




Social Justice Report 2023







UTS is an agent for
social change,
transforming communities
through research,
education and practice.



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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.

Welcome

I am pleased to present the 2023 Social Justice Report.

UTS's commitment to social justice and how we serve our community is fundamental to who we are as an institution, underpinning our teaching and research. The achievements of our university community throughout 2023 are a testament to this, and it is satisfying to see the ideas that can be brought to life when brilliant minds work together for social good.

We know that education has the power to transform lives. However, not everyone has equal access to higher education in Australia, and as a university, we seek to address this, ensuring the opportunity to attend university is available to all. While we still have much to do, this report shows the outcomes of some of our current pathways and programs.

We are pleased to have joined forces with 11 other universities to launch the Australian Refugee Welcome University Sponsorship Consortium. The consortium will co-design a groundbreaking, education-led blueprint for refugee resettlement in Australia.

This initiative is an extension of our strong commitment to supporting refugee and asylum seeker students through our sector-renowned Humanitarian Scholarship Program, as well as displaced academics through our participation in the Scholars at Risk initiative.

Backed by the Paul Ramsay Foundation, Professor Anne Summers AO released *The Choice: Violence or Poverty*, a report into the impacts of domestic violence. This research was pivotal in the Australian Government's decision to change the criteria for single parents receiving welfare support. Previously, support was cut off when a recipient's youngest child turned 8. Through the work of Anne and other advocates like her, it has since been raised to 14. This is just one of many examples of the work of our researchers having immediate and tangible real-world impacts on society.

In November, UTS was named as one of two Australian universities to be awarded the prestigious Carnegie Community Engagement Classification, recognising our community engagement work.

This comes after the Australian Universities Accord Interim Report, released in March 2023, identified community engagement as being a key responsibility of universities. UTS's Social Impact Showcase, held in November 2023, was an opportunity for staff, students and the UTS community to celebrate our community engagement and the invaluable grassroots partnerships driving real change.

The outcome of the Voice referendum does not change UTS's long-standing commitment to supporting First Nations peoples' rights to self-determination. I was proud of the respectful way our university community navigated complex and challenging discussions around the referendum. We will continue to be guided by First Nations colleagues and work with, and for, First Nations communities toward truth-telling and treaty.

“We are a university for all,
with social impact, technology,
innovation and creativity at the
heart of everything we do.”

Late in 2023, we were delighted to share the innovative designs dreamed up for the National First Nations College architectural design competition. The winning team, Greenaway Architects, Warren and Mahoney, and OCULUS, have embodied architectural and design excellence while promoting caring for Country. The College is planned to be a place to celebrate the value of Indigenous identity and history while developing and nurturing the leaders of the future.

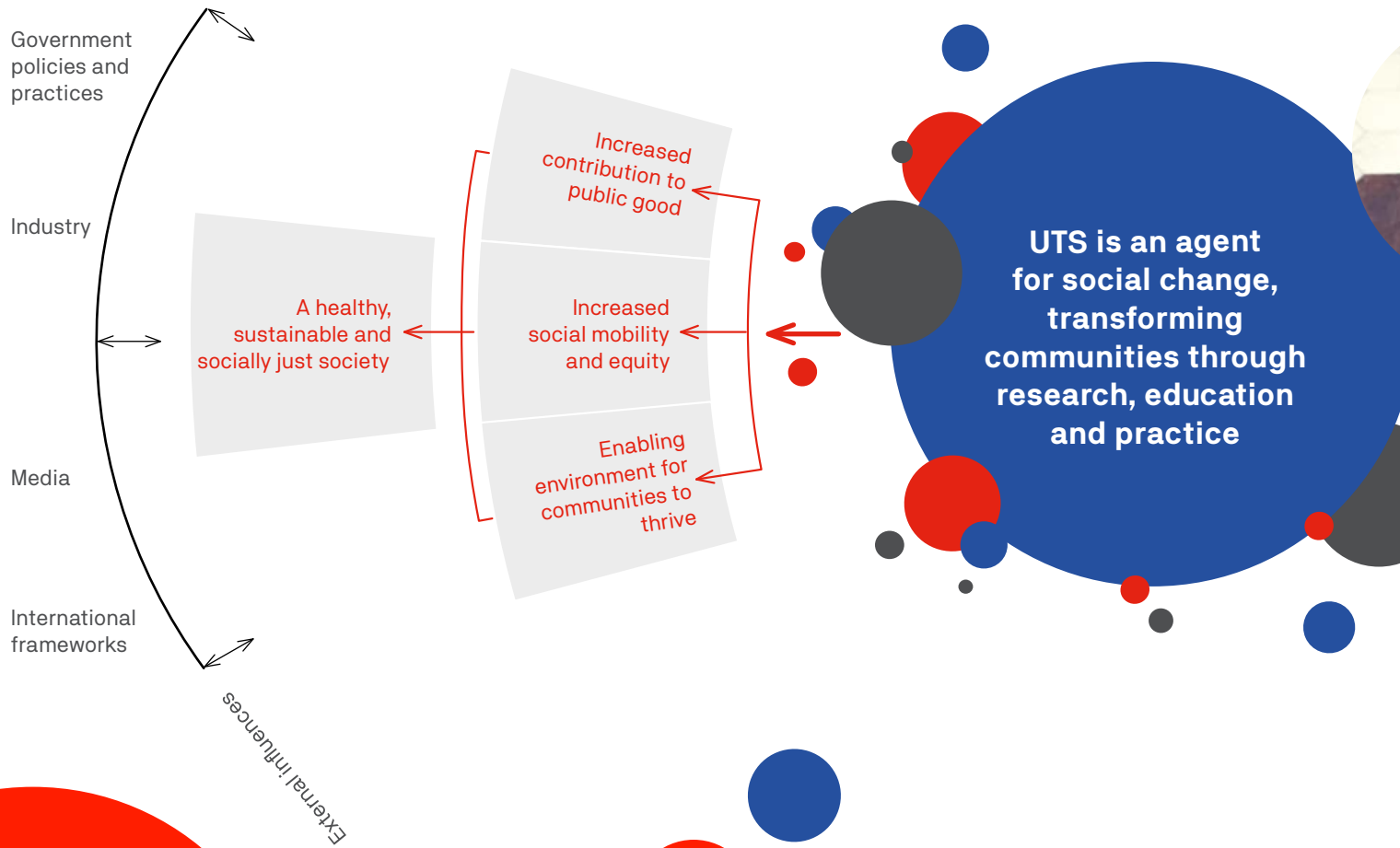
Also late last year, we launched the UTS Social Impact Dashboards, which aggregate data to measure our progress against our university-wide social justice goals. These Australian-first dashboards offer unprecedented transparency, empowering our community to uncover issues and instigate change.

