UNIVERSITY
OF WOLLONGONG
AUSTRALIA

Sustainable Development Goals

REPORT 2025



Building on 50 years of impact and action

The University of Wollongong's (UOW) 50th anniversary in 2025 was an opportunity to reflect on 5 decades of education, research, innovation, partnership and practical action. This milestone also provided a moment to look ahead at how the university can contribute to a more sustainable and equitable future.

Launched in 2025, UOW's *Vision 2035 and Strategic Plan 2030* set the direction for this next chapter, with an ambition closely aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The following report demonstrates how UOW staff, students and partners contributed to the SDGs in 2025, creating impact locally, across Australia and around the world.

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Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge that Country for Aboriginal peoples is an interconnected set of ancient and sophisticated relationships. UOW spreads across many interrelated Aboriginal Countries that are bound by this sacred landscape, and intimate relationship with that landscape since creation. From Sydney to the Southern Highlands, to the South Coast. From fresh water to bitter water to salt. From city to urban to rural. UOW acknowledges the custodianship of the Aboriginal peoples of this place and space that has kept alive the relationships between all living things. The university acknowledges the devastating impact of colonisation on our campuses' footprint and commit ourselves to truth-telling, healing and education.

Artwork by

Brittney Angus

Wiradjuri and Ngunnawal woman

UOW graduate





A university's contribution is seen in the opportunities it creates and the lives it helps change. For me, this is at the heart of our commitment to a more sustainable future.

From our beginnings as a small regional college, the University of Wollongong (UOW) has grown into a globally connected university, grounded in the communities we serve. Shaped by the support and ambition of our local community, we understand our responsibility to expand opportunity and contribute to shared prosperity, both locally and globally.

Our *Vision 2035 and Strategic Plan 2030* set the direction for this next chapter. Our strategy has a clear purpose: to create and apply knowledge that empowers people, strengthens communities and supports a resilient and sustainable world. Our students are central to that vision. We want every graduate to leave UOW with the knowledge, skills and confidence to help build a fairer, healthier and more sustainable world.

This Sustainable Development Goals Report demonstrates our purpose in action. From advancing clean energy and sustainable infrastructure to improving health outcomes, widening participation and working with communities to address complex social and environmental challenges, our students, researchers, staff and partners are translating knowledge into impact. That extends to how we operate our campuses, use resources and put sustainable solutions into practice. These efforts are reflected in UOW's continued strong performance in the global Times Higher Education Sustainability Impact Ratings.

The Sustainable Development Goals remind us that progress depends on working together. By connecting disciplines and bringing together communities, researchers, industry and government, we can develop solutions that respond to local needs and contribute to global progress.

Looking ahead, our greatest strength remains our people and the difference we can make together. I thank our students, staff, alumni, partners and communities for their continued commitment to a more sustainable future.

Professor G.Q. Max Lu AO
Vice-Chancellor and President

UOW's Vision 2035 and Strategic Plan 2030

THINK GLOBAL. ACT LOCAL. IMPACT THROUGH PARTNERSHIP.

As the University of Wollongong moves confidently into its sixth decade, *Vision 2035 and Strategic Plan 2030* set a bold agenda for the future – one defined by adaptability, innovation and a steadfast commitment to societal impact.

Our purpose:

To create and apply knowledge that empowers people, strengthens communities and supports a resilient and sustainable world.

Vision 2035:

Empowering student success, delivering world-leading teaching and research, and driving local and global impact, UOW will be recognised among the world's top 100 universities.

At the heart of this vision are the people who drive our success: students, staff, alumni, partners and communities working together.

Our full *Vision 2035 and Strategic Plan 2030* can be viewed at uow.info/strategy.

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals

Adopted by the United Nations in 2015, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a call-to-action for people worldwide to address 5 critical areas of importance by 2030: people, planet, prosperity, peace, and partnership. In total, there are 17 goals aimed at improving the planet and the quality of human life around the world.



Goal 1

No Poverty

End poverty in all its forms everywhere.



Goal 2

Zero Hunger

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



Goal 3

Good Health and Well-Being

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



Goal 4

Quality Education

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



Goal 5

Gender Equality

Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.



Goal 6

Clean Water and Sanitation

Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.



Goal 7

Affordable and Clean Energy

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



Goal 8

Decent Work and Economic Growth

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



Goal 9

Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure

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



Goal 10

Reduced Inequalities

Reduce inequality within and among countries.



Goal 11

Sustainable Cities and Communities

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



Goal 12

Responsible Consumption and Production

Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.



Goal 13

Climate Action

Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.



Goal 14

Life Below Water

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



Goal 15

Life on Land

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



Goal 16

Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

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



Goal 17

Partnerships for the Goals

Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development.

Global highlights



=41st

Times Higher Education Impact Ratings

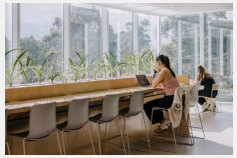
2026



138th

QS World University Rankings: Sustainability

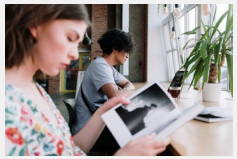
2026



=86th

QS World University Rankings: Sustainability – Governance

2026



6th

QS World University Rankings: Philosophy

2026



Top 100

THE rating in 13 out of 17 SDGs

2026

Times Higher Education (THE)

TOP 50 GLOBALLY

=20th

SDG 10
Reduced Inequalities

30th

SDG 8
Decent Work and Economic Growth (3rd in Australia)

45th

SDG 9
Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure (1st in Australia)

TOP 100 GLOBALLY

52nd

SDG 13
Climate Action

58th

SDG 6
Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

=63rd

SDG 14
Responsible Consumption and Production

=63rd

SDG 17
Partnerships for the Goals

=67th

SDG 1
No Poverty (2nd in Australia)

70th

SDG 2
Zero Hunger

70th

SDG 16
Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

=71st

SDG 5
Gender Equality

78th

SDG 12
Responsible Consumption and Production

=91st

SDG 11
Sustainable Cities and Communities

Environment and climate action

From climate resilience and biodiversity conservation to sustainable infrastructure and caring for Country, UOW is helping communities and industry better respond to the environmental challenges of our time.

