role to play in decarbonisation. Wastewater is estimated to contribute approximately 5% of global methane emissions as well as nitrous oxide emissions. Methane and nitrous oxide are greenhouse gases with significant global warming potential, 28 and 265 times more than carbon dioxide respectively. Poorly managed sanitation particularly contributes to emissions, and global estimates do not fully consider non-sewered sanitation systems prevalent in rapidly growing cities and rural areas in low-and middle-income countries such as Indonesia.

Between 2024 and 2026, ISF researchers have been involved in the Emissions Measurement to Improve Sanitation in Indonesia (EMISI) project, an initiative of the Ministry of Public Works and Housing of the Government of Indonesia (GOI) and supported by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), through KIAT – the Indonesia Australia Infrastructure Partnership.

The research team developed methodologies to measure greenhouse gas emissions from diverse sanitation systems across Indonesia and generated a dataset for them. They used this information to identify potential reduction strategies and to estimate Indonesia's sanitation emissions under current conditions and future scenarios. The research was used to build understanding of sanitation's emissions within the Government of Indonesia and other global stakeholders, and to evolve policies and wider action to minimise emissions in other countries.

Find out more

7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY

Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all

FWCI of university's research outputs	2.45
International collaborations	83.8%
Proportion of pubs in the top 10% of journals according to Citescore	64.7%
Number of publications produced	1,871
Number of citations produced	72,689

UTS energy supply

In 2025, UTS achieved a major milestone in its sustainability journey, transitioning to 100% renewable electricity across its campus operations. This achievement was made possible through a strategic combination of on-site solar generation, innovative energy storage, and a landmark renewable Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) securing solar and wind energy from New South Wales projects. This is a significant milestone in the implementation of our **Climate Positive Plan**.

100% renewable electricity

Unlocking rooftop solar for all

Australia is a global leader in rooftop solar adoption, yet millions of suitable rooftops remain unused. This project, undertaken by researchers from the Faculty of Design and Society, investigates why housing affordability has become a critical barrier preventing many households from accessing the benefits of clean energy.

The research shows that rising house prices relative to incomes significantly reduce both the likelihood of installing rooftop solar and the size of systems installed. While falling solar costs and rising electricity prices encourage uptake, housing affordability constraints increasingly limit households' ability to invest, even where solar would deliver long term savings. Renters face additional structural barriers, as they typically lack decision making power over rooftop investments.

The project has translated its findings into public policy debate through national media engagement, and proposes a practical policy solution, the "Use It or Lend It" solar program, under which governments can install and operate solar panels on suitable rooftops where owners are unable or unwilling to invest themselves. Electricity generated can be allocated to low income households and renters, expanding access to affordable clean energy. The project demonstrates how rigorous research, public communication, and policy oriented design can jointly support a more equitable and inclusive clean energy transition.

Find out more

7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY

Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all

Photo: Energy Partner

Cost-effective wireless energy harvesting from high-voltage powerlines

UTS is developing alternative power harvesting techniques with an energy industry partner and Charles Sturt University (CSU) to help deliver clean, reliable power in hard-to-reach locations. The project, explores how to wirelessly harvest energy from the electromagnetic field surrounding high-voltage transmission lines and convert existing grid infrastructure into a practical source of power for rural and regional settings.

UTS Rapido, leads the technical development and CSU contributes deep expertise in energy systems. The team has completed a detailed circuit and mechanical design and developed an advanced proof-of-concept prototype in collaboration with Professor Dylan Lu and the UTS School of Electrical and Data Engineering. Lab testing has demonstrated the prototype's ability to harvest usable power without a direct physical connection to the powerline.

A key use case involves remote telecommunications towers, which support essential connectivity across regional and remote Australia. These sites often rely on diesel generators that bring high costs, carbon intensity, and maintenance challenges. Solar can reduce emissions but can prove unreliable in shaded or weather-affected environments. This project aims to offer a third path by leveraging proximity to transmission lines to deliver consistent renewable energy without new generation infrastructure.

Field trials will take place at CSU's AgriPark. The next stage has secured seed funding through the NSW Electrification & Energy Systems Network (EESN) Seed Grant Scheme, part of the NSW Decarbonisation Innovation Hub. As the energy partner notes: "This project demonstrates the potential for existing transmission infrastructure to serve a dual purpose, delivering both electricity and connectivity to regional communities."

A bold vision for Africa's energy future

In 2025, researchers from the Institute for Sustainable Futures (ISF) partnered with Power Shift Africa to chart a bold course: 100% renewable energy across Africa by 2050. Using the One Earth Climate Model (OECM), an integrated energy assessment tool co-developed by ISF, the German Aerospace Centre and the University of Melbourne in 2017, ISF researchers developed fair and detailed decarbonisation pathways for Kenya, Malawi, Rwanda, Senegal, Tanzania and Tunisia. In developing the scenarios, researchers found that these six African countries have enormous solar and wind power generating potential – such that the continent could produce more than 180 times more energy than they need. The excess energy could be exported to neighbouring countries.

The report explores energy demand across major sectors, investment requirements, and policy frameworks and shows that annual investment into new renewable technologies for power generation until 2025 is enough to establish a reliable and affordable electricity supply and universal access to energy for the six African countries.

The OECM African pathways support countries to meet their decarbonisation commitments in accordance with the Paris Agreement while revealing opportunities for Africa within the global energy transition.

Find out more

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

FWCI of university's research outputs	2.79
International collaborations	64.1%
Proportion of pubs in the top 10% of journals according to Citescore	51.1%
Number of publications produced	752
Number of citations produced	20,579

Student employment services

UTS Careers helps connect UTS students with employment and workplace training opportunities through a wide range of initiatives, events, and workshops. In addition to engagement with first year student events during Autumn and Spring Orientation, there were over 4,220 student attendances at our 39 UTS Careers organised events in 2025.

The CareerHub online portal received 39,296 distinct student and alumni logins and promoted over 3,000 job advertisements, which totalled over 17,500 job and career opportunities for UTS students and recent graduates. A total of 21,997 employers are registered on the portal, of which 1,304 were new registrations this year.

UTS Careers has a strategic focus to scaffold career education in the curriculum. In 2025, UTS Careers embedded career education into 73 courses and 135 subjects, reaching approximately 33,500 students, a 14% increase in subject coverage.

21,997
employers now registered on CareerHub

Solving the stalemate

By re-engineering the relationship between bargaining and arbitration, this project offers a new regulatory model for essential services that promotes genuine negotiation and timely dispute resolution. Australia's current bargaining system for essential workers - police, firefighters, nurses - creates long damaging stalemates because these workers cannot strike and arbitration is only allowed in extreme "crisis" situations. Disputes remain unresolved for months, undermining morale and threatening the quality of public services.

Associate Professor Carabetta, from the UTS Business School, argues the system is "not fit for purpose" and proposes a redesigned arbitration model that encourages genuine negotiation rather than waiting for crises. His research draws on evidence from Canada and New Zealand, as well as other models, where the possibility of arbitration creates a "shadow effect" with both sides aware that an arbitrator could impose a settlement.

Key elements of the proposed model include introducing stronger triggers for intervention when parties fail to bargain in good faith along with strict time limits to prevent disputes from dragging on. Crucially, it envisions bargaining and arbitration as complementary mechanisms rather than a binary choice.

This work has gained significant traction across legal, industrial and policy spheres, supported by the Australian Federal Police Association and Police Federation of Australia, cited in government inquiries and referenced by the Supreme Court. Internationally, the research has been particularly influential in Canada and is widely recognised as a major contribution to employment law.