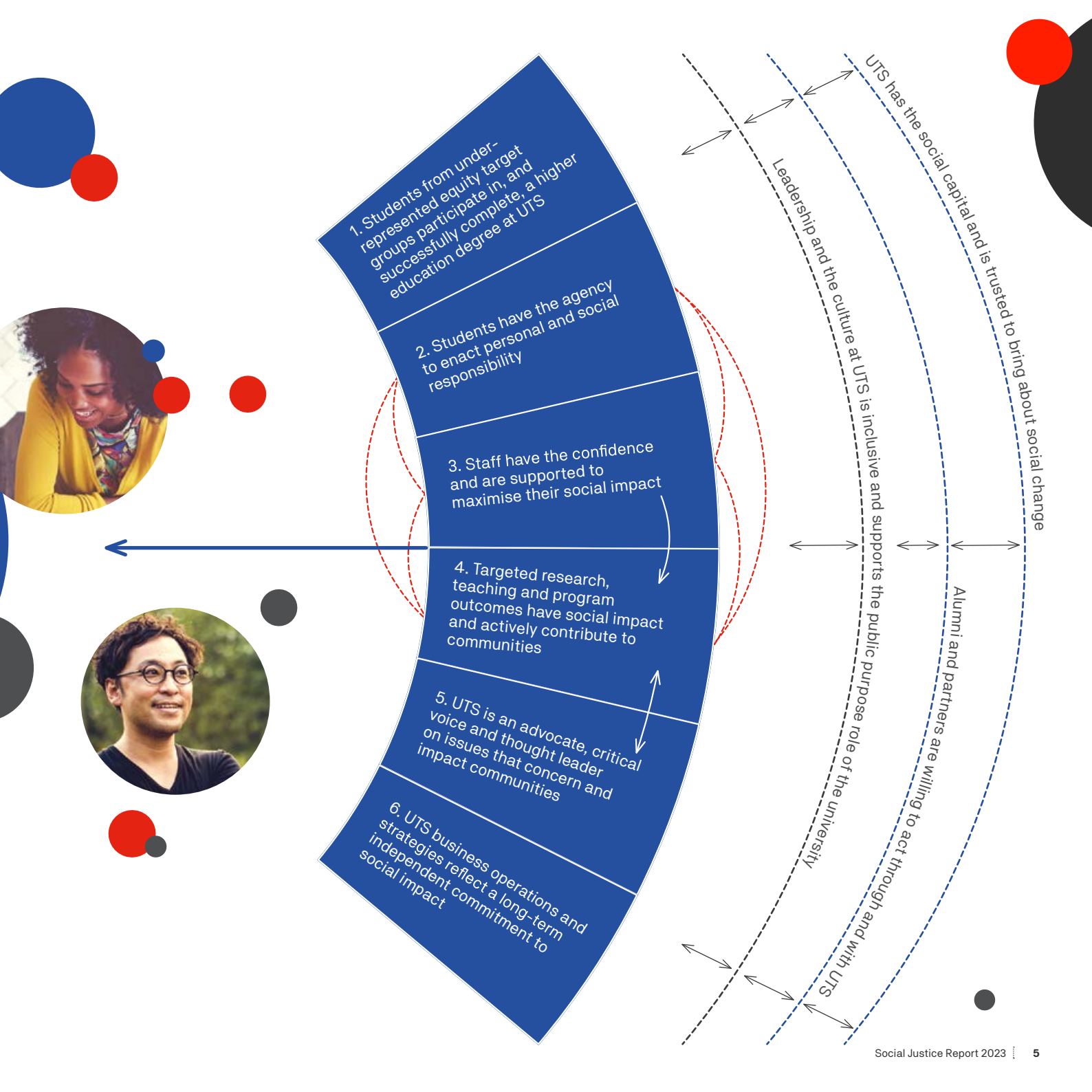
This year saw our social impact evolve substantially, and I continue to be impressed by the staff, students and partners who contributed to this. I look forward to continuing to expand our reach in 2024 and beyond.

Professor Andrew Parfitt
Vice-Chancellor and President, UTS



The UTS Social Impact Framework





1. Students from under-represented equity target groups participate in, and successfully complete, a higher education degree at UTS

2. Students have the agency to enact personal and social responsibility

3. Staff have the confidence and are supported to maximise their social impact

4. Targeted research, teaching and program outcomes have social impact and actively contribute to communities

5. UTS is an advocate, critical voice and thought leader on issues that concern and impact communities

6. UTS business operations and strategies reflect a long-term independent commitment to social impact

Leadership and the culture at UTS is inclusive and supports the public purpose role of the university

UTS has the social capital and is trusted to bring about social change

Alumni and partners are willing to act through and with UTS



Visualising our social impact

Measuring our progress: UTS's Social Impact Dashboards

The UTS Social Impact Framework (SIF) underpins our social justice agenda. Universities have a responsibility to contribute to society, and the SIF is our roadmap to helping create a healthier, more sustainable and more socially just society.

The SIF dashboards show dynamic data from across the university, showing us up-to-date measures of our progress to meeting our goals. By offering transparency, the UTS community is able to examine and explore the data, to find empirical evidence of our successes and to open conversations of where we can improve.

The dashboards report on demographic data and trends, such as the number of equity students, or the number of women in senior academic positions, or the number of staff or students with a disability. They allow users to interrogate and filter data such as, to compare different faculties or courses, or different student or staff equity groups, and to examine changes over time. They also report data on staff and student opinions and experiences, and on a range of UTS's programs and initiatives and goals.

This transparency empowers our community to uncover issues and instigate change. Since their release in 2023, they have already inspired multiple research projects and interventions to create positive change at UTS, and to develop new sources of data to provide more rigorous and comprehensive evaluation.

The UTS Social Impact Framework underpins our social justice agenda, and is our roadmap to helping create a healthier, more sustainable and more socially just society.



Domain 1: Students from under-represented groups participate in and complete a higher education degree at UTS
Attrition and success of Indigenous students at UTS

Last updated: 17/05/2023

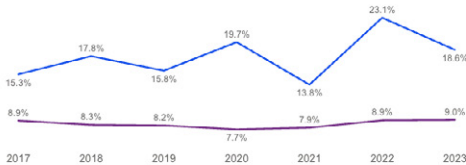
UTS-INTERNAL

Enrolled Faculty
 All

Course Type
 All

Indigenous Student Attrition

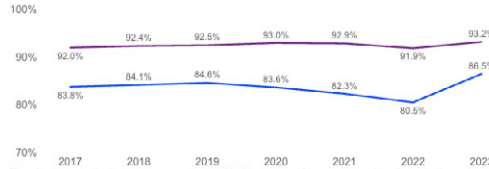
● Indigenous students attrition ● All domestic students attrition



The above chart displays the attrition rates, which refers to the percentage of Indigenous students and all domestic students who did not return to study after being enrolled in the previous year.

Indigenous Student Success

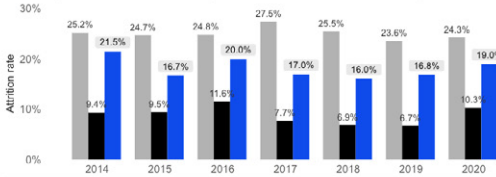
● Success rate of Indigenous students% ● Success rate of all students%



The above chart displays the success rates of Indigenous students compared to all domestic students in terms of study units passed as a percentage of total study units attempted.