Across Australia and the world, the university is contributing new knowledge and solutions that support more sustainable futures. Through interdisciplinary research and global partnerships, our work contributes to advancing climate education, informing conservation efforts, strengthening disaster preparedness and improving the sustainability of the systems and environments on which we depend. Together, these efforts reflect UOW's commitment to creating and applying knowledge that supports a resilient and sustainable world.

52nd
SDG 13:
Climate Action
THE Impact Ratings 2026

=63rd
SDG 14:
Life Below Water
THE Impact Ratings 2026

58th
SDG 6:
Clean Water and Sanitation
THE Impact Ratings 2026

=91st
SDG 11:
Sustainable Cities and Communities
THE Impact Ratings 2026



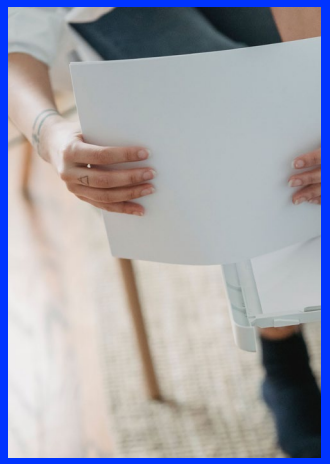
Campus sustainability in numbers



WATER CONSUMPTION

3.2 megalitres
of onsite rainwater storage

10.21%
decrease in mains water consumption since 2019



PAPER CONSUMPTION

77%
reduction in office paper purchased since 2019

96%
of paper consumed in 2025 was carbon neutral



SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL

22%
of people commuted to UOW Wollongong via active transport in 2025

23.6%
of people commuted to UOW Wollongong via public transport in 2025

2
electric shuttle buses

13
secure bike bases and end-of-trip facilities*



WASTE MANAGEMENT

46%
of waste diverted from landfill in 2025*

180 tonnes
of waste composted in 2025*



CAMPUS ENVIRONMENT

82 native trees
planted in 2025 across Wollongong and Innovation campuses



INFRASTRUCTURE

7
LED lighting upgrades in buildings and outdoor areas in 2025

13
EV charging locations with plug options from 22 kW AC to 360 kW ultra-fast DC

18.6%
increase in EV network charging capacity in 2025

1,124 kW
total peak charging capacity

*Wollongong and Innovation campuses only



RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT

Environmental Futures

Environmental Futures brings together expert interdisciplinary researchers to enhance wellbeing and environmental sustainability. Underpinned by world-leading research and diverse expertise, Environmental Futures collaborates with research partners and industry to tackle real-world challenges spanning sustainability, climate change and human impacts.

Research undertaken by members of Environmental Futures seeks to align with the UN SDGs and contribute to the UN Decade of Action at global and local scales. UOW research groups who contributed to Environmental Futures in 2025 included the ARC Centre of Excellence for Australian Biodiversity and Heritage and the Centre for Environmental Risk Management of Bushfires.





RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT

Sustainable Buildings Research Centre

The Sustainable Buildings Research Centre (SBRC) is a multidisciplinary facility addressing the challenges of making built environments sustainable. The centre aims to be a leader in ideas and solutions that improve the performance of current and new buildings to create more effective places to live and work. The SBRC building itself was the first in Australia to be certified under the Living Building Challenge (LBC) framework for sustainable, regenerative buildings and is internationally recognised for efficiency and restoration.





RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT

Australian National Centre for Ocean Resources and Security (ANCORS)

The Australian National Centre for Ocean Resources and Security (ANCORS) is the southern hemisphere's only multidisciplinary, university-based centre dedicated to research, education and training in ocean law, maritime security and natural marine resource management. ANCORS has an unrivalled reputation for capacity building in the law of the sea, ocean policymaking and maritime security.





RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT

Australian Centre for Culture, Environment, Society and Space (ACCESS)

In a volatile world, how do we shape more just and sustainable futures for people and places? ACCESS research combines analysis of culture, environment, society and space to explore the complex challenges and opportunities arising from the transformation of environments, economies, spaces and places. It also addresses how we can approach these challenges with decision-making and action across institutions and communities.





INITIATIVE

UOW launches revitalised Campus Tree Walk

To mark the university's 50th anniversary year, UOW reopened its Campus Tree Walk, drawing together Western science and Indigenous knowledge in a new shared experience of the Wollongong campus.

Fifty trees of ecological, cultural and historical significance were selected for the revitalised walk, each fitted with new signage and linked by QR code to deeper ecological, cultural and botanical detail. The project became one of UOW's most wide-ranging collaborations, involving the Environment Unit, landscape team, the Janet Cosh Herbarium, Indigenous community representatives, academics, alumni and local plant experts.

'The walk is an invitation to step into 2 knowledge systems,' said Associate Professor Anthony McKnight of UOW's Indigenous Strategy Unit. 'Western science, which sees a tree as a resource, and Indigenous knowledge, which sees a tree as giving gifts all the time.'

The walk is designed to evolve, with new trees able to be added over time and the accompanying webpage expanding into an educational resource for schools and universities.