The ultimate goal is legislative reform that ensures essential workers have a fair, timely dispute resolution pathway — protecting both workers and the communities who rely on them.

Find out more

UTS Open Modern Slavery introductory course

UTS Open offers a free introductory course on Modern Slavery produced by UTS and Anti-Slavery Australia experts, Professor Jennifer Burn and Carolyn Liaw. This resource is designed to provide an understanding of the different types of modern slavery and the way in which we all intersect with modern slavery in our daily lives and what can be done about it.

Find out more

Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation

FWCI of university's research outputs	2.42
International collaborations	70.2%
Proportion of pubs in the top 10% of journals according to Citescore	53.3%
Number of publications produced	1,624
Number of citations produced	51,120

Recycled tyre tech boost railway resilience

One of the major challenges faced by Australian railways is the long-standing issue of track instability and degradation, mainly in heavy haul networks which are exacerbated by the increasing axle loads and speeds of modern freight trains. Conventional rail foundations rely heavily on quarried granular materials, which are not only costly and environmentally unsustainable, but are also prone to particle breakage, reduction in track bearing capacity and increase in settlements. These deficiencies lead to frequent maintenance requirements, higher repair costs, increased operational downtime, and long-term track performance issues.

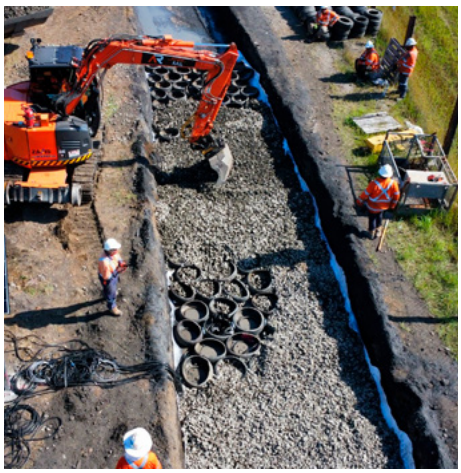


Photo: Rakesh Malisetty

Embracing circular-economy principles, the new design and construction procedure developed by the UTS Transport Research Centre (TRC) in close collaboration with industry utilises repurposed recycled rubber tyres and discarded mining conveyor belts to reduce reliance on traditionally quarried ballast and sub ballast materials while enhancing track resilience and extending the track's design life.

This research directly addresses urgent environmental, economic, and infrastructure challenges by reducing the reliance on quarried aggregates during track construction and decreasing overall material consumption through extended renewal cycles. By incorporating recycled materials, the railway track's carbon footprint is significantly reduced, partly through emissions avoided and partly through the carbon-sequestration benefits associated with recycling processes, while simultaneously enhancing overall track performance and resilience.

Following extensive large-scale laboratory testing supported by advanced numerical modelling, these technologies were successfully implemented at the Chullora Rail Precinct in Western Sydney. Under live freight-train operations, these solutions demonstrated significant reductions in noise and vibration, aggregate degradation and improved track stability, confirming superior performance compared to standard track design.

This project exemplifies how targeted and collaborative research can unlock solutions for national infrastructure, yielding tangible engineering, economic, social, and environmental impact. By turning waste into high-performance track technology, the TRC team has redefined what sustainable innovation in transport infrastructure can achieve.

Mining ore efficiently with robotics

Mining operations often make high-impact decisions about ore routing and processing with limited or delayed information about material composition. This can lead to unnecessary handling, suboptimal processing, and higher resource use.

Through a sustained partnership with NextOre, the UTS Robotics Institute has contributed robotics, sensing integration, and deployment methods that help bring magnetic resonance ore analysis out of CSIRO's lab and into mine-site workflows. The project develops a site-ready sensing and positioning approach to scan whole truck loads and operator-oriented procedures make the system usable by non-specialists in harsh operating conditions.

Key factors enabling progress include partner co-design of operational constraints and acceptance criteria, iterative validation using controlled testing and simulation before site deployment, and field-facing integration and commissioning activities that convert research methods into repeatable workflows.

The positive impact is realised through partner-enabled deployment capability: earlier, higher-through put measurement that can support faster and more consistent ore handling decisions, and a clearer pathway to scale sensing across assets and sites. The collaboration also strengthens workforce capability through research-aligned student projects that contribute to real industry deliverables.

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES

Reduce inequality within and among countries

FWCI of university's research outputs	2.22
International collaborations	52.4%
Proportion of pubs in the top 10% of journals according to Citescore	35.4%
Number of publications produced	607
Number of citations producedt	9,941

UTS SOUL

The UTS SOUL Program is a co-curricular social impact action and leadership initiative delivered by the Centre for Social Justice and Inclusion. SOUL supports students to go beyond their degree and into the community to skill up, give back and make meaningful change. Through a combination of social impact learning and hands on community experience, SOUL students leave with the skills and agency to address issues of social concern.

In 2025, 506 students gave 24,322 hours of their time to support 260 community organisations. 115 students achieved their Award, dedicating a minimum of 90 hours and developing their skills in social and cultural humility, critical reflection, collaborating across difference and making social change. 269 students also completed stage 1 of the program, the Badge, which is a pre-requisite to complete the Award.

Engagement Australia Excellence Award 2025 Student Engagement UTS SOUL

SOULie Spotlight – Glebe Youth Service volunteers

The GYS Food Circle is a food relief program in the local UTS precinct run by the Glebe Youth Service. UTS SOUL students support the program as volunteers, helping to sort, prepare and package donated fresh produce and assist the community to access the free food market.

In 2025, 13 SOUL students gave 129 hours of their time to support Food Circle.

These students are Aditya Sreenivas, Ananta Paul Argha, Binh Nguyen, Callum Wood, Gaurav Santhanu Thampy, Kenneth Vaz, Maki Kuroda, Marlena Olive, Nikhil Badgujar, Pratham Harwani, Sidharth Joly, Yixian Leng and Yue Jia.

The program builds connections between UTS students and members of the local community. Food Circle program coordinator Jennifer Norton says "it's particularly nice for our long-term community volunteers to engage with young people."

For the student volunteers, it gives them a sense of belonging. "Sharing is caring! It felt good to be part of the community service and to help those in need. Despite being an international student, I could realise a sense of belonging within the community" says volunteer Kenneth Vaz, a Master of Information Technology student from India.

Photo: Aditya Sreenivas

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES

Reduce inequality within and among countries

Photo: Alison Byrne

Staff volunteers

UTS staff can choose to take social justice leave and volunteer their skills and time to support and build the capacity of community organisations. In 2025, staff from across the university contributed 2,196 hours to community organisations using social justice leave.

2,196

hours contributed to community organisations

UTS's new Pathways Plan

Education is a fundamental human right. However, circumstances beyond individual control often determine how accessible university is. This could include socioeconomic background, location, or disability.

The UTS Pathways Plan is dedicated to advancing educational access and equity by offering multiple entry routes into higher education for students from underrepresented backgrounds. Part of this means offering more flexible and equitable opportunities and dismantling structural barriers for students from diverse backgrounds. It's the responsibility of universities to ensure that every student, regardless of background, has the opportunity to thrive.

Read the UTS Pathways Plan 2025-2027 here

Photo: Andy Roberts

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES

Reduce inequality within and among countries

Giving NDIS participants a voice

An AI-powered communication platform developed by the UTS Data Science Institute is giving people with disability a stronger voice in Australia's NDIS system. The "My Complaint Assistant" uses large language model technology to transform unclear or emotional feedback into structured, actionable complaints - helping every participant access the services they deserve.

People with disability across Australia frequently face significant barriers when attempting to make complaints about their NDIS services. These include communication difficulties, anxiety about confrontation, fear of service suspension, and limited familiarity with formal complaints processes - leaving injustices unresolved and providers without the feedback they need to improve.