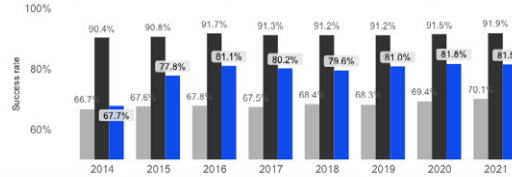
Indigenous Student Attrition Rate Comparison

■ Indigenous Students National Average ● UTS All Domestic Students ● UTS Indigenous Students



Indigenous Student Success Rate Comparison

■ Indigenous Students National Average ● UTS All Domestic Students ● UTS Indigenous Students



The above charts compare UTS attrition rates (up to 2020) and success rates (up to 2021) with national averages for Indigenous students across Australian universities. UTS attrition and success rates shown for comparison may be different to rates reported internally due to differences in calculation methods used by UTS and the Department of Education.
 Data source: UTS internal data sourced from CASS while external university data is sourced from Federal Government Department of Education, Skill, and Employment.

Learn more about the dashboards at uts.edu.au/socialimpactdata

1 Enabling equitable access to education

UTS Social Impact Framework – Domain 1:

Students from underrepresented groups participate in and complete a higher education degree at UTS

Everyone should have equal access to higher education.

UTS has several programs designed to increase this access. We base outcomes not only on access to education for students in underrepresented groups, but also on the retention and success of our students throughout their lifetime of learning at UTS and beyond.

The diversity of our student community is one of UTS's greatest strengths



Financial Inclusion Action Plan

In response to the impact of rising living costs on students, UTS created a Financial Inclusion Action Plan.

Through the plan, we will endeavour to enhance the financial wellbeing of our student community, remove financial barriers for students and assess the impact of this intervention.

“Financial stress and hardship can have a pervasive and negative impact on the access, participation, retention, and success of students. Without intervention, we could see financial exclusion increasing barriers to education and reducing the diversity of our student cohort.”

Sarah Ellis, Manager, Success and Strategy (Student Equity)

U@Uni Academy

This program provides an alternative pathway to university for senior high school students at partner schools in South West and Western Sydney.

Students who complete the U@Uni Academy are offered a place at UTS regardless of their ATAR.

UTS welcomed a fourth cohort to this two-year program in 2023. Throughout the program, students participate in various on-campus experiences and in-school mentoring and tutoring. These experiences will provide industry connections, enhance HSC studies, and develop skills in communication, critical thinking and innovation.

25

participating
high schools

337

U@Uni graduates
in 2023



Setting students up for success

While we have several programs that help students access UTS, enabling equitable access to education extends past students enrolling in university.

The First Year Success program supports first-year students coming from the U@Uni Academy program, the Humanitarian Scholarship Program, and the Schools Recommendation Scheme.

By participating in bridging courses, workshops, social events and peer mentoring, students are given tools and support to ease the transition to university.



205

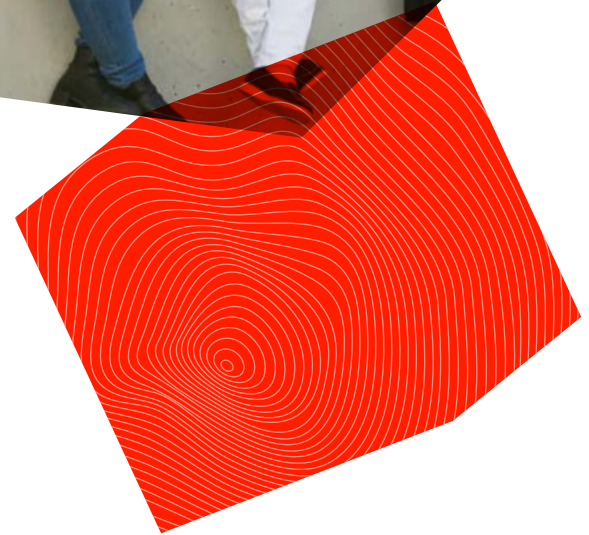
students enrolled
in Autumn session

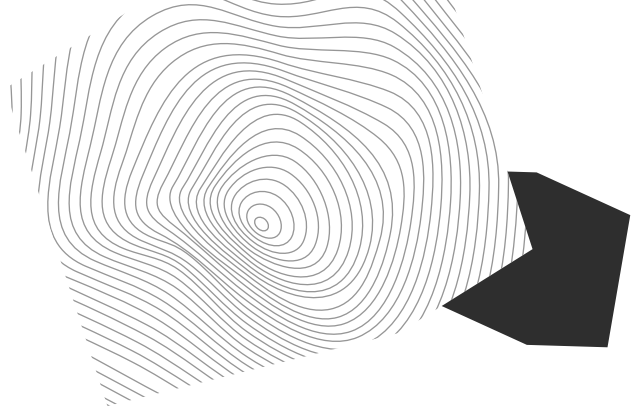
184

students enrolled
in Spring session

55

students passed
all their subjects





Empowering young Pasifika Australians

Designed by and for Pasifika people, participants' academic and cultural identities are supported through a leadership program, experience days, mentoring and networking events. These initiatives are delivered in alignment with Pacific values, world views and pieces of knowledge.

In 2023, UTS launched several initiatives to empower Pasifika communities through education, leadership and sports. The Tautai Leadership Program, specifically tailored for Pasifika learners, focuses on nurturing personal agency and confidence by intertwining leadership skills development with ancestral knowledge. This 12-week initiative engages students from high schools, fostering active decision-making in their educational journeys.

“My confidence has been boosted... I feel more outgoing and more connected to my culture and accepted. I enjoyed being surrounded by only Pasifika people and learning about my culture.”

Plumpton High School student

Complementing this, the UTS Pasifika Sports Science and Management Experience Day offers Pasifika high school students a hands-on experience in sports and exercise science at UTS's advanced Moore Park campus, promoting connections with industry professionals and academics in a culturally relevant manner. The UTS Pasifika in STEM Experience Day also provides a comprehensive on-campus event to introduce Pasifika students and their families to STEM fields. This is done through interactions with Pasifika professionals and academics, enhancing their understanding and interest in these areas.

The Pasifika Youth Cup Education Summit collaborates with the Sydney Junior Rugby Union to leverage rugby as a platform for education, leadership and community development, addressing key aspects of youth development and cultural integration.

These initiatives underscore UTS's commitment to supporting the educational and professional growth of Pasifika communities while fostering a culturally responsive environment celebrating diversity and inclusion.

391
students
participated

50
NSW high schools
were represented

103
parents attended an
information session/
community event

14

UTS academics
ran workshops

33

Pasifika industry
professionals
spoke to students

10

Pasifika student
ambassadors
offered insights

“The young people were excellent as they shared their dreams and aspirations and journeyed with a step-by-step cultural approach – focusing on the seafaring navigation of our ancestors. They showed so much pride in representing their families and the lineage they carry with them, expressing that they are the ones to join them in their waka as they set sail to reach their ‘Island of Success’.”

Anthony Folasaitu, industry professional

Below: UTS Pasifika and Pacific Professionals Network Mentoring Program orientation ceremony 2023.



UTS Humanitarian Scholarship Program

Many students who arrived in Australia as asylum seekers or humanitarian entrants cannot access Commonwealth-supported places or government loan schemes due to their visa status. This program is designed to help eliminate barriers to study.

More than a scholarship, the program includes support with the transition to university, peer and academic mentoring and access to paid internship opportunities. UTS Humanitarian Scholarship Program students receive a full tuition-fee scholarship and access to comprehensive support throughout their studies.