INITIATIVE

Global Climate Change Week marks a decade of climate education

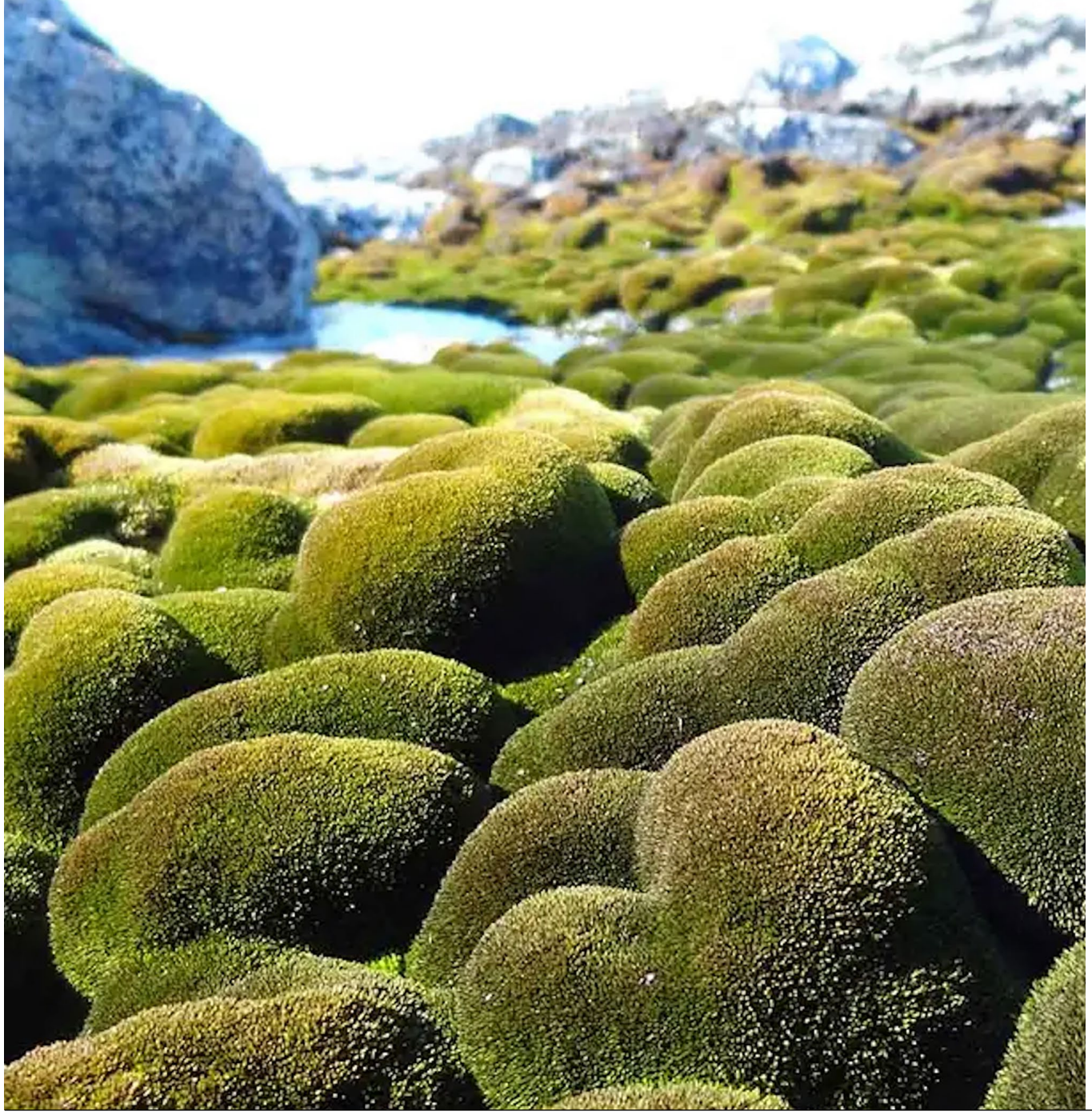
In October 2025, staff and students participated in the 10th annual Global Climate Change Week (GCCW), an international initiative founded at UOW that has grown into a worldwide movement for climate education and action.

Established by UOW academics and students in 2015, GCCW encourages universities, schools and communities to engage in activities that inspire behaviour change and support solutions to the climate crisis.

The 2025 program – Rethinking the role of education in times of climate emergency: reflect, repair, regenerate – explored how education can help drive the transformations needed to address the impacts of climate change. Through a program of in-person and online events across UOW's global campuses, participants shared knowledge and ideas centred on protecting our planet.

While international leadership of GCCW has now transitioned to Grand Valley State University in the United States, UOW remains proud of its role in establishing an initiative that continues to foster climate education, collaboration and action across the globe.





CASE STUDY

World-first database unlocks the secrets of Antarctica's many species

A pioneering new database is helping scientists build a precise picture of the thousands of flora, fauna and organisms that call Antarctica home.

For the first time, an international cohort of researchers, including Distinguished Professor Sharon Robinson AM from UOW's School of Science, has compiled a comprehensive inventory of species from Earth's least understood and most remote continent.

The Antarctic Terrestrial Database – assembled in partnership with the Australian Antarctic Division, the British Antarctic Survey and the Australian Research Council's Securing Antarctica's Environmental Future (SAEF) program – contains more than 35,654 records of 1,890 species of Antarctic organisms, dating from as far back as the 1800s.

Distinguished Professor Robinson, who is also the Deputy Director Science Implementation of SAEF, said an accurate inventory has long been missing and the world-first inventory is essential for conservation efforts in Antarctica.

'This database is the first step in a better understanding of the continent's terrestrial biodiversity,' she said. 'It is a key requirement for understanding and mitigating the impacts of climate change on the region's biodiversity.'