The UTS Data Science Institute partnered with digital complaints specialist nTrustus to develop the My Complaint Assistant and My Response Assistant platform. This custom-built system, funded by the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission, helps NDIS participants express concerns clearly while preserving their authentic voice, and guides providers in crafting constructive, resolution-focused responses.

The collaboration combined UTS's expertise in trustworthy, explainable AI, user testing and fairness evaluation with nTrustus's deep knowledge of the NDIS sector and existing provider relationships. A grant from the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission enabled rigorous development across three phases between 2023 and 2025, from research and prototyping through to full public deployment via the nTrustus platform.

The platform is freely available to all 646,000 NDIS participants and has begun diverting lower-level complaints from the Commission, freeing regulators to focus on serious incidents. The technology won the 2025 RegTech Social Impact of the Year Award at the APAC Region RegTech Awards. Participants have reported transformative outcomes: "I get overwhelmed and never get the words right. The online helper made my complaint sound really good."

This project also received the 2025 UTS Distilling Research Impact Award.

Financial assistance for students

UTS runs a number of financial assistance and support programs designed to assist students who are from financially disadvantaged / low socially economic backgrounds. Support is in the form of grants, free computers, textbooks, and zero interest flexible repayments loans with the aim of impacting on students' attrition, retention, success and inclusion at university.

In 2025, support totalled $449,000 (excluding loans) with assistance provided to approximately 1000 students. Loan support in 2025 was provided to 242 students totalling $629,000.

Loan Support

provided to 242 students totalling $629,000

Reduce inequality within and among countries

Inclusive and sustainable employment pathways for refugees and migrants

Refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants encounter persistent structural barriers to accessing meaningful and sustainable employment in the Australian construction industry, despite ongoing skills shortages. These obstacles include challenges with the recognition of overseas qualifications, limited local work experience, discrimination, gendered exclusion, and increased risks of exploitation, particularly affecting women and recently arrived humanitarian entrants.

This project, led by UTS School of Built Environment, is an example of a targeted educational initiative delivered in a strategic collaboration between the UTS, Sydney Metro, Parklife Metro, and Metro Assist (a community-based migrant support organisation). It introduces skilled migrants and refugees to the realities of working in construction through culturally informed resources that explain workplace practices, safety requirements, and career pathways, alongside real stories of migrants rebuilding their engineering and construction careers.

Success is underpinned by strong partnerships with community organisations, active engagement with NSW Government and industry bodies, and research-driven insights into employment experiences. The project informs policy and workforce programs, improving employability, job quality, and workforce diversity, while reducing exploitation and underemployment. It also addresses labour and skills shortages, supports construction productivity, and helps meet critical housing and infrastructure targets, contributing to more inclusive economic participation and reduced inequalities.

By enabling refugees and migrants to participate and thrive, this initiative promotes social cohesion, enhances wellbeing, and fosters a sense of belonging for individuals and families. It is particularly significant given the NSW building industry's current skills crisis, making workforce diversification crucial to deliver Australia's future housing, infrastructure, and energy transition needs.

Find out more

Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

FWCI of university's research outputs	2.32
International collaborations	66.8%
Proportion of pubs in the top 10% of journals according to Citescore	53.5%
Number of publications produced	1,193
Number of citations produced	36,915

Campus engagement activities

The sustainability team runs a program of events and initiatives throughout the year to engage staff and students. In 2025, 2,320 people attended events including Green Week, Global Goals Month and Orientation days. Two successful photo competitions were delivered in collaboration with student clubs. Our Sustainability Newsletter now has over 4,200 subscribers with an average open rate of 39.3%.

Subscribe here

Winning photo from the Green Week Photo Competition: Matthew Zabel - Finding your place among ruins

Photo: Kwa Nguyen

UTS Housing initiatives

In 2025, UTS Housing continued to deliver strong sustainability outcomes across energy performance, waste reduction and circular economy initiatives. Energy consumption declined from mid-year, with four consecutive months of reduced usage despite full occupancy, in part due to a full upgrade of the hot water system to improve reliability and operational efficiency.

UTS Housing's circular economy and reuse initiatives, anchored by the Free Store, continues to deliver substantial diversion outcomes with approximately 700kg of clothing and 800kg of bedding reused by residents or redistributed to local charities. A further 600kg of kitchen equipment and utensils were reused within the housing community. Other waste initiatives saw 200kg of E-waste and 2 tonnes of metal diverted from landfill.

Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

Community-led Sustainable Cities

Cities are at the forefront of climate change - yet the people most affected by environmental and economic pressures are often the least included in shaping solutions. In many inner-city neighbourhoods, sustainability initiatives can feel top-down, overlooking the lived experience, cultural knowledge and leadership already present within communities.

Community-led Sustainable Cities reimagined how urban sustainability can be designed and delivered. Led by the UTS Social Impact Lab, the project partnered with more than 80 residents across Glebe, Ultimo, Pyrmont and Haymarket to co-create a locally grounded roadmap for sustainability transitions. Rather than starting with policy, the project began with people - using visual arts, storytelling, asset-mapping and bilingual engagement to surface community priorities, strengths and ideas.

This participatory foundation enabled residents to lead three tangible sustainability initiatives: the transformation of a neglected social housing garden into a thriving shared green space; two bilingual clothing swaps and a textile repair workshop that diverted over 300 garments from landfill; and a resident-led climate forum that strengthened climate literacy and collective action at the neighbourhood level.

Beyond environmental outcomes, the project built social connection, confidence and leadership capacity; demonstrating that inclusive, community-led approaches are essential to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. By embedding equity, partnership and co-design at every stage, the initiative offers a replicable model for how universities and communities can work together to co-create more resilient, just, and sustainable cities.

Find out more

Photo: Bridge Housing

Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

A paradigm for inclusive urban development

The Child-Focused Cities initiative positioned children and young people at the centre of sustainable and inclusive urban development, in alignment with the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. It advanced a shift from viewing children as passive beneficiaries to recognising them as active citizens and co-creators of urban futures.

This international project drew expertise from researchers including Professor Jua Cilliers from the Faculty of Design and Society to examine when, where, how, and under what conditions children were meaningfully included in local governance, planning, and decision-making processes. It highlighted diverse cultural and geographical understandings of childhood while strengthening the connection between research, policy, and practice. In doing so, it contributed to more responsive, equitable, and resilient urban systems.

The project offers practical pathways to embed child-inclusive approaches within city-making. A key outcome was the development of a comprehensive toolbox comprising methods, frameworks, and protocols to support local governments, practitioners, and communities in implementing child-focused planning and governance. This work reinforced the role of children and young people as essential stakeholders in shaping sustainable, liveable, and future-ready cities.

Read the report

Photo: Ralph Fares

Greening Bradfield: biosolar roofs for a sustainable city

Australia's most ambitious green roof mandate is transforming Bradfield City into a benchmark for sustainable urban living, delivering thermal comfort, enhanced renewable energy output, cleaner air, and biodiversity habitat to 10,000 future residents.

Rapid urban development in space-constrained environments leaves residents without access to the ecological and environmental benefits that green infrastructure provides. Bradfield City Centre, Australia's newest city, is located in Western Sydney adjacent to the Western Sydney International Airport and is a 114-hectare high-tech hub currently under development, designed to deliver 10,000 homes, 20,000 jobs, and extensive public spaces.