10
Humanitarian Scholars completed their UTS degrees

56
Humanitarian Scholars commenced their UTS degrees

20
students participated in Glow-Up career coaching

40
UTS academics and 34 industry professionals mentored Humanitarian Scholars

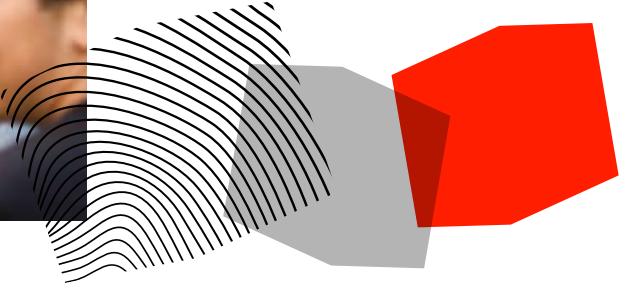
“This is an important and worthwhile program, providing support for students who have the characteristics of the best colleagues – those who are resilient, able to adapt and interested in learning and having new experiences with excellent interactions.”

Industry mentor

Working together to help refugees access higher education

UTS joined 11 universities – under the leadership of the Australian National University – to launch the Australian Refugee Welcome University Sponsorship Consortium.

Driven by a strong commitment to social impact, the consortium will co-design a groundbreaking, education-led blueprint for refugee resettlement in Australia.



“This cohort has been historically underrepresented in higher education and has had to overcome tremendous barriers to get to where they are. Accessing education shouldn’t be another one.”

Sonal Singh, Executive Manager, Student Access and Equity at UTS

Disrupting education disadvantage

Education leaders have joined UTS through the Paul Ramsay Fellowship program to generate new research and policy solutions to address entrenched inequality in education

New EdTech network to address educational inequality

Chaired by Professor Leslie Loble AM, the Australian Network for Quality Digital Education's purpose is to harness educational technology's (EdTech) potential to improve learning outcomes, bending this benefit towards the students who need it most.

The network brings together members from industry, government, schools and philanthropy to ensure EdTech adopted in Australia's schools meets the highest standards of quality and safety.



Equalising education

What are the factors that concentrate disadvantage? And how can measuring and defining those concentrations help shape education policy and practice?

Dr Michele Bruniges AM's research looks to answer those questions. A former teacher and state and federal education leader, she has joined UTS as a research fellow supported by the Paul Ramsey Foundation.

“Technology, if well designed and managed, can play a crucial role in addressing the widening outcome gaps in Australia’s education system.”

Professor Leslie Loble AM



2 Student agency

UTS Social Impact Framework – Domain 2:

Students have the agency to enact personal and social responsibility

We want our students to feel empowered to be involved in social issues.

Throughout their time at UTS, we hope to instil in them the confidence to use their skills to contribute to our society in an impactful way.

BUILDing global citizens

UTS BUILD is an extra-curricular global leadership program that prepares students to be active global citizens. The program offers a variety of opportunities to help students develop a global mindset, cross-cultural understanding, and explore ways to contribute personally and professionally to a sustainable and equitable future.

Students collect BUILD points through participating in endorsed activities. These include interactive workshops, seminars about global issues, and recognition of community service activities – particularly those that help international students develop a sense of belonging. The program awards points for optional global short-term or exchange semester experiences and provides opportunities for networking among students from diverse academic and cultural backgrounds.

The BUILD program also supports the development of the UTS graduate attribute, which is to help students think globally and ‘develop into responsible global citizens equipped for the global workplace.’

462

completed core foundational leadership and global citizenship workshops

897

attended elective experiences

1,253

participants enrolled in the 2023 BUILD program

“This program challenged me to think beyond the boundaries of my own experiences and consider the broader implications of my actions. I learned to embrace diverse viewpoints and approach problems with a more open and inclusive mindset, making me a more adaptable and effective leader.”

Maria Zahid, Bachelor of Business,
Bachelor of Creative Intelligence and Innovation

Skilling up while giving back

The UTS SOUL Award is an extra-curricular social justice leadership and volunteering program for UTS students.

Through volunteering and interactive workshops, students completing the UTS SOUL Award develop their real-world skills by making a tangible difference in the community.



Above: Students taking part in UTS SOUL Award program. Photographer: Kwa Nguyen.

“I gained a profound understanding of the intricate intersections between leadership and societal dynamics. The workshop emphasised the importance of empathy, active listening, and inclusivity in navigating diverse perspectives. It underscored the role of a leader in fostering an inclusive environment that encourages open dialogue on pressing social and political issues.”

SOUL student participant

15,303
hours volunteered in
the community sector

225
SOUL Badge and
Award graduates

24
workshops delivered

205
community organisations
supported

1,452
students participated
in SOUL

536
students upskilled
at workshops



“This experience allowed me to gain an insight into human rights advocacy and learn about the work that individuals and organisations have been undertaking to protect and promote human rights across Australia. It was so inspiring to see people from all different backgrounds come together to acknowledge and share the important work of human rights advocates who have worked so hard to promote human rights, social justice and equality in Australia.”

SOUL student participant

Shopfront: Real-world experience within the community

For 27 years, UTS Shopfront has paired community organisations with the skills of our students. It delivers free project support for under-resourced not-for-profits, while allowing students to bring their considerable skills to real organisational challenges.

“We loved the student’s perspective on the organisation... and we are even going to use some of their comments in our organisational planning. The logo and branding designs will start to be incorporated across all the work we do. The branding provides us with a new and ‘fresh’ look and will allow us to be more recognised in the community.”

Shopfront partner

1,900

students

49

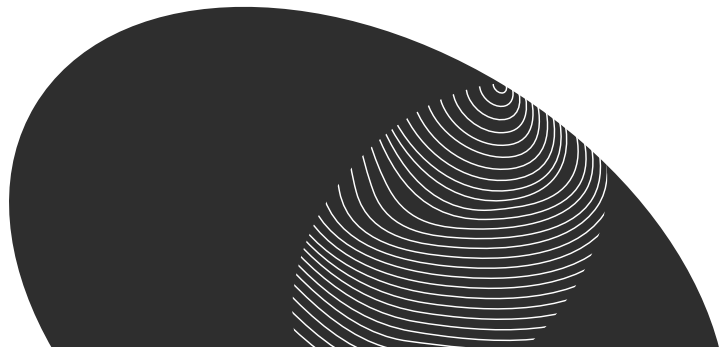
community partners

2,000

students participated in Shopfront guest lectures

183

projects





Shopfront in action

One project in 2023 saw students from the UTS Business School and Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS) support social enterprise Yung Prodigy.

The Business School students developed a 3-year strategic business plan, identifying a clear organisational direction, corporate partnerships, marketing, funding opportunities and stakeholder engagement.

The FASS students produced research on the current gaps in educational pathways for youth with incarcerated parents.

“The Shopfront Program has supported Yung Prodigy through ensuring our first three years are successful as a startup.”

Maia Ihemeje, founder of Yung Prodigy

“I had actually been so certain about a different career path prior to this whole experience. However, this made me realise privileging marginalised voices through the contribution of knowledge is something I want to pursue in my career. And for this life-changing realisation, I am forever indebted to UTS Shopfront, to Yung Prodigy and Maia, my tutor, Associate Professor Kyungja Jung. I am grateful for this opportunity and to have learnt so much in the process.”

Patricia Tolentino, FASS

100 voices: Place-based community research and action

The Centre for Social Justice & Inclusion works with communities across Glebe, Haymarket, Pyrmont and Ultimo to understand what our shared neighbourhood needs to thrive. Through place-based engagement, our work demonstrates how community-led research can generate real world impact.