CASE STUDY

Coastal wetlands research shortlisted for Eureka Prize

In July 2025, UOW's Professor Kerrylee Rogers and Dr Jeff Kelleway were named Australian Museum Eureka Prizes finalists for Excellence in Interdisciplinary Scientific Research for their work on how global warming is affecting critical coastal habitats.

As part of the Crosscurrents research team, the UOW scientists combined computer modelling with real-world data to reveal how coastal ecosystems such as mangroves, coral reefs and tidal marshes have responded to rising sea levels, and how they are likely to respond in future.

The research found that meeting Paris Agreement climate targets is essential for keeping these habitats alive.

'Our research is at the global forefront of this issue,' said Professor Rogers, former director of UOW's Environmental Futures research centre. 'We're facing a critical moment for our planet's future and it is essential that we draw attention to the importance of protecting our coastal ecosystems.'

The team's groundbreaking research now contributes to the evidence base for Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reporting, guiding decision-makers on how to safeguard vital ecosystems and coastal communities for generations to come.





CASE STUDY

Mapping weeds to care for Country

With invasive plants changing the landscapes and ecosystems of northern Australia, a team of UOW researchers investigated how weed and biosecurity management can be intertwined with social and cultural connections to place.

Mapping weeds on Country, a project led by Associate Professor Jennifer Atchison from UOW's School of Social Sciences, put Indigenous knowledge at the centre of managing invasive species in Gajerrong Country.

In collaboration with the Marralam Community in the Northern Territory, researchers used innovative mapping technologies to record where weeds occur and how local knowledge can help shape practical responses and more resilient landscapes.

The resulting database can now be used by the community to identify priorities, make land management decisions and share their visions for Country. The project reflects a broader principle that effective responses to invasive species depend on the knowledge and lived experience of the people caring for the land.





CASE STUDY

Study brings science of bushfire smoke to the frontline of firefighting

University of Wollongong research is helping close the gap between the science of bushfire smoke and the health and safety protections firefighters need on the frontline.

Published in the *International Journal of Wildland Fire,* the study synthesises global research on smoke composition, toxicity and exposure pathways, and the effectiveness of protective equipment and decontamination procedures. It responds directly to firefighter feedback and coronial inquest recommendations following the 2019–2020 Black Summer bushfires.

'Firefighters operate in incredibly complex environments and face hazards from smoke that are often invisible,' said lead author Dr Max Desservettaz, research fellow at UOW's School of Science. 'Supporting firefighter health means ensuring they have the best available information to manage the risks inherent in protecting our communities.'

The team is now working with national partners through the Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council to translate the findings into practical and accessible guidance for fire agencies nationally.





CASE STUDY

Designing smart water infrastructure for sustainable communities

Water supply is essential for liveable regional communities, but water systems are highly energy-intensive and costly to operate. In collaboration with Shoalhaven Water, UOW researchers tackled this sustainability challenge by developing intelligent optimisation tools to help regional water utilities reduce energy use and improve reliability of essential water services.

Led by ARC Future Grids Training Centre Director Distinguished Professor Kashem Muttaqi, the initiative combined artificial intelligence, real-time electricity market data and practical engineering knowledge to support smarter operational decisions in water pumping systems.

Using a web-based scheduling platform and coordinated control framework, the project helped operators better align energy-intensive processes with system needs and electricity market conditions. The work demonstrates how applied research can help regional utilities reduce operational pressure, improve infrastructure efficiency and build more sustainable water services for the future.





CASE STUDY

Ancient floods provide blueprint for modern climate resilience

A UOW-led research project is digging deep to help build more climate-resilient communities across western Sydney.

Led by Associate Professor Tim Cohen from UOW's Environmental Futures, the groundbreaking project revealed the long-term history of extreme floods in the Hawkesbury-Nepean catchment, drawing on 1,000 years of evidence.

Using cutting-edge technology to analyse the landscape's geological past, researchers excavated flood deposits and applied advanced luminescence dating methods in UOW's world-class Optical Dating Facility – one of the leading labs of its kind globally.

In partnership with government, industry and environmental stakeholders, the team then combined geological findings with statistical data and cultural oral histories to build a comprehensive picture of the catchment's flood behaviour.

The research is being proposed as a method to inform flood models and risk assessments for the communities of western Sydney, helping improve planning and emergency response. The team hopes to replicate the approach across Australia's most at-risk river catchments.

'Communities cannot prepare for disasters that they don't know are possible,' Associate Professor Cohen said. 'In the face of a changing climate, knowledge truly is our best defence.'





CASE STUDY

Scientists discover hidden species in Atacama Desert

New genomic research, led by UOW PhD candidate Kamryn Carter, has revealed that Chile's Garthia geckos, previously thought to be a single species, in fact comprise up to 11 distinct species.

Using the latest genomic tools, the study analysed mitochondrial and nuclear DNA across the geckos' entire range in the Atacama Desert, reconstructing evolutionary history in the driest place on earth. Understanding species diversity and responses to past environmental shifts is central to their survival in a world undergoing rapid climate change and biodiversity loss.

Co-author Dr Damien Esquerré, a UOW evolutionary biologist, said many regions like the Atacama remain underexplored at the genomic level. 'Traditional approaches often overlook cryptic species, underestimating biodiversity and limiting our ability to conserve these unique lifeforms,' he said.

The research, conducted with collaborators in Chile and the United States, underscores how genomic tools can help conserve biodiversity hotspots threatened by climate change and habitat loss.



Health and wellbeing

From disease prevention and treatment innovation to equipping Australia's future healthcare workforce, UOW is improving health outcomes while building capability across the health sector.

Through interdisciplinary research and clinical partnerships, the university advances new approaches to prevention, diagnosis and treatment, improving access to care and responding to diverse wellbeing needs. Building on a strong legacy of healthcare leadership, our work continues to create meaningful change for individuals and communities across Australia and beyond.