This research, led by Peter Irga from the Faculty of Engineering & Information Technology, established the evidence base for mandatory 80% biosolar green roof coverage across every building in Bradfield City, with the Bradfield Development Authority having already signed a $1 billion development delivering 1,400 homes as the first stage. The work was made possible through collaboration with the Bradfield Development Authority, with ongoing real-time performance monitoring (2025 to 2026) used to empirically validate outcomes on the ground.

As a result, all Bradfield residents will benefit from reduced rooftop temperatures, stormwater absorption, improved air quality, and surrogate biodiversity habitat regardless of socioeconomic status, making Bradfield a pioneering data-driven model for functional urban sustainability across Australia.

Watch here to find out more

12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

FWCI of university's research outputs	2.62
International collaborations	73.5%
Proportion of pubs in the top 10% of journals according to Citescore	57.8%
Number of publications produced	901
Number of citations produced	42,606

Campus waste and recycling

The total volume of general waste on campus was 674.9 tonnes in 2025. Our diversion from landfill rate stayed the same at 87.7% in 2024 and 2025.

Most IT equipment and computers at UTS are leased, under 'take-back-at-end-of-life' lease conditions for recycling. These items are not included in the university's waste figures. Nevertheless, UTS purchases small quantities of one-off IT items and equipment which are recycled at end of life. This year we recycled 1.22 tonnes of E-waste.

UTS uses the online Warp-it platform to facilitate furniture re-use within the university. In 2025 we reused a total of 200 pieces of furniture, diverting approximately 3.88 tonnes of material from landfill. We also participate in the National FluoroCycle program, recycling 100% of our lamp waste which was 625kg in 2025. We recycled 480kg of batteries.

87.7%

of general waste diverted from landfill

Rethinking tote bags: UTS Library's commitment to sustainability

Since 2021, UTS Library has prioritised sustainability and ethics in our student resources production by moving away from mass-producing cheap tote bags. Student polling revealed that tote bags remained a valued and highly used resource, so the Library changed production models, partnering with small, Australian-owned suppliers who share our commitment to sustainability. This approach has provided greater supply chain transparency, from energy sources powering production to the sourcing of threads and dyes and all the way to the working conditions and wages of weavers.

The result is high-quality tote bags made from 100% recycled cotton, produced using renewable energy, and shipped by boat to reduce carbon emissions. Offering these tote bags at Orientation has strengthened incoming students' experience of UTS and reinforced UTS's position as a welcoming, supportive and sustainably-minded place.

Photo: Joyce Carleen

12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

Photo: Seamless Australia

Curiosities

Fashion designer answers questions about the future of fashion

Knitting a circular future or zero waste garments from zero waste yarn

UTS's Knit Lab is helping to show the fashion industry how to reduce textile waste without compromising on design. Industry partner High Tea with Mrs Woo used our Shima Seiki WHOLEGARMENT machine to create garments from yarn made from the brand's own textile waste with innovation partner Dempstah.

The fashion and textiles sector has a major environmental impact. It accounts for 8-10% of global greenhouse gas emissions; global fibre production has more than doubled in the last 15 years, and fossil fuel-based synthetics make up more than 60% of global fibre production. The Seamless National Clothing Benchmark notes Australia sends 220,000 tonnes of clothing to local landfill each year, exports approximately 360,000 tonnes of used clothing for reuse or recycling and sends 9,000 tonnes to offshore landfill. At the production level, 15-20% of fabric becomes offcuts waste before they've even become a garment. Slow fashion brand High Tea with Mrs Woo aimed to turn this 'waste' into a functional resource with the help of a number of strategic partners, including UTS.

This project – funded by the City of Sydney – demonstrated the potential to create zero-waste garments from yarn made with recycled textiles. Slow fashion brand Woo has been collecting its own offcuts for over 10 years, having faith that a solution would come when they could realistically use the materials for new garments. Partnering with Dempstah, an Australian recycling innovator that uses equipment in Hong Kong to shred textiles to create new yarn, Woo created 'new' yarn from their own textile offcuts and partnered with Dr Doris Li of the Centre of Excellence in Sustainable Fashion + Textiles to use UTS's Shima Seiki WHOLEGARMENT knit machine to create a zero waste garment from their zero waste yarn. Knit Lab technician Shirley Tam worked closely with Woo designers to create impactful design and advanced knit structures to create the Sure as Rain jumper – created with the Woo customer in mind, the garment is versatile, and ultimately, recyclable at the end of its useful life.

The project was made possible through strong relationships and clear communication amongst all partners, and the combination of strong environmental values with the latest in recycling and production technologies.

Find out more

Photo: Hokyong Shon

Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

FWCI of university's research outputs	2.32
International collaborations	71.7%
Proportion of pubs in the top 10% of journals according to Citescore	59.9%
Number of publications produced	1,153
Number of citations produced	42,172

Climate Positive Plan

We continue to implement our UTS Climate Positive Plan (CPP) following its launch in 2022. The Plan provides a roadmap with initiatives, targets and timelines to transition UTS to Net Zero and beyond, achieving Net Zero and Climate Positive by 2029. In 2025, we achieved a significant CPP milestone, 100% renewable electricity, by signing two long term Purchase Power Agreements (PPAs) with a wind farm and a solar farm.

We purchased and retired 1,339 carbon credits to cover our scope 1 emissions (mostly gas) along with 21,551 LGCs (Large-scale Generation Certificates) from our solar and wind farm contracts to mitigate our scope 2 emissions (electricity) from July 2025 in line with our CPP Net Zero goal.

The carbon credit projects we purchased include:

- Sunnyside Permanent Planting Project - 588 Australian Carbon Credit Units (ACCUs)
- Fish River Fire Project - 588 ACCUs
- Cambodia Production and dissemination of Ceramic Water Purifiers – 107 GSVERS (Gold Standard Verified Emission Reductions)
- Himalayan Rocket Stove Project – 397 GSVERS

Our total scope 1 and 2 greenhouse gas market-based emissions decreased 48.6% this year, from 35,023 tonnes in 2024 to 18,009 tonnes in 2025 as a result of UTS commencing the solar PPA in July 2025. We also improved upon our emissions intensity target of 48kg CO2-e/m² GFA by a significant margin, achieving an impressive 42.8kg CO2-e/m² GFA. Scope 3 emissions for 2025 totalled 53,088 tonnes forming 62% of UTS's overall scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions.

Climate Action Week Sydney

UTS was a key partner and location for **Climate Action Week Sydney** in mid March. Over 1000 guests attended 25 events, 10 of them UTS-led, with themes including Solutions House, Future Generations Day, Country and Climate, and Nature Positive Futures. 15 of our experts led critical conversations about climate action, and there was even an electric car powered coffee cart.

Curiosities

Climate scientist answers questions about the future of our planet

Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

Student spotlight - Cooper Crellin

As one of the world's most climate vulnerable nations, the Pacific Island nation of Tuvalu is experiencing the accelerating impacts of climate change, including rising sea levels, intensified weather events, and ongoing coastal erosion. With an average elevation of only two metres above sea level and a growing urbanised population, urgent and significant action is essential to ensure the longevity of Tuvaluan communities for years to come.

UTS student and 2024 New Colombo Plan Scholar Cooper Crellin completed a seven-month internship based in the capital, Funafuti, contributing to a variety of projects around the country aimed at strengthening the climate resilience of critical infrastructure assets, including the country's only international seaport.

A significant component of his experience was his involvement in the final works of the Tuvalu Coastal Adaptation Project (TCAP), a 7-hectare area of newly reclaimed land along the shorefront of Funafuti Lagoon that provides both coastal protection and much needed additional land to the community. The reclamation was constructed to a height significantly above predicted sea level rise until the year 2100, strengthening Funafuti's resilience by enabling both government and residents to utilise this land to safely plan and build for the future.