This work has resulted in a community vision – a suburb-level theory of change – to advocate for community needs and uplift what’s already working in the local area.

Community-identified priorities in this vision include:

- inclusive and accessible spaces
- ensuring community voice informs decision-making
- sustainable behaviours
- housing
- improving public transport.

In 2023, this work focused on how inclusive and accessible spaces connect people and create a sense of belonging. To feel safe and included in their community, individuals said they needed access to basics like adequate housing and support to be physically and mentally well. They also highlighted the importance of affordable activities and events, information about what’s happening in the local area, and learning opportunities which support people to contribute to community.

The next part of the project is disseminating the research to community organisations and members through webinars and short publications. UTS will continue working with local communities to advocate for social change



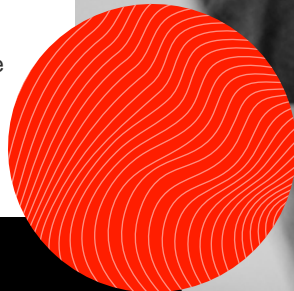


3 Maximising our impact

UTS Social Impact Framework – Domain 3:

Staff have the confidence and are supported to maximise their social impact

We want to ensure that our staff have the capacity, support and confidence to lead and contribute to socially impactful work. More than that, we want to ensure they are recognised and rewarded for this work.



Giving domestic violence the finger

Throughout October, 30 UTS staff and students donned a painted nail to spark conversations about domestic violence.

As part of The Polished Man campaign, these ambassadors – including Glen Babington, our Chief Operating Officer – raised funds and awareness to encourage our community to step up, speak out and take a stand against violence.

30

UTS ambassadors

\$6,000

raised to support trauma prevention and recovery programs



Teams that volunteer together

While the festive season is supposed to be a joyous occasion spent with family and friends, it can also be a challenging time for many Australians.

In 2023, teams within the Marketing and Communications Unit came together at Foodbank Australia to make a difference to families by helping put food on the table this Christmas.

Staff members' time was covered by UTS's social justice leave policy, which provides all staff, professional and academic, with five days of personal leave per annum to use for volunteer work.

Social justice leave allows large organisations to contribute authentically to society while facilitating opportunities for staff to dedicate their skills, time and energy towards the communities beyond our campus.

540

hampers packed

Social Impact Grants

These grants support researchers and practitioners within our community to maximise their contribution to positive social change. In 2023 UTS awarded 11 grants of \$10,000 to these projects contributing to the social good.

Enhancing diabetes educators' cultural empathy in the provision of care for Indigenous people living with or at risk of diabetes and/or pre-diabetes

Team: Shannon Lin, Diabetes Course Director, Faculty of Health, Professor Tracy Levett-Jones, Auntie Grace Ward, Dr Wenbo Peng

Partners: Illawarra Aboriginal Medical Service, Diabetes Australia, Australian Diabetes Educations Association.

Dementia Connect: Adaptation and co-Creation of a communication partner training program for families of people with dementia

Team: Naomi Folder, PhD Candidate, Associate Professor Emma Power, Professor Deborah Parker, Dr Rachael Rietdijk, Professor Leanne Togher

Partners: Dementia Australia and stakeholders throughout the community.

Evaluating the social impact of the Africultures Festival

Team: Pavlina Jasovska, Lecturer, Najmeh Hassanli, Janine Williamson, Fatma Mohamed, Tom Dawkins

Partners: SWCA trading as Africultures Festival, African and non-African community stakeholders involved in the project (specifically stallholders and patrons), StartSomeGood – Social ventures accelerator, capacity-building provider and crowdfunding platform for social entrepreneurs.

Community capacity building with migrant domestic workers in Singapore: Increasing their access to public space through impactful story-telling

Team: Dr Kristine Aquino, Senior Lecturer, Professor Amanda Wise, Associate Professor Velayutham

Partners: Filipina migrant domestic workers who play volleyball in Kallang, Singapore and HOME Singapore.

First Nations' controlled education and the true school of Mparntwe

Team: Archie Thomas, Chancellors Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Centre for Advancement of Indigenous Knowledges

Partners: Peg Havnen and Helen McCann. Children's Ground, Arrernte knowledge holder and custodian M K Turner, The Yipirinya School Council, the descendants of the Yipirinya School Founders, including the Rubuntja family, the Raggett family, the Inkamala family, and the Sharpe family.

Cultural diversity of UTS Law students: experiences and perceptions of careers in law

Team: Maxine Evers, Associate Professor, Beth Goldblatt, Professor, Karen O'Connell, Associate Professor

Partners: Asian Australian Lawyers Association, NSW Branch.

Measuring the effectiveness of 'A Stronger Me' program for survivors of domestic violence

Team: Sonika Singh, Lecturer, Kaye Chan, Senior Lecturer; Mihajla Gavin, Senior Lecturer, David Waller, Associate Professor

Partner: Survivor Vision Australia.

CHEX Community Gift Card

Team: Rajanish Calisa, Principal Delivery Manager

Partners: Uniting Harris Community Centre and local community members, CHEX business partners and other local businesses.

A co-designed, culturally inclusive physical activity program for culturally diverse communities in Sydney's Western Suburbs: Pacific People Active

Team: Dr Oscar Lederman, Yvonne Peacock, Professor Christina Caperchione, David Burns

Partners: Western Sydney Local Health District, Collective Leisure

Spontaneous Volunteering: Building disaster resilience in volunteerism in Australian communities

Team: Dr Kate Delmo, Elly Bird, Alex Rixon-Booth

Partners: Resilient Lismore, CommandPost.

The Role of Social Norms and Misperceptions on Muslim Women's Work Outcomes

Team: Dr Elif Incekara-Hafalir, Rayan Merkbawi, Ali Vergili

Partners: Australian Muslim Women Centre for Human Rights.





Measuring our progress: Social Impact Dashboards grants

These grants are designed to support faculties and university staff to engage with and use the UTS Social Impact Dashboards. By identifying areas needing improvement, the projects will design solutions for change.

Does workforce diversity actually change our perception and experience of belonging and equity

Lead: Professor Adam Berry,
Faculty of Engineering and
Information Technology

Students as social agents and active community members: improving the dashboards

Lead: Dr David Van Reyk,
Faculty of Science

Understanding the critical role of inclusive community in STEM gender equity programs

Lead: Dr Faezeh Karimi,
Faculty of Engineering and
Information Technology

Project: The impact of student's postcode on education success and attrition rates in the post-COVID era

Lead: Professor Hui Chen,
Faculty of Science

Exploring student participation in activism in the welfare space

Lead: Jennifer Wills,
UTS Students' Association

Improving Indigenous student success by understanding the Business School's low enrolment of UG Indigenous students and the high attrition rate

Lead: Dr Kaye Chan,
UTS Business School

The impact of Immigrants parents' perceived challenges on their children's enrolment in university

Lead: Dr Rayan Merkbawi,
UTS Business School, Management
Department

How impactful is HDR knowledge capital? Evidencing HDR impact and pathways to ensure future knowledge resilience

Lead: Dr Sarah Kinkel Miller,
Graduate Research School

Applying the lens of First and Further Year Experience transition to the Social Impact Dashboard

Leads: Sonia Matiuk and Dr Kathy Egea,
Faculty of Health



Riding for education

A firm believer in education access for all, Danny Builth-Snoad had an idea to raise money for the UTS Humanitarian Scholarship. Lacing up his shoes, he cycled for 21 hours through scorching heat and a thunderstorm – raising an incredible amount of money.