36th
in Nursing
QS World University Rankings by Subject 2026

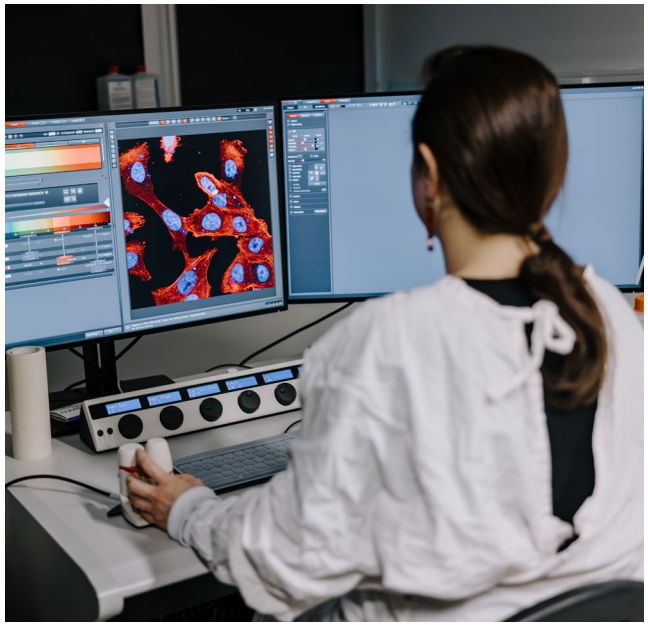
34th
for Nursing
ARWU 2026

=78th
in the world
QS World University Rankings: Sustainability 2026 – Health and Wellbeing

98.3%
of UOW medicine postgraduates in full-time employment 2023–2025

27.2%
of UOW graduates in 2025 completed health-related courses





RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT

Molecular Horizons

Molecular Horizons unites researchers from across biology, chemistry, physics, medicine, engineering and beyond to combat the challenges of the 21st century in health and sustainability. With a focus on neurological disease, cancer, antimicrobial resistance and chemical sciences, the work at Molecular Horizons provides an understanding of disease and pioneers scientific advancements, translating basic molecular understanding into real-world applications. Molecular Horizons offers researchers expert support and guidance, collaboration opportunities and access to state-of-the-art equipment, including Australia's most powerful biological electron microscope, the Titan Krios cryo-EM microscope.





RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT

Australasian Health Outcomes Consortium

Australasian Health Outcomes Consortium (AHOC) is a research consortium within the Faculty of Science, Medicine and Health that aims to improve services and outcomes for patients through benchmarking of care and treatment. AHOC generates robust evidence through its provision of clinical quality registries in rehabilitation, pain and palliative care. The registries provide evidence to guide treatment, measure outcomes and deliver benchmarking for the relevant health sector, driving quality improvement and promoting best practice in clinical care.





RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT

Health Innovations

UOW Health Innovations is a leading multidisciplinary research hub focused on advancing health care through innovation, with a vision to enhance the wellbeing of people and communities worldwide. By integrating cutting-edge research with practical applications, Health Innovations aims to enhance patient outcomes, streamline healthcare delivery, and foster collaboration with industry and the community to address complex health issues. Key research areas include chronic disease management, quality use of medicines, aged care, nutrition, mental health, cardiovascular health, digital health, and health services research, including primary care, rural health, Indigenous health, equity and cultural diversity.





INITIATIVE

Taskforce launched to tackle food insecurity in the Illawarra Shoalhaven

With food insecurity rising across the region, UOW research has prompted the formation of a collaborative taskforce to ensure better access to healthy, sustainable and culturally appropriate food.

The Illawarra Shoalhaven Food Futures Taskforce was established in response to the 'Let's Talk About Food' survey, led by Professor Karen Charlton and Dr Katherine Kent from the Faculty of Science, Medicine and Health. The survey found that a growing number of families in the region were skipping meals or struggling to afford nutritious food due to rising living costs.

'For too long, the scale of food insecurity in our region has been underestimated,' said Dr Kent. 'This survey has given us local evidence and a clear mandate for action.'

The taskforce is made up of a coalition of UOW academics, community leaders, health professionals and local organisations, with an aim to strengthen local food production, improve distribution and access, and address systemic barriers through policy change.





CASE STUDY

Life-saving blood pressure project boosts healthcare access in regional Australia