Upon his return to Australia in 2025 Cooper completed his Honours Capstone in the discipline of Humanitarian Engineering, developing a framework for selecting coastal protection structures on atoll islands and gave a presentation on his time in Tuvalu at Global Goals Month. He has also continued working on climate resilient infrastructure projects throughout the Pacific Islands, including the subsequent land reclamation projects TCAP1A and TCAP1B in Tuvalu.

Photo: Cooper Crellin

13 CLIMATE ACTION

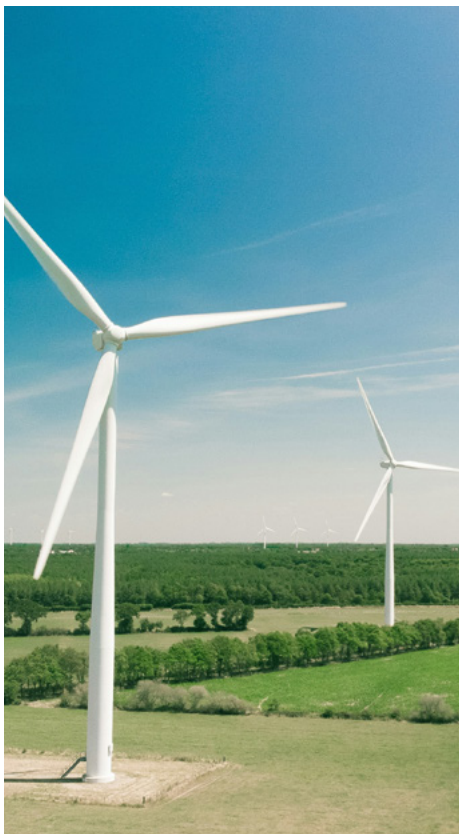
Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

Gas and Electricity Usage

Electricity usage decreased 5.7%, compared to 2024 due to the implementation of building analytics projects, building management system tuning, and ongoing energy and water efficiency initiatives. Gas usage has decreased 14% due to energy efficiency and UTS's first electrification project coming online. Thermal energy imports through a precinct energy sharing program with our neighbours at Central Park helped to reduce electricity used for air-conditioning.

Electricity		
Year	Gj	Gross Floor Area (m^2)
2019	166,877	434,688
2020	146,233	437,756
2021	131,189	434,517
2022	143,726	412,285
2023	152,881	421,656
2024	161,845	415,775
2025	152,521	409,602

Gas		
Year	Gj	Gross Floor Area (m^2)
2019	53,749	434,688
2020	54,203	437,756
2021	54,744	434,517
2022	64,772	412,285
2023	57,903	421,656
2024	61,740	415,775
2025	52,980	409,602



COP30: A call to action

In 2025, the Institute for Sustainable Futures (ISF) Director Professor Stuart White attended the COP30 global climate conference in Brazil observing that it was both a step in the right direction for decarbonisation as well as being a reminder that there is still much to do. Despite the absence of major players such as the United States, the conference was the second-largest COP ever held, with some 56,000 delegates.

More than 190 countries submitted emissions reductions plans as required by the Paris Agreement. If achieved, their combined reductions would limit temperature rise to 2.5°C – exceeding the 1.5°C target but falling well below the pre-Paris Agreement estimates a decade ago. While an increase to 2.5°C would not preclude reaching net zero by 2025, it would necessitate an accelerated transition from fossil fuels, funding for low-income countries and action to realise the methane pledge.

This year's conference saw a focus on a fair and just transition for middle-and low-income countries that are most impacted by the effects of climate change. This echoes ISF's 2025 work in developing just decarbonisation pathways for African countries while presenting opportunities to strengthen the countries' economies under a 100% renewables scenario.

As part of the COP 'Resilience Hub' program, the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Water for Women and ISF launched a research-informed policy paper on "Converging crises and potential opportunities: Gender, climate, sanitation and water". This work continues a long-standing relationship between ISF and Water for Women spanning a wealth of projects that empower women to play a crucial role in developing climate-resilient Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) – especially in the Indo Pacific region.

Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

Climate-related disclosure: supporting the most significant change to corporate reporting in decades

Commissioned by ASIC, UTS is developing foundational educational materials for business professionals to help them meet new Australian climate-related disclosure requirements. Ultimately, better disclosure supports Australia's transition to net zero and a more resilient, climate ready Australian economy.

Mandatory climate related financial disclosure represents the most significant change to Australia's corporate reporting framework in decades. From 2025, organisations will be required to disclose climate risks and opportunities under the Corporations Act 2001, with requirements phased in through to 2027. While large entities have begun preparing, many smaller and medium sized organisations face capability gaps, limited access to expertise, and uncertainty about how to interpret and apply the new requirements in practice.

This project responds by developing a suite of accessible, high quality educational resources to support Australian business professionals to understand and implement mandatory climate related disclosures. Led by UTS in partnership with ASIC, the Australian Accounting Standards Board and Studio 3 Learning, the project will deliver eight online learning modules supported by short, practical videos. The resources will cover core topics such as climate science foundations, scenario analysis, emissions accounting, governance, and risk management, all tailored to the Australian regulatory context.

Key factors enabling the project's success include UTS's deep expertise in climate risk, sustainable finance and adult education, strong collaboration across UTS, partnership with an educational design agency, and close alignment with regulators responsible for implementing the disclosure regime.

The project will equip Australian businesses with the knowledge and tools to comply with new disclosure requirements, strengthen climate risk understanding, and support better informed decision-making. Ultimately, it will contribute to more consistent, decision useful disclosures, supporting Australia's transition to net zero and a more resilient, climate ready Australian economy.

Find out more

Green light for algae innovation

Meeting the sustainability challenges of the 21st century requires rapid, disruptive innovation at a speed and scale. The world needs entrepreneurs, and entrepreneurs need support to build their solutions. The Green Light Accelerator Program leverages the algae biotechnology research strength of the UTS Climate Change Cluster (C3) to support the research and development of algae-related projects, prioritising projects underpinned by an approach to sustainability.

With funding from the NSW Government's Boosting Business Innovation Program, teams received $10,000 in seed funding to support the growth of their startup, as well as comprehensive support from UTS including research mentorship from an algal expert from C3, and individualised entrepreneurial guidance. Weekly workshops were held covering a range of industrially and scientifically relevant topics, by established companies.

The 2025 program concluded with a Pitch Night providing an opportunity for teams to share their work and innovations with a broad audience and receive valuable feedback from industry and academic leaders.

Across the six Green Light cohorts to date, more than 20 teams have been supported through the Accelerator Program and it has strengthened connections between the Faculty of Science and UTS Startups.

Watch this video to find out more

Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development

FWCI of university's research outputs	2.0
International collaborations	68.5%
Proportion of pubs in the top 10% of journals according to Citescore	52.2%
Number of publications produced	569
Number of citations produced	16,033

Karenia cristata identified as the dominant strain in South Australian catastrophic event

UTS researchers from the Faculty of Science, identified a previously unrecognised toxin-producing microalga responsible for a large-scale marine mortality event, providing crucial knowledge for monitoring and mitigating harmful algal blooms.

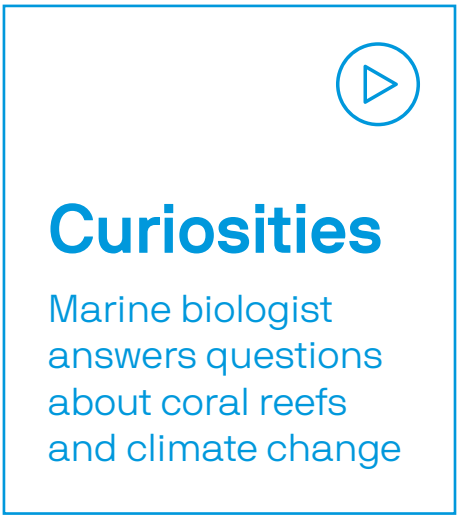
In 2025, South Australia experienced an unprecedented marine mortality event affecting millions of organisms across more than 550 marine species. The event persisted for over six months and extended across approximately 20,000 km² of coastal waters, with additional impacts on human health through respiratory irritation linked to airborne toxins.