\$6,900

raised

20.21

hours on bike

440

kilometers covered



Say My Name campaign

Many people with non-Anglo-sounding names are used to navigating the world with people not knowing how to or not trying to pronounce their name correctly. As part of the UTS Multicultural Women's Network, Dr Elaine Laforteza spearheaded an initiative to decolonise how we understand and recognise names often deemed 'tricky' in Anglo-Australian contexts.

Working with UTS design students, the campaign launched guides on how to respectfully ask the pronunciation of someone's name and open up the conversation to celebrate all names.

Walking the talk

100 per cent of donations from the Staff Giving Program go directly to students – and UTS matches the money dollar-for-dollar, doubling the impact. At a morning tea this year, donors were invited to meet some of the recipients of this program and see first-hand, the weight of their generosity.



1,500
students supported



The First Inventors

Navigation, aeronautics, kinship and memory – these are just some ways this continent was managed before colonisation.

Distinguished Professor Larissa Behrendt OA directed a series exploring the oft-ignored innovation of First Nations peoples.

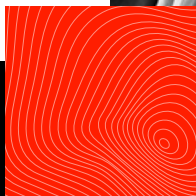
4 Contributing to our community

UTS Social Impact Framework – Domain 4:

Targeted research, teaching and program outcomes have social impact and collectively contribute to community

We aspire to be an agent for social change, transforming communities through research, education and practice.

This means we must ensure social impact is embedded into all aspects of our work.



Traditional transformation

Indigenous landowners hold knowledge that is vital to climate change solutions. But a lack of resources has limited the ability of communities to participate in and reap the benefits of renewable energy.

Enter – an Indigenous-led research project building on insights from Professor Heidi Norman's twenty years of research on Aboriginal Land Rights in NSW and extensive consultation with the Aboriginal Land Council network.

The project is backed by a \$125,000 grant from the James Martin Institute for Public Policy.



Above: Marx Melencio, ARIA's lead Machine Vision Engineer who is completely blind, testing the ARIA glasses in real-world scenarios. Image courtesy ARIA Research.

Visionary tech

'I can always hear them fight, but I can never hear them smile.' When Rob, a participant in an ARIA research study, said this about his kids, it sparked the idea for a project to enable sight through sound. Our researchers have teamed up with the Sydney-based start-up ARIA Research, and the University of Sydney and developed next-generation smart glasses that translate visual information into distinct sound icons.

ARIA is a non-invasive device that can be worn like ordinary glasses. It's equipped with a camera and other sensors that collect data about the surrounding environment and objects within it; this information is transmitted via audio cues that help users visualise the world around them.

Nurturing through nutrition

Did you know up to half of all children experience feeding difficulties? Tube feeding is surprisingly common, with the numbers increasing worldwide. Ninety in 100,000 children have severe feeding difficulties. These include premature babies, those with congenital heart disease, cerebral palsy, cystic fibrosis, neurodevelopmental disabilities, metabolic disease or cleft palate.

While tube feeding is a solution for nutritional intake, it is not always easy for the child or family. That's where Professor Nick Hopwood's (School of International Studies & Education) research comes in. His learning-based approach is transforming the lives of families with tube-fed children.

The cost of crisis

Nationally, around 175,000 households are on a waiting list for social housing, and those in NSW can expect to wait 10 years or more for support.

A new report, *Waithood: The Experiences of Applying for and Waiting for Social Housing*, led by Professor Alan Morris at UTS's Institute for Public Policy and Governance and funded by the Australian Research Council, reveals the experiences and often dire circumstances of those on the waitlist.

All in the family

Associate Professor Harry Hobbs (Faculty of Law) was awarded a prestigious Discovery Early Career Researcher Award for his work examining how to improve the likelihood of successful treaty processes.

A constitutional and human rights lawyer, his work explores questions of sovereignty and statehood. His passion for his work stems from his grandfather, Stewart Harris, a former journalist who wrote regularly on racial discrimination and Aboriginal land rights.



Beating the heat

Hot temperatures can have severe impacts, especially on vulnerable individuals. Associate Professor Jo River (Faculty of Health) is part of the research team for a 'cooling hub' project – the first of its kind in Australia. People with experience of homelessness worked with researchers and health workers in determining where to set up the cooling hub, what to include inside, how to make the community aware of the service, and how to reach out from the hub to bring people to it.

Using the HeatWatch App and misting fans, it will help hundreds of Sydneysiders stay cooler and pave a blueprint for the future. reach out from the hub to bring people to it. Using the HeatWatch App and misting fans, it will help hundreds of Sydneysiders stay cooler and pave a blueprint for the future.

Research and advocacy for First Nations children

Statutory child protection systems continue to intervene disproportionately in the lives of First Nations children and their families. First Nations children are almost 6 times more likely to be subject of a notification of risk of harm, and more than 10 times more likely to be removed from their families.

Numerous reviews have raised significant systemic issues, including the over-representation of First Nations children and families, and the poor outcomes achieved across domains, including health and wellbeing, education attainment, employment, homelessness, justice system and even future child protection involvement as parents. The economic and, more importantly, the human cost to First Nations children and young people, their families and communities are considerable.

Jumbunna Institute's research and advocacy focus is in service of First Nations families and communities, including direct advocacy and support of families, raising awareness about the systems and practice issues affecting Aboriginal children and families, and supporting First Nations communities to organise strategically to advocate for change.

The approach goes beyond conventional models of researcher or government-led 'consultation', towards genuinely First Nations-led approaches. It's responsive to First Nations' aspirations and priorities by working closely with communities in research design and implementation towards achieving their goals. The project has contributed to legislative reforms, improved accountability of child protection services, the development

of national strategic priorities and supporting dialogue about transforming systems and practice. It continues to support ongoing efforts for change, as well as providing immediate outcomes for some families in their interactions with child protection system.

This work partners with stakeholders including First Nations communities and their organisations, government and independent statutory organisations, non-government organisations and practitioners in the child protection sector.

New beginnings

A joint research project provided the most comprehensive contemporary insight into refugee family settlement in Australia by following 246 refugee families from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan living in suburban and regional areas in NSW, Qld and Vic. The report, led by UTS Professor Jock Collins, Professor Carol Reid from Western Sydney University and Associate Professor Dimitria Groutsis from the University of Sydney, found that settlement outcomes such as education, language, employment and belonging all improved significantly over time (between 2017–2022).

“These evidence-based findings demonstrate that Australian refugee intakes can be substantially increased.”

Professor Jock Collins

Seeing is believing

UTS has teamed up with Cognizant – a global professional services company – to expand the Women in Engineering and IT (WiEIT) Program, empowering young women and girls to see the possibilities of a bright and successful future career in STEM, starting in the classroom.

The STEM x Play program brings UTS students and industry professionals into a primary school classroom for 6–8 weeks over the term. Students get hands on, learning about design thinking, building prototypes and engaging with industry professionals.

STEM x Impact is the next step, where students in year 7 and 8 get the chance to develop and test prototypes to solve real-world problems – receiving valuable feedback, coaching and role modelling from those within the field as their ideas come to life.