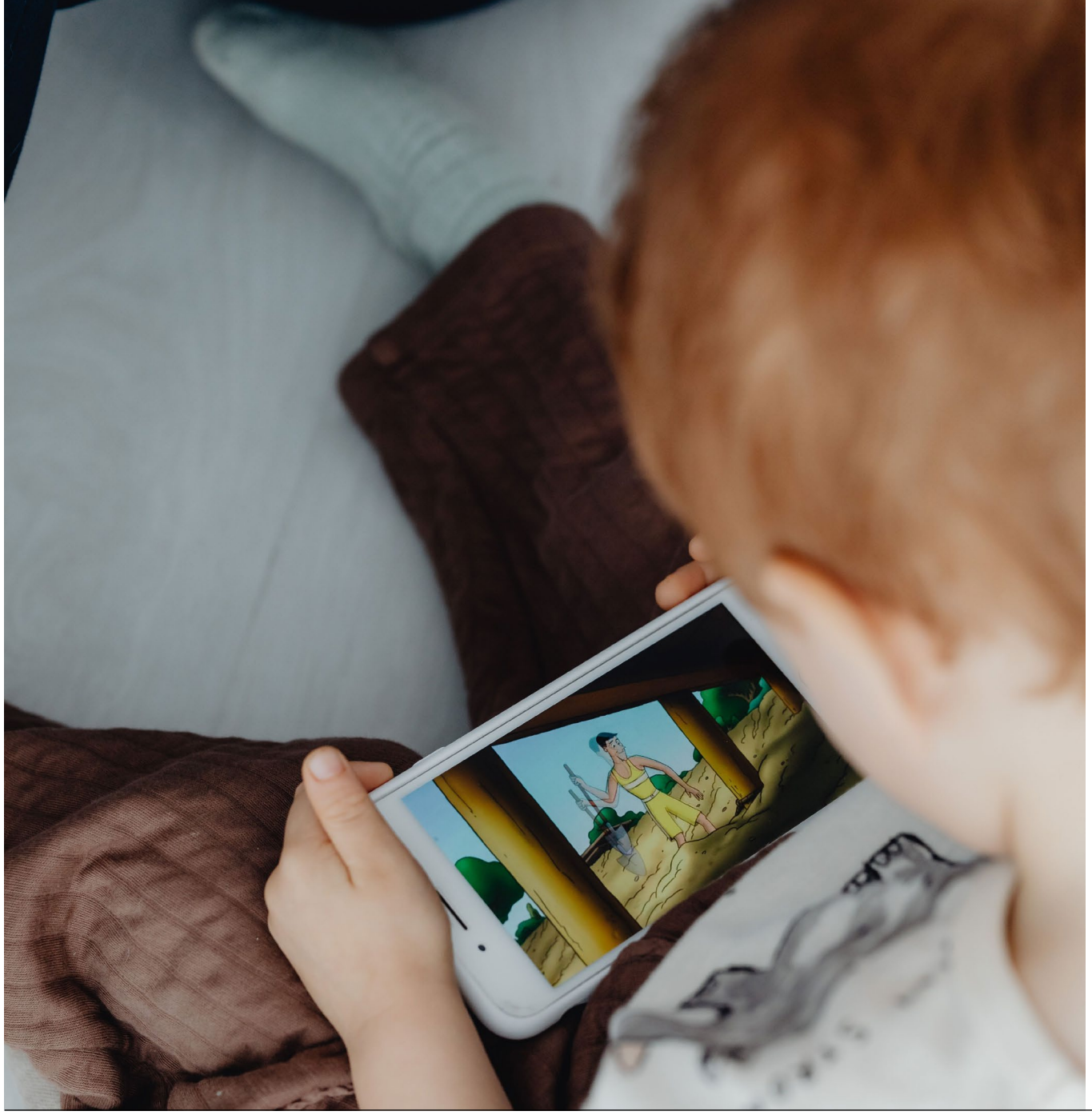
UOW researchers are contributing to a 5-year, $4.8 million program to decrease hypertension rates and prevent heart disease, stroke and other conditions in regional communities.

Australians living in rural and remote areas face a significantly higher risk of hypertension and are less likely to receive effective treatment. The research project – funded by the Australian Government's Medical Research Future Fund and led by the University of Sydney – aims to close this gap for 7 million Australians living outside major cities.

Professor Elizabeth Halcomb and Dr Catherine Stephen from UOW's School of Nursing are collaborators on the multidisciplinary project, with a focus on Western NSW where hypertension rates are 10% higher than the national average. The team partners with the Royal Flying Doctor Service, local pharmacies and general practices to identify people at risk and strengthen community-based primary care.

'Effectively managing blood pressure has the potential to reduce a range of health conditions, including dementia, stroke, renal failure and cardiovascular disease,' Professor Halcomb said. 'This program offers a sustainable strategy to improve the health, and reduce the inequities, of those Australians living in rural areas.'





CASE STUDY

Researchers tackle digital wellbeing for young people

University of Wollongong researchers have been awarded $978,192 by the NSW Government to investigate the effects of video gaming and screen use on children and adolescent wellbeing across multiple research projects.

Led by Dr Karley Beckman and Dr Tiffani Apps from UOW's School of Education, the largest project investigates the links between gaming and wellbeing, cognition and learning among Year 9 students across NSW. The research will identify problematic behavioural markers from real gameplay data and support co-design of educational resources with students, parents and teachers to promote healthy digital engagement.

It is estimated that between 500,000 and 2 million young Australians exhibit symptoms of internet gaming disorder (IGD), with a far greater number experiencing problematic play that falls below clinical thresholds but still negatively impacts education, health and wellbeing.

The projects will generate critical evidence on the links between digital activity habits and youth health, wellbeing, cognition and learning outcomes, with Dr Beckman saying the research addresses a critical gap in our understanding of youth gaming behaviours.

'We know most young Australians play video games regularly, but little is known about the specific links between screen use related to gaming and adolescent wellbeing,' she said.

'Not all screen time is equivalent – playing games with friends after school may have benefits such as combatting loneliness, while playing the same game alone late at night might lead to negative impacts on health, wellbeing, social skills, and reduced school engagement.'





CASE STUDY

World-first research trial boosts health for people living with kidney disease

Groundbreaking UOW research is challenging long-held dietary advice, finding that a diverse, plant-rich diet can significantly improve gut health and reduce toxin levels in people living with chronic kidney disease (CKD).

The world-first study, led by former UOW PhD student Dr Jordan Stanford, involved participants consuming more than 30 different types of plant foods each week. The research found that CKD patients who followed the diet experienced significant improvements in their gut bacteria diversity and a reduction in blood and urine toxin levels, despite traditional advice restricting fruit and vegetable intake.

Professor Kelly Lambert, co-director of the Kidney Lifestyle Research Group, said the most unwell patients gained the greatest benefit from the dietary change, with the study showing that 'a more inclusive, plant-based approach is not only safe but potentially more beneficial, even for those with advanced kidney disease.'