Researchers and collaborators investigated the causes of this event using environmental DNA, metabarcoding, long-read sequencing and targeted quantitative PCR. The study identified the dinoflagellate *Karenia cristata* as the dominant species in the bloom and demonstrated for the first time that it produces brevetoxins, potent neurotoxins which were previously associated mainly with *Karenia brevis*.

Through field sampling, genomic analyses, toxin characterisation and laboratory toxicity assays, the project revealed that this newly identified toxin producer played a major role in the widespread ecosystem impacts observed during the bloom. The work also highlighted the complexity of harmful algal bloom assemblages and the need for improved monitoring strategies.

The findings contribute critical knowledge for early warning systems, environmental monitoring, and the development of mitigation strategies to protect marine ecosystems, fisheries, and human health from harmful algal blooms under changing ocean conditions.

Find out more



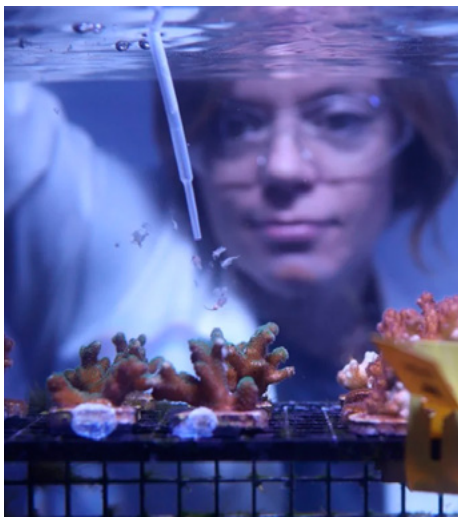


Photo: Hadley England

Coral "baby food" for reef restoration

A major barrier to both natural recovery and reef restoration is that fewer than 1% of baby corals survive their first year, severely limiting reef recovery efforts.

This project addresses that challenge by developing a "coral baby food" – a targeted nutritional supplement that provides coral larvae with the essential fats they need to swim, settle, and survive. By feeding corals during their earliest and most vulnerable life stage, we can significantly increase the number of young corals on reefs, supporting recovery while also enhancing the diversity needed for future resilience.

Research from the Climate Change Cluster, shows that feeding coral larvae can double survival rates, even under high temperatures, while also improving their ability to swim and successfully locate and settle onto new reef habitats.

The project has already moved from the lab to the reef. In partnership with Traditional Owners, tourism operators, and reef practitioners, the researchers have developed simple, scalable feeding methods and, in 2025, fed more than 8 million coral larvae directly on the Great Barrier Reef.

By giving coral babies a better start in life, this approach provides a practical, scalable tool to accelerate reef restoration, strengthen climate resilience, and support the ecosystems, industries, and communities that depend on healthy reefs.

Find out more

Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss

FWCI of university's research outputs	2.16
International collaborations	72.0%
Proportion of pubs in the top 10% of journals according to Citescore	55.8%
Number of publications produced	475
Number of citations produced	14,000

Photo: Amelia Kraszewski

The Big Lift

The Big Lift (TBL) is a student run volunteering organisation founded on the philosophy of 'paying it forward' at the heart of everything they do. Founded in 2010, TBL builds connections with regional and Sydney based communities including an annual Winter Trip that takes 80 volunteers through regional and rural NSW, VIC or QLD. These trips create a space for students to step outside the hustle and individualism of city life and into environments where everyone is truly seen, valued and connected through storytelling and shared experiences.

TBL offers unskilled labour to towns and organisations that have been affected by natural disasters, limited resources or the ongoing demands of supporting their own communities. In 2025, TBL proudly celebrated visiting their 100th unique town and, with the help of 265 members, contributed over 3400 individual volunteer hours. TBL is eternally grateful for the communities, who welcomed them into their story with such warmth, generosity and compassion.

Find out more

Western Sydney Chain of Ponds

In many warm and dry regions of Australia, water systems called Chains of Ponds once supported immense life and biodiversity. A Chain of Ponds is made up of swampy meadows that slowly migrate downstream, which cleans water, mitigates flooding from stormwater, and prevents erosion. The Cumberland Plain in Western Sydney once supported an extensive network of these chains, which has been degraded by colonising agricultural practices and Sydney's urban sprawl.

To address the degradation of this fragile landscape system, UTS researchers from the School of Architecture reconstructed a Chain of Ponds history of the area and explored the potential for regenerating the Cumberland Plain's Chain of Ponds, as well as those in other areas that have been similarly impacted by urbanisation. The research found that the European land-use practices have degraded Chains of Ponds like the Cumberland Plains System but that it has the potential to not only be regenerated and re-established but can form a healthy system alongside the city to build the resilience of both the city and the Chain of Ponds.

Chains of Ponds form a crucial part of the Australian Rural Landscape, building a resilience to floods and droughts that flora and fauna rely on as well as significantly reduce land surface temperatures and improve water quality. Research like this is critical to mitigating the impacts of the urban sprawl of our cities on the surrounding landscape systems, as well as understanding the means by which a landscape cares for itself, and how the landscape of our cities can be enriched.

Read the full paper here

Photo: Penny Allan

Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss

Driving Indigenous-led clean energy

The Institute for Sustainable Futures (ISF) is working with local Aboriginal Land Councils (LALCs) to identify and realise opportunities for First Nations Australians to take an active role in the nation's energy transition and to reap its benefits.

The fast-emerging transition to renewable energy in New South Wales presents a transformative opportunity for Aboriginal communities, particularly through the involvement of LALCs.

Approximately 43% of the infrastructure needed to achieve Net Zero by 2060 is expected to be developed on land collectively held by First Peoples. This underscores the critical role Aboriginal landholders can play—not just as beneficiaries of clean energy, but as active participants and leaders in its development.

In 2025, ISF and UNSW investigated how LALCs can host renewable energy projects on their land, unlocking economic, employment and social benefits. The project, funded by the James Martin Foundation and Boundless, sought to identify both opportunities for LALCs and the action that needs to be taken.

Case studies conducted in Brewarrina, Tibooburra and Hay revealed substantial potential. The current LALC land estate could support up to 11 gigawatts of solar energy and 1.6 gigawatts of wind energy. In addition, there is strong potential for small-to mid-scale renewable projects such as microgrids and battery storage systems.

To help realise this potential, the report recommends four key policy actions:

- Capacity building through dedicated government support teams and funding
- Collaboration between Land Councils and electricity networks to support microgrid development on Aboriginal land
- Pilot and demonstration programs for mid- and large-scale renewable projects
- Stronger recognition of rights through expedited land claims, improved cooperation between Land Councils and Traditional Owners, and enhanced cultural heritage protections.

Find out more

Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

FWCI of university's research outputs	2.45
International collaborations	31.6%
Proportion of pubs in the top 10% of journals according to Citescore	48.5%
Number of publications produced	713
Number of citations produced	25,262

Supporting the safe and responsible use of AI in healthcare

UTS Rapido and the UTS Human Technology Institute (HTI) have partnered with the Digital Health Cooperative Research Centre and the Australian Department of Health and Aged Care, to deliver an Australia first initiative supporting the safe and responsible use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in healthcare.