Our WiEIT program has been actively working to promote gender diversity in STEM fields since 1981. Despite making some progress, gender inequality remains a significant issue in STEM, and WiEIT is addressing this problem through various outreach initiatives.

“When people are not accustomed to working with diverse teams, their prejudices and biases become evident.”

Maryam Kausar, WiEIT Outreach Officer



5 Advocacy and thought leadership

UTS Social Impact Framework – Domain 5:

UTS is an advocate, critical voice and thought leader on issues that concern and impact communities

Central to UTS's public purpose mission is our role as an advocate, critical voice and thought leader on issues that concern and impact communities.

Forums for impact

The Centre for Social Justice & Inclusion held a series of public events to advocate for social justice in the university sector and beyond, and deepen the connections between alumni, partners, community stakeholders and the public.

Fighting modern slavery

Australia's initial response to modern slavery strongly focused on criminal justice outcomes and was not informed by the voices and experiences of survivors.

In **Modern slavery: Amplifying survivor voices**, co-hosted with Anti-Slavery Australia, Helena Hassani, Habiba, Professor Jennifer Burn AM, and Dr Jacqueline Nelson explored how a survivor-led approach can help combat modern slavery through meaningful, ethical and trauma-informed engagement.

“We need to provide both mental and physical safe spaces for people to disclose their experience. Once we develop a good understanding of the situation through a trauma-informed lens, we can guide the client or the victim survivors and empower them to choose the best support.”

Helena Hassani, Anti-Slavery Australia

“It is fantastic to see such incredible minds coming together to advocate for change. I’m inspired each day by the work done in the Centre.”

Amy Persson, Interim Pro Vice-Chancellor
(Social Justice & Inclusion)



Changing the single parent payment

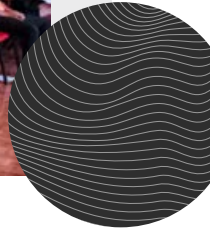
In the May 2023 budget, Treasurer Jim Chalmers announced an important change to the welfare payment for single parents: recipients could stay on it until their youngest child turned 14, up from the previous cut-off at eight years old. Groundbreaking research by Professor Anne Summers AO added fuel to the calls by community and economic leaders to invest in single parents – overwhelmingly single mothers. The campaign leading up to the budget is a success story of how lived experience, independent research, media attention, and a government-backed task force combined to reform a harmful policy.

UTS hosted **How do you change a bad law?** to showcase the successful collaboration as a pathway for policy change. Terese Edwards, Sam Mostyn, Laura Tingle and Professor Anne Summers AO joined the Hon. Professor Verity Firth AO to discuss how researchers, activists, policymakers, and the community sector can join forces to make a real difference and navigate complex politics to advocate for – and achieve – reform.

“We’re dealing with gendered norms that persist no matter what... We’re probably one of the most gendered normed countries in the world.”

Sam Mostyn AO, Chair, Women's Economic Equality Taskforce





Disability justice

People with dementia have been subject to significant harm, including violence, abuse, and neglect in aged care. In the webinar, **Dementia justice**, Associate Professor Linda Steele, Kate Swaffer, Yumi Lee, Bill Mitchell OAM, and Theresa Flavin discussed reparations, justice, and how we can better support people living with dementia.

In partnership with the Human Rights Law Centre, our **Human rights and people with disability** panel session with Alice Drury, Hannah Solomons, Liz Hudson and Neha Prakash explored how a National Charter of Human Rights could make a difference for people with disability, and the lives of all Australians.

“Financial compensation is just one part of reparations. The other parts include the settings, the practices, the ecosystem which enables the perpetration of the violation of the rights of people with dementia.”

Yumi Lee, CEO of the Older Women’s Network

“The wellbeing and rights of people should be at the heart of government decision-making. It would put the obligation of the government to ensure deep and meaningful consultation with people with disability regarding any positions that disproportionately impacts them.”

Alice Drury, Acting Legal Director of the Human Rights Law Centre



The right of future generations

The first Future Generations Commissioner for Wales, Sophie Howe, joined Professor Susan Harris Rimmer and Professor Michael Thomson in this webinar to share lessons in leading high-profile interventions and challenging the government to demonstrate how they are taking account of future generations.

“The statutory definition of a prosperous Wales is a ‘productive, innovative, and low carbon society, one which uses resources efficiently and proportionately.’ This definition is an exciting one because it firmly puts prosperity in Wales within the context of planetary boundaries, and it focuses on skills and giving our population access to decent or fair work.”

Sophie Howe, former Future Generations Commissioner, Wales



“Today is a celebration of your strength and your joy. And the power of our words – to protest, to speak, to keep fighting for the world we want to live in and the capacity always that we have to use our words to write new futures for ourselves.”

Sarah Malik, journalist, author and television presenter

Gender equity

International Women's Day: Navigating gender, race, faith, and belonging featured keynote speaker Sarah Malik, Associate Professor Eva Cheng, and Farra Zaed to discuss navigating gender, race, faith, and belonging in modern Australia.

In the webinar, **Fixing our systems to stop sexual violence**, Karen Iles and Catharine Pruscino discussed what's needed to improve our laws, policies, and systems to combat sexual violence in our institutions.

“We need a culture of listening, and promoting the voices and experiences of victim survivors so that we start to break the silence over sexual assault and rape.”

Karen Iles, Founder and Principal Solicitor of Violet Co Legal & Consulting



Refugee rights

In **Universities' role in the humanitarian crisis**, Dr Sally Baker, Dr Tebeje Molla, Dr Olga Oleinikova, Dr Asher Hirsch, and Amir Ali Jalali discussed how universities can better advocate for human rights and freedoms of refugees.

The conversation was shared with partners including the Australian Refugee Consortium, the Department of Home Affairs, the Scholars at Risk network and community groups to continue universities' advocacy for refugee rights.

“Policy invisibility means no funding. No funding means university cannot provide ongoing targeted support because it’s resource intensive. Policy invisibility is a serious issue at the sector level that we need to work on.”

**Dr Tebeje Molla, Senior Lecturer,
Deakin University**



Striving for student equity

In response to the release of the Australian Universities Accord Discussion Paper, UTS and EPHEA joined forces to convene a national forum of student equity leaders and practitioners to reflect and respond to the issues.

Feedback and discussions from the forum informed a white paper, which emphasised the need for targets beyond overall participation in higher education to drive better long-term outcomes for students. This includes exploring the student lifecycle to improve access, participation, success completion, and graduate outcomes.

The white paper was a key source of information in submissions to the Accord Panel for recommendations to improve outcomes for students from equity backgrounds.

“The recommendations from the Australian Universities Accord are sound. With many of them relying on additional government funding, universities must continue to strive to create opportunities for equitable access to education – on their own accord.”

**Amy Persson, Interim Pro Vice-Chancellor
(Social Justice & Inclusion)**



Voice, Treaty, Truth

The Voice referendum was a historic moment for Australia. UTS, with a long-standing commitment to the right to self-determination for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, voiced its support for implementing the Uluru Statement from the Heart in full – Yes to Voice. Yes to Treaty. Yes to Truth.

As an education institution, UTS played an important role in helping people to understand issues and concepts in the referendum like constitutional implications, self-determination, the case for Treaty, truth-telling, and emphasising everyone’s democratic right and responsibility to participate in the referendum.