The research, published in the *Clinical Journal of the American Society of Nephrology,* is the first to show the positive effects of a plant-dominant diet on CKD patients. As global prevalence of CKD continues to rise, the findings from the study offer a promising and accessible approach to managing the condition, potentially changing the lives of millions of people living with kidney disease worldwide.





CASE STUDY

UOW Shoalhaven amplifies Aboriginal voices in medicine

In partnership with the *Medical Journal of Australia*, UOW hosted a First Nations Cultural Sharing Gathering at its Shoalhaven campus, bringing together Aboriginal community members and medical leaders to celebrate Indigenous voices in medicine.

The gathering celebrated a special NAIDOC Week issue of the journal produced in collaboration with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and guest edited by Associate Professor Paul Saunders, a proud Biripi man and Academic Lead, Indigenous Health in UOW's Graduate School of Medicine.

'This gathering marks a momentous occasion to showcase the rich knowledges and cultures of the vibrant South Coast Aboriginal communities, and advance UOW's and the *Medical Journal of Australia's* relationship with Aboriginal peoples,' Dr Saunders said.

The event highlighted UOW's ongoing commitment to nurturing the next generation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and medical leaders, with ceremonies, storytelling and cultural exchange paving the way for strengthened connections between medical institutions and Aboriginal communities.





CASE STUDY

Potential new treatment for motor neurone disease unveiled

University of Wollongong scientists have developed a breakthrough therapy that clears toxic proteins from nerve cells in a world-first discovery that could transform the treatment of motor neurone disease (MND).

The proof-of-concept study, published in *Nature Communications* and led by Dr Christen Chisholm from UOW's Molecular Horizons, revealed a therapeutic designer molecule that targets and removes toxic proteins before they can accumulate and damage motor neurones. The research has the potential to benefit approximately 35% of people with inherited MND in Australia.

The discovery builds on the work of the late Professor Justin Yerbury, who lost his own battle with MND in 2023 after dedicating much of his career to understanding the disease's development and progression.

'This research is the result of years of dedicated effort by many amazing scientists, all inspired by Justin and driven to advancing our understanding of MND and how to treat it,' Dr Chisholm said.

The project was undertaken by researchers from UOW's Yerbury Lab in collaboration with renowned MND researcher, Professor Neil Cashman.





CASE STUDY

Cutting-edge clinical simulation labs train tomorrow's health workforce

Australia's healthcare workforce is facing unprecedented demand due to a shortage of nurses and skilled health professionals and an ageing population. In response, UOW has opened a suite of advanced clinical simulation labs, designed to transform healthcare education and meet rising student demand.

The labs are equipped with industry-leading technology, including virtual reality and simulation tools, allowing students in nursing and allied health degrees to practise real-world clinical scenarios, mimicking the pressures of modern healthcare settings.

'These immersive simulations mirror complex, unpredictable environments, allowing students to experience a broader spectrum of healthcare situations and develop their critical thinking and problem-solving abilities,' said School of Nursing Deputy Head Professor Bronwyn Everett.

The clinical simulation labs expand the university's teaching capacity and deliver more job-ready graduates to communities in need, including in regional and rural areas. The high-tech training facilities opened to students in 2025 and build on UOW's existing leadership in health education.





CASE STUDY

Supporting safer transitions home for older heart patients

University of Wollongong cardiovascular nurse researcher Professor Caleb Ferguson has been awarded a $652,000 Heart Foundation Future Leader Fellowship to transform how older adults with heart-related conditions transition safely from hospital to home.

Professor Ferguson's program, based at UOW's Centre for Chronic and Complex Care Research, will develop a model of transitional care designed to improve recovery, reduce hospital readmissions and enhance quality of life for people living with heart disease and stroke.

'Too often, patients feel as though they've "fallen off a cliff" after leaving hospital and returning home because they lack the preparation, information and support they need,' Professor Ferguson said.

The project builds on his expertise leading Australia's first clinical frailty registry, which has already highlighted the high rehospitalisation risk for older adults with multiple cardiovascular conditions.

The 4-year fellowship involves partnerships with local and national health services and a large, multi-site clinical trial. The project reinforces UOW's focus on tackling national priorities in chronic disease, cardiovascular health and ageing.





CASE STUDY

Centre for Medical Radiation Physics celebrates 25 years of research breakthroughs

In 2025, world-renowned researchers and clinicians recognised a milestone for UOW's Centre for Medical Radiation Physics (CMRP), marking 25 years of pioneering research.

CMRP's research has revolutionised the fields of radiation measurement and the study of radiation at microscopic levels, driven by groundbreaking technological advancements. This research has significantly advanced cancer treatment quality assurance with radiation therapy and disease management, as well as understanding of space radiation effects on humans and electronics.

Founded in 2000 by Distinguished Professor Anatoly Rozenfeld with just 2 academics and 2 PhD students, CMRP is now Australasia and the Pacific's largest education and research institution in its field. The centre stands as a testament to how visionary leadership and collaborative innovation can drive transformative advancements in science and medicine.

Senior Professor Michael Lerch, Associate Dean of Research in UOW's Faculty of Engineering and Information Sciences, said it had been incredible to be part of the centre as it has grown over the past quarter century. 'Anatoly's outstanding contribution to the medical radiation physics field of research has grown together with UOW's international reputational recognition, which is world leading in this area.'

Alongside celebrating its past achievements, CMRP secured an additional $2 million in funding throughout 2025 for 2 innovative treatment and therapy research projects.



Social justice and community resilience

Strong communities are built on inclusion, participation and equitable access to opportunity. Across all areas of research and education, UOW is dedicated to reducing inequalities, amplifying diverse voices, and helping to create more inclusive systems that enable individuals and communities to thrive.