The project has produced a prototype web based AI classification tool tailored to Australian health sector needs. Built on the OECD AI Classification Framework, the tool adapts the framework to reflect Australia's emerging AI regulatory environment, including alignment with national AI ethics principles, and the Voluntary AI Safety Standard.

It offers a revised, health specific question set, contextual guidance, and dynamic reporting to help organisations understand how an AI system works, the context in which it is deployed, and the potential human impacts that warrant attention.

The R&D team at UTS Rapido led the design and development of the interactive tool, drawing on its engineering and UX capabilities, while HTI provided expertise in AI governance and regulatory alignment. The tool incorporates insights gathered through consultation and user testing with developers, deployers, and health sector stakeholders.

The prototype establishes a foundation for future development, including further co-design, broader testing, and deeper integration with health specific standards and guidance.

Photo: Kwa Nguyen

Embedding anti-racism practices at UTS

Australia's modern history is one of colonialisation and migration, with universities founded within this context. UTS has a responsibility to reflect and value the rich diversity of society, as well as support our Indigenous and Culturally and Racially Marginalised (CARM) students and staff. The Cultural Diversity and Anti-Racism (CDAR) Action Plan aims to guide UTS's work in cultural diversity and anti-racism. Racism in Australia is ingrained in our systems, structures and institutions, and the CDAR aims to create a safe, equitable, and supportive environment within the university community.

Read the Cultural Diversity and Anti-Racism Action Plan here

Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

Promoting safe, responsible and effective AI in the Pacific and Southeast Asia

The Southeast Asia and Pacific regions are home to some of the world's most geographically dispersed and culturally diverse nations, creating both challenges and opportunities for the responsible use of artificial intelligence. Many smaller countries face barriers to accessing technical infrastructure and expertise, while competitive pressures accelerate the push for AI adoption in neighbouring countries. Ensuring that safety, security and accountability remain central is therefore critical.

In early 2025, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) partnered with the UTS Human Technology Institute (HTI) to identify regional priorities for advancing safe, responsible, and effective AI across the Pacific and Southeast Asia.

As part of this work, HTI convened two high profile side events at the 2025 Paris AI Action Summit, ran an online, regional consultation and survey process, convened a regional dialogue in San Francisco, and facilitated an AI governance session at the inaugural Pacific Cyber Week in August. Together, these engagements gathered insights from more than 200 leaders and experts from government, civil society, and industry. In 2026, HTI further explored Pacific perspectives by convening digital leaders from Papua New Guinea, Palau, Tonga, Tuvalu, Samoa, and the Solomon Islands in the margins of the AI Impact Summit in New Delhi.

The project delivered practical, actionable insights via a regional Roadmap to inform DFAT's regional engagement, strengthened cooperation across Southeast Asia and the Pacific, and amplified voices that are often underrepresented in global AI governance. Collectively, this work has laid a strong foundation for inclusive, safe, and effective AI outcomes across the region.

Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the global partnership for sustainable development

Vehicle-Grid Network

Australia's energy and transport systems are changing rapidly as electric vehicle (EV) uptake accelerates nationwide. While bidirectional EV charging (vehicle-to-grid, or V2G) presents a major opportunity to use EVs as flexible energy storage – reducing energy costs and supporting grid reliability – the pathway to adoption remains complex. Consumers, businesses and industry face fragmented standards, evolving regulations, interoperability challenges, uncertainty around commercial models and the market signals needed to unlock investment and scale.

The Vehicle-Grid Network (VGN) was established to unlock these barriers by creating Australia's first nationally coordinated collaboration focused on EV-to-grid integration. The project is led by Climate KIC Australia and the Institute for Sustainable Futures. It is funded by the Australian Renewable Energy Agency (ARENA), the RACE for 2030 CRC, and industry partners.

Key factors supporting VGN's work include strong cross-sector partnerships. The project brings together stakeholders across the V2G value chain, including energy companies, vehicle and charger manufacturers, researchers, governments, and policymakers. This breadth reflects the reality that no single organisation can resolve the technical, regulatory, commercial and customer-experience challenges alone. The aim is to align priorities, share evidence, and accelerate practical pathways from pilots to scalable deployment.

VGN convenes working groups, expert panels and events to tackle technical, regulatory and market challenges, while translating emerging insights into trusted tools and guidance for decision makers.

Through this coordinated approach, VGN is helping to reduce fragmentation, strengthen interoperability, improve consumer protection and choice, and clarify market signals to build industry confidence. The project supports a cleaner, more resilient and affordable energy system, positioning Australia as a credible global testbed for integrating EVs into the grid in ways that benefit communities, businesses and the climate.

Find out more

No. 1

in Australia
SDG 17 THE Impact Rankings

Global Goals Month on campus

UN Global Goals Month ran again in September to raise awareness about the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and to showcase the great work being done across UTS to advance the SDGs in teaching, research and operations. The event was officially launched by Professor Stuart White, Director of the Institute for Sustainable Futures who gave an exceptional speech acknowledging the gravity of the challenges ahead while noting that we must 'remain committed to hope, action and transformation'.

The month-long event included an interactive exhibition in the foyer, a photo competition, and a series of Chats for the Goals whereby UTS academics talked about their work and impact on progressing towards achieving the SDGs. In 2025, two UTS students also gave Chats for the Goals talks; one about STEM education in Pakistan and the other on a climate change adaptation project in Tuvalu. Global Goals Month was coordinated by the Sustainability team and UTS BUILD.

Find out more

17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

UTS Bachelor of Sustainability and Environment: Internships in Sustainability

Sustainability graduates often leave university with strong theoretical knowledge but limited exposure to how organisations operate in terms of the complex realities of driving meaningful change from within. There is also a growing demand for sustainability professionals as organisations recognise sustainability as a core part of business and not just a 'nice to have' addition within a given workplace.

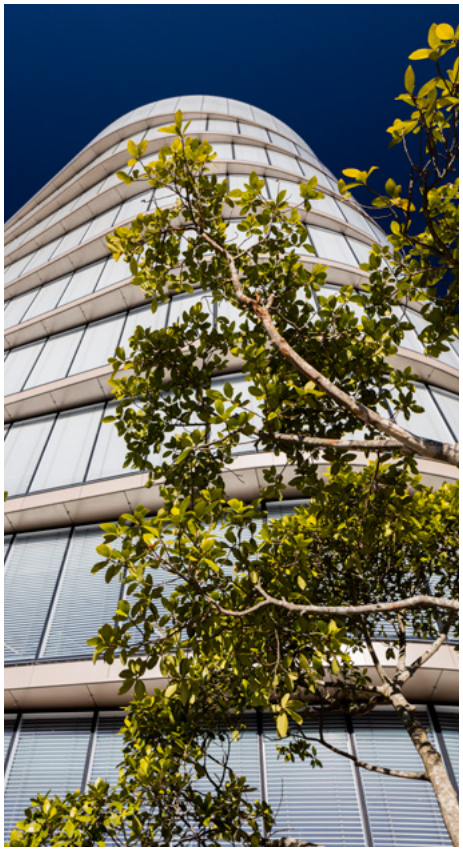
This program places UTS Bachelor of Sustainability and Environment (BSE) students into real-world organisations for a 100-hour internship, connecting coursework in sustainability theory, standards, and institutional approaches with direct workplace experience. It is supported by an innovative learning structure, preparatory workshops, self-paced modules, and one-on-one academic support to ensure students are equipped at every stage of their placement. Work-integrated learning staff and UTS Careers advisors work alongside teaching staff to source and support finding opportunities to prepare students for life after graduation. Students benefit from direct engagement with industry through guest lectures, expert panels, and networking opportunities facilitated via existing networks and newly established partnerships with UTS Shopfront.

