Institute for Sustainable Futures

**ISF STRATEGY 2013-2016**

In 2012 the Institute for Sustainable Futures at the University of Technology, Sydney celebrated 15 years of creating change towards sustainable futures. The Institute, through its research and the outcomes of that research, makes a difference and in a different way. Our work is solutions-focused, interdisciplinary and based on strong linkages with government, industry and the community. We strive for quality research: rigorous, evidence-based, ethical and independent. The outcomes influence policy and investment in many of the areas in which we work. We aim to foster public debate, and are not afraid to speak out for what we think is right. Many of the issues we take on, and the ways that we approach them, break new ground. This Strategy for the next three years aims to increase the scale and impact of our research, enabling us to be a world-leading sustainability research institute.

**ISF RESEARCH AREAS**

ISF currently conducts transdisciplinary research across 10 areas

- Water & Sanitation
- Climate Change Adaptation
- Transport
- Social Change
- Resource Futures
- Natural Resources & Ecosystems
- Pollution
- Cities & Buildings
- International Development
- Local Government & Organisational Sustainability

**ISF STRATEGIC GOALS**

By 2016, in the areas listed below, we will have:

- **Quality Research**
  - At least five focus areas that are recognised nationally and internationally.
  - Pioneered innovative methods and approaches, which are transdisciplinary and integrative.

- **Research with Impact**
  - Created deliberate, positive and measurable change in attitudes, policies, practices and outcomes.

- **People Development**
  - Staff and students who are sustainability leaders.

- **Partner Engagement**
  - Engaged with our partners in mutually beneficial and enabling research activities.

- **Good Governance**
  - Secured financial, social and environmental sustainability for the organisation.

- **Research Culture**
  - A vibrant workplace filled with passionate people who ‘walk the talk’ of ISF values.

**ISF MISSION AND OBJECTIVES**

To create change towards sustainable futures

1. To be a world leading sustainability research institute
2. To support communities, government and business to create their own change towards sustainable futures
3. To deliver a cutting edge transdisciplinary postgraduate research program in sustainable futures
4. To progress public dialogue as well as motivate and facilitate action
5. To be an exemplar of participation within the UTS community
6. To value and enrich our supportive and sustainable workplace

**ISF VALUE STATEMENTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UTS Values</th>
<th>ISF Value Statements</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discover</td>
<td>Creating knowledge collaboratively</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engage</td>
<td>Integrity in our relationships</td>
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<tr>
<td>Empower</td>
<td>Empowering ourselves and others</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deliver</td>
<td>Delivering excellence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sustain</td>
<td>Flourishing organisation</td>
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</tbody>
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**Quality Research**

- Our research will demonstrate high quality

**People Development**

- Our people are reflexive interdisciplinary practitioners

**Partner Engagement**

- Our Partnership is enabling

**Research with Impact**

- Our research will have impact

**Good Governance**

- Our governance is enabling

**Research Culture**

- Our research culture is enabling

**Document and implement processes for efficient and effective internal communication and devolved decision-making.**
ISF STRATEGY 2013-2016

ISF PORTFOLIOS
ISF governance and its Strategic Plan are enacted via the ISF Action Plan. This Action Plan and its activities are focused through five portfolio areas, underpinned by professional services of the Corporate Services & Infrastructure team. These portfolios are focused on research and their purpose is to deliver ISF’s Action Plan. The Action Plan is supported by and aligned with ISF’s Strategic Goals, the UTS Research Strategy and the UTS Strategic Directions.

Research Outcomes
By undertaking quality research with impact, we will create change towards sustainable futures in government, communities and business.

Sustainable Workplace
• Support an environment of wellbeing and enjoyment that advances the professional and personal development of staff and students.
• Continually reduce our ecological impact and model sustainability principles for the wider community.

Postgrad Program
Continue to develop and maintain high quality postgraduate processes and practices to support our outstanding students and supervisors and their contribution to ISF and UTS, as well as transdisciplinary and sustainable futures postgraduate pedagogy.

Research Development
Develop sound strategies for securing appropriate project funds for innovative research projects that allow us to create change towards sustainable futures, match our collective capabilities and our resource capacity, as well as broaden our research networks.

Planning & Quality
Review and improve project processes and practices in order to reinforce and enrich our supportive and sustainable workplace and strengthen our research outcomes and our organisational objectives.

Corporate Services & Infrastructure
Develop our organisational capabilities to ensure planning, monitoring, evaluation and improvement of our resource management, thereby creating a sustainable operating model. This will involve:
• Managing people, finances and infrastructure to achieve our Mission and Objectives.
• Supporting the implementation of structures, processes and systems to meet our goals.

Research Outcomes
- Develop expertise and collaborative research which supports local and national transition paths for creating wealth from waste in a resource efficient economy.
- Support fundamental reshaping of cities in alignment with the ‘restorative’ goal of net positive social, ecological and economic outcomes, through policy, planning, design, governance and social change.
- Support the implementation of resilient and restorative urban water services through facilitating innovative approaches to supply demand planning, designing options and assessing them meaningfully, institutional and financial arrangements, new technologies, and socio-technical interfaces.
- Work with organisations and communities to expedite the transition to a low carbon energy sector, specifically through larger, longer-term research projects that support an internal shift towards a strategic, proactive research program targeting each of the five key themes: Decentralised Energy; Energy Resilient Communities and Organisations; Renewable Energy Transitions; Fossil Fuels; and Policy Advice & Effectiveness.
- Support holistic approaches to the sustainable management of natural resources by undertaking quality research into social adaptation, urban biodiversity and compassionate conservation with the broad range of actors that influence the future of social-ecological systems.

ACHIEVING SUCCESS

WE WILL ACHIEVE OUR SUCCESS THROUGH:
Alignment in planning, from individual workplans through portfolio Action Plans to the ISF Strategic Plan and beyond.

WE WILL MEASURE OUR SUCCESS THROUGH:
- Our reputation with industry, government, community organisations & professions
- Our record as a premier source of commentary on public issues
- Research leadership & recognition
- Research outcomes – HDR completions & commencements
- Research outcomes – publications
- Research sustainability – external grant and contract income
- Internationalisation of student experience
- Student equity
- Student satisfaction with facilities & services
- Commitment to diversity
- Staff engagement
- Staff equity
- Operating surplus
- Workforce cost sustainability
- Greenhouse gas reductions.

ABOUT ISF
ISF is a university research institute that creates change towards sustainable futures by conducting independent project based research for Australian and international clients. We work on projects across a range of research areas using a variety of approaches. These projects foster lasting change and we aim to build independent capacity in our clients by passing on knowledge and skills. We focus on innovation and our research often extends sustainability practice and contributes to current thinking. Our clients are in government, industry and community organisations.

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