From advancing Indigenous participation and belonging, to our focus on gender equality and improving support for vulnerable populations, our work brings together evidence-based research and respect for lived experiences to address complex social challenges. As a shared priority across all faculties, our initiatives in this area reflect a university-wide commitment to creating positive social change through quality research, partnerships and education.

=20th
SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities

THE Impact Ratings 2026

=64th
in the world

QS World University Rankings: Sustainability 2026 – Equality

=71st
SDG 5: Gender Equality

THE Impact Ratings 2026

78th
in the world

QS World University Rankings: Sustainability 2026 – Social Impact



Reducing inequalities in numbers

CREATING OPPORTUNITIES

22.9%
of successful applicants in 2025 came from regional or remote areas

1.5%
of successful applicants in 2025 identified as Indigenous

13.4%
of successful applicants in 2025 were from low socio-economic backgrounds

$1,526,000
in scholarships was delivered to students from low socio-economic backgrounds in 2025

832
students received equity scholarships in 2025

26.7%
of students who started in 2025 were first-generation students

16.2%
of international students in 2025 were from developing countries

STRIVING FOR GENDER EQUALITY

38.9%
of the University Council in 2025 were women

45.3%
of senior academic staff in 2025 were women

60.9%
of students who commenced in 2025 were women

58.1%
of graduates in 2025 were women

76%
of graduates in health-related courses in 2025 were women



RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT

Ngarruwan Ngadju Research Centre

Ngarruwan Ngadju is an Indigenous-led health and wellbeing research centre located within UOW's School of Medical, Indigenous and Health Sciences. The centre focuses on the needs and priorities of Indigenous communities by undertaking research that is high impact, innovative, strengths-based and beneficial to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Ngarruwan Ngadju's vision is to provide Indigenous-led health and wellbeing research to drive more equitable systems and policies, sustained by strong and enduring community partnerships. Key research themes include building resilient communities and addressing the interconnected factors that perpetuate inequities for Indigenous peoples.





RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT

Australian Centre for Health Engagement, Evidence and Values (ACHEEV)

The Australian Centre for Health Engagement, Evidence and Values (ACHEEV) is an interdisciplinary team of academics, postdoctoral researchers, honorary fellows, research assistants and higher degree researchers, focusing on the health and equity of people, animals, society and the planet. The centre's mission is to make health systems more inclusive and democratic and work towards greater justice and equity for all. ACHEEV operates in the space between evidence and values, tackling difficult questions and generating meaningful and accessible answers that guide policy and practice.





INITIATIVE

Pulse Pantry addresses student food insecurity

With 53% of UOW students experiencing food insecurity in 2024, Pulse Pantry continued to assist students facing financial hardship in 2025.

Launched as an ongoing initiative after an overwhelming response to COVID-19 pantry packs, the service operates on a points-based system where students receive 10 points weekly to claim food or hygiene items as required.

Pulse Pantry is stocked through UOW's Village Grocer and donation partners including Aspire Events, Venues and Catering, Gillette, Kotex, OzHarvest and Share the Dignity. The pantry also has a sustainability focus with around 90% of its items suitable for a vegan diet, reducing the need for cold storage and its associated emissions.

Run by student volunteers, the initiative represents a collaborative approach to addressing student food insecurity and food waste in an era of rising living costs.





INITIATIVE

Woolyungah partners with the Australian Electoral Commission

In 2025, UOW's Woolyungah Indigenous Centre (WIC) partnered with the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) to help build electoral awareness and increase voter participation within Indigenous communities. The partnership aims to help close the enrolment gap for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and strengthen engagement with local organisations, ensuring services are accessible and culturally appropriate.

Both WIC and the AEC focus on working closely with communities and organisations, with training sessions delivered to WIC student ambassadors to enable them to confidently engage with community members. Ambassadors promoted AEC initiatives and yarned with community at events such as career expos, O-Week and local gatherings, actively promoting electoral participation both for Indigenous students and the broader UOW student community.

The AEC partnership supports WIC's commitment to increasing participation, engagement and support for Indigenous students at UOW, from degree success to career readiness and beyond.





INITIATIVE

Gender Equity Awards recognise inclusive leadership and advocacy

The University of Wollongong held its inaugural International Women's Day Gender Equity Awards in March 2025, recognising students and staff who are advancing gender equity across the university and wider community.

Announced as part of UOW's International Women's Day celebrations, the awards highlight individuals and teams creating more inclusive opportunities through leadership, advocacy, research, teaching and community engagement.

Winners included students Ella Young and Jessica Hewett, who received the Gender Equity Project Award for their initiative to provide free menstrual hygiene products on campus, reducing inequity for at-risk students. UOW's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Transformation team was recognised for developing a fieldwork code of conduct to promote safer environments for women, while Denny Nesbitt, Chair of the Women of UOW Network, received the Gender Equity Advocate Award for her support for women and working mothers.

Alongside celebrating achievement, the awards reinforce UOW's ongoing commitment to embedding gender equity across all areas of university life and inspiring future leaders to drive positive change.



CASE STUDY

iAccelerate wins global award for empowering female entrepreneurs

The university's innovation and entrepreneurship hub, iAccelerate, was awarded the Female Entrepreneurship Empowerment Award at the 2025 ACEEU (Accreditation Council for Entrepreneurial and Engaged Universities) Global Triple E Awards. iAccelerate also won the People's Choice Award in the same category, recognising its leadership in inclusive entrepreneurship and support for women founders.

Director Dr Tamantha Stutchbury said that iAccelerate's commitment to delivering excellence in female entrepreneurship was not an afterthought, but rather the core of the hub's purpose.

'Through innovative, inclusive programming, iAccelerate empowers women from diverse backgrounds to thrive. We believe that to create a future built for everyone, innovators and