Our BSE students consistently report that the sustainability internship subject is one of the most valuable parts of their experience at university. Placements build confidence in professional settings, expand networks, and give students a chance to trial roles and industries before they graduate. Working inside real organisations, they see first-hand how sustainability is understood and applied across different sectors and with a critical academic lens and they're often well-placed to spot the gaps. Many leave their placement with a clearer sense of how they can genuinely contribute to a more sustainable future.

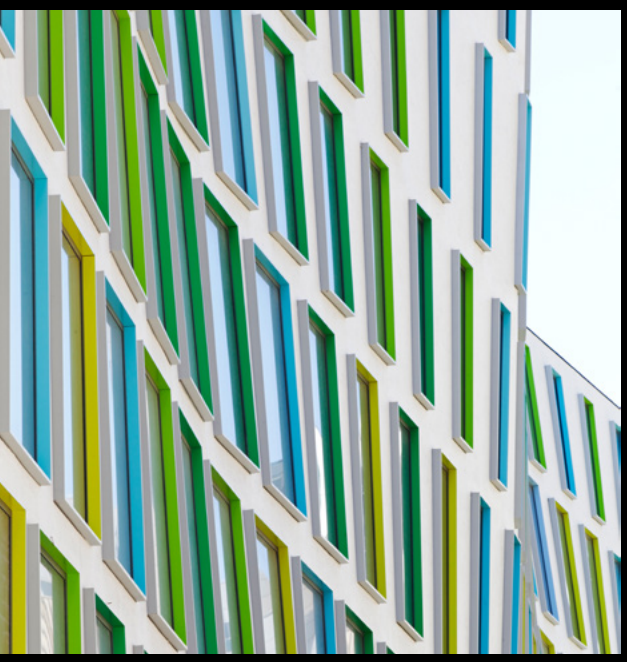
Better Buildings Partnership

We continued our membership of the City of Sydney Council's Better Buildings Partnership (BBP), a network of owners and managers of large commercial and public buildings in the Sydney CBD collaborating to improve the sustainability of the built environment and community. UTS representatives participate on the Leadership Panel, Circular Economy and Community Resilience Working Groups, and co-chair the Climate Positive Working Group, delivering Masterclasses in Green Leasing and Reducing Scope 3 Emissions Through Circular Fitouts.

Visit the BBP



Leadership and Governance



Sustainability Policy and Strategy

The university's Sustainability Framework consists of the Sustainability Policy, Sustainability Strategy and annual Sustainability Report.

The Sustainability Policy is a high-level governance document which articulates ownership, oversight and accountabilities. The Policy is regularly updated to reflect ongoing best practice.

The Sustainability Strategy implements and operationalises the Policy and reflects our commitment to see sustainability embedded into our core activities: Education, Research and Operations. For each of these Domains priority actions are outlined with timeframes for delivery, expected outcomes and success measures.

Six Cross-cutting Themes flow through our core activities and represent our distinctive identity and sustainable partnerships model: Connecting with Country, Social Justice and Inclusion, Demonstrating Leadership, Partnerships and Networks, Engagement and Communication. Four Enablers form the foundation of the Strategy allowing us to deliver our sustainability vision: our people and culture, campus infrastructure, systems and processes and governance.

The Sustainability Report is produced annually and highlights sustainability activities, progress, performance and achievements.

For more information

Sustainability Policy

Sustainability Strategy

Sustainability Policy and Strategy

Sustainability Steering Committee

The Sustainability Steering Committee oversees implementation of the *UTS Sustainability Strategy* and provides high-level guidance for sustainability activities across the university. The Committee meets quarterly. Throughout the year membership was made up of the following:

- **Glen Babington**
  Chief Operating Officer (Chair)
- **Nigel Oliver**
  Director, Property Unit
- **Danielle McCartney**
  Head of Sustainability
- **Associate Professor Paul Brown**
  School of Transdisciplinary Innovation
- **Professor Stuart White**
  Director, Institute for Sustainable Futures
- **Professor Jo McKenzie**
  Teaching Learning and Curriculum Unit
- **Dr Rosemary Sainty**
  Senior Lecturer, Business School
- **Danielle Woolley**
  Director, Government Affairs and External Engagement
- **Amy Persson**
  Pro Vice-Chancellor Social Justice and Inclusion
- **Christina Miebach**
  International Marketing Manager, Marketing and Communications Unit
- **Associate Professor Emma Camp**
  Faculty of Science
- **Professor Jason De Santolo**
  Associate Dean, Indigenous Research
- **Sina Afsharmehr**
  President of the Enviro Collective
- **Morwenna Shahani**
  Chief Executive Officer, UTS College
- **Murray Hurps**
  Director, Entrepreneurship

Sustainable Development Goals Working Group

The SDGs Working Group aims to assist with the development of UTS's institutional response to the UN SDGs with the aim of embedding them across the university's academic, operational and engagement activities. Working Group membership this year included:

- **Professor Stuart White**
  Director Institute for Sustainable Futures (Chair)
- **Danielle McCartney**
  Head of Sustainability
- **Alexandra Fransen**
  Sustainability Coordinator
- **Alison Atherton**
  Research Director, Institute for Sustainable Futures
- **Andrew Parker**
  Senior Research Communication Advisor
- **Professor David Leary**
  Faculty of Law
- **Dr Elizabeth Tomc**
  Faculty of Engineering and Information Technology
- **Dr Elvira Fonacier**
  Head of Performance Evaluation
- **Professor Kees Dorst**
  School of Transdisciplinary Innovation
- **Dr Klaus Gebel**
  Faculty of Health
- **Associate Professor Kristine Aquino**
  Faculty of Design and Society
- **Michaela Zappia**
  Education Portfolio
- **Professor Robynne Quiggin**
  Pro Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous Leadership and Engagement)
- **Dr Rosemary Sainty**
  Business School
- **Stella Vasiliadis**
  Centre for Social Justice and Inclusion
- **Associate Professor Timo Rissanen**
  Faculty of Design and Society
- **Associate Professor Katherina Petrou**
  Faculty of Science
- **Professor Sara Wilkinson**
  Faculty of Design and Society

The UTS Sustainability Team

The UTS Sustainability team (left to right): Alexandra Fransen: Sustainability Coordinator, Daniel Harris: Carbon & Sustainability Engineer, Danielle McCartney: Head of Sustainability, Joe Dullard: Sustainability Assistant, Vasilios Giotis: Consultant Engineer

About this report

Methodology

This Sustainability Report uses the SDGs framework, reflecting our ongoing journey working towards integrating the SDGs across all areas of UTS's research, teaching and learning, operations, engagement and governance. The report has a section on each of the 17 SDGs, with highlights of relevant projects, initiatives, activities and UTS people contributing to the SDGs. Data for these was drawn from internal sources including websites and reports as well as interviews with relevant staff and students.

Research metrics and some graphs throughout the report provide quantitative data. The graphs relate to campus operations and data was drawn from our operational reporting systems and processes. Data for the research metrics is from external sources, mostly through Elsevier's SciVal, and relate to the 2021-2025 period. The Elsevier reporting is based on Scopus mapping information for each SDG. Metrics in this report were based on this Scopus data source updated at the end of March 2026. We have not included metrics for SDG 17 because Elsevier does not provide data for SDG 17 as this SDG relates to each of the other SDGs (i.e. partnerships).

Contact us

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UTSgreen

UTSgreen

2025 Green Week Photo Competition 2nd place – Green Dream
Photo: Nguyen Thuy Vy Trinh

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