Grants, communications, and events supported the wider university community to engage in meaningful discussion and respectful debate.

This included a Voice, Treaty, Truth panel session during National Reconciliation Week with Dr Tony McAvoy SC, Professor Robynne Quiggin, Professor Lindon Coombes, and Dr Harry Hobbs.

We also hosted a week-long UTS First Nations Film Festival showcasing insights into the fight for self-determination and sovereignty and the talent of Indigenous filmmakers, producers, actors, artists, and activists.

“Recognition and observance for Indigenous sovereignty means understanding we’ve got law systems of our own. We operate according to our ancient lore and there needs to be some accommodation of our sovereignty if the country is to live, act, and go forward in a respectful manner.”

Dr Tony McAvoy SC, native title, treaties and truth-telling specialist





Walking in two worlds: the space between cultures

The Centre for Social Justice & Inclusion and the Centre for Inclusive Design co-hosted this panel at the inaugural SXSW Sydney 2023. Dr Elaine Laforteza, Dr Bilquis Ghani, Senthan Sanchayan and Dr Manisha Amin explored the challenges and benefits of having access to more than one culture in modern Australia.



Spreading the first stories

First Nations literature is beginning to get the recognition it deserves in Australia, but one UTS academic wants to see these stories told on a global stage.

Graham, a Kokomini man, found his Master of Fine Arts in New York so transformative he wanted other Indigenous Australian writers to experience the same. From this desire The First Nations Writers Residency was born. Sponsored by The American Australian Association, it will welcome its inaugural recipient in 2024.

Indigenous-led excellence

UTS is embarking on a groundbreaking proposal to build Australia's first truly comprehensive National First Nations College.

Developed and led by the Indigenous leadership team at UTS and the Indigenous community, the college aims to remove the barriers, both real and perceived, that prevent Indigenous participation in higher education and the broader economy.

The college – to which Woolworths Group has pledged \$10 million – will aim to do this by raising aspiration, maximising opportunities for entry to higher education, and supporting the pursuit of quality employment, careers and contribution to society.

We were thrilled to announce the winning team for the National First Nations College architectural design competition, Greenaway Architects, Warren and Mahoney, and OCULUS. The design incorporates thoughtful connection to Country and centring the student experience for what will hopefully set a global example for First Nations colleges.

“The College aims to create an environment where students – Indigenous and non-Indigenous – can thrive and celebrate Indigenous identity and culture, while setting a new benchmark for excellence in Indigenous education and research.”

**Professor Robynne Quiggin,
Pro Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous Leadership
and Engagement) at UTS**

Image © Greenaway Architects, Warren and Mahoney, OCULUS.

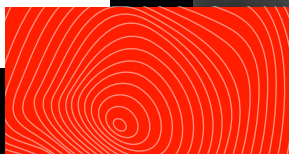


6 Business operations

UTS Social Impact Framework – Domain 6:

UTS business operations and strategies reflect a long-term independent commitment to social impact

For UTS to be truly committed to social justice, this value must be embedded in our business operations, internal ways of working and how we support our students and staff.



Respect. Now. Always.

We are a proud and active member of the national Respect. Now. Always. (RNA) campaign dedicated to the elimination of sexual harm on Australian campuses. In 2023, the team finalised the research project, Community Voice, which released four strategic recommendations for the RNA program in 2024 and beyond, and launched the RNA Theory of Change, which provides a clear blueprint on how UTS can collectively address sexual harm within our community.

We also completed our sixth year of using ice-cream to talk about consent to first-year and commencing students, assisted by an active and passionate volunteer member base.

In addition, the UTS RNA team was named as a finalist in the 2023 AFR Higher Education Awards, Community Engagement category.

2023 saw the establishment of the RNA Steering Committee to oversee and apply direction to the RNA program.

80

student volunteers

115,000

UTS staff and students completed the Consent Matters module

7,000

scoops of ice-cream

We launched the RNA Theory of Change, providing a clear blueprint on how UTS can collectively address sexual harm within our community.

We finalised the research project, Community Voice, releasing four strategic recommendations for the RNA program in 2024 and beyond.



Breaking the Binary

This training session aims to unpack sex characteristics, gender identity, gender expression and sexuality while exploring the gender binary, challenges faced by LGBTIQ+ communities and identifying strategies to make our spaces more inclusive and empowering.

Ally training

The next step in our LGBTIQ+ training, Ally training shows participants how to take all the learnings from Breaking the Binary and put them into action for our community.

145

Ally training participants

64

Breaking the Binary participants



“It was amazing to have the opportunity to take the next step after the Breaking the Binary training and learn how I can make a tangible impact as an ally – not only in the UTS community but in my life more broadly.”

Zoe Cwojdzinski, Staff Communication Advisor



Inner Sydney – Redfern, La Perouse

Eye-opening opportunities

The Jawun secondment program is a unique 6-week program, UTS staff are matched with Indigenous organisations to help build capability and empower Indigenous-led development. Participants are placed in one of three regions across Australia where they not only lend their skills to a community organisation, but learn so much in return.

These secondments take place in:

- Inner Sydney – Redfern, La Perouse
- Lower River Murray and Far West Coast – South Australia
- Central Australia – based in Alice Springs

A new era of community recognition

The Carnegie Community Engagement Classification has been the leading framework for community engagement in the US for the past 17 years. We were proud to be one of two inaugural recipients of the Australian classification.

With consideration of Indigenous sovereignty as key, it is acknowledged in the Australian classification that all Australian higher education institutions must be committed to the advancement and self-determination of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and reconciliation of First Nations peoples with the wider Australian community.



“The launch of the classification has come at a pivotal point in Australian higher education.”

The Hon. Professor Verity Firth, Chair of the National Advisory Committee for the Carnegie Elective Community Engagement Classifications in Australia

Addressing gender inequity in STEMM


In Australia and internationally, women are underrepresented in science, technology, engineering, mathematics and medicine (STEMM) – both in industry and academia, especially in senior leadership positions.

UTS participates in the Athena Swan program which recognises and celebrates good practice to boost gender equity. UTS's focus is specifically on supporting women in STEMM.

UTS has identified five key barriers to gender equity in STEMM and is working to address those barriers. These form the crux of UTS's new plan to address gender equity in STEMM:

1. Building the pipeline through outreach to attract women to Engineering and IT in early education. Currently, low numbers of women are drawn to Engineering and IT disciplines. This begins in early primary and continues through secondary and undergraduate education.
2. Supporting career progression for Higher Degree Research (HDR) students in the Faculty of Engineering and IT. UTS is losing talent due to lack of career progression pathways that work for women, especially for HDR and Early Career Research women.
3. Targeting recruitment to combat the gender imbalance in applications for STEMM positions. This will address the unequal numbers of women and men that are applying for positions in the Faculty of Science and the Faculty of Engineering and IT.
4. Making flexible work the norm across STEMM work areas. Flexible work arrangements available at UTS are not well known or taken up in STEMM work areas. Flexible work provisions need to be applied equally across the university.
5. Promotion pathways to increase numbers of women ascending to senior positions in STEMM. This will address the unequal numbers of women applying for promotion in Science and FEIT, resulting in a gender imbalance that increases at every level of seniority.





**Social justice
is core to UTS's
DNA.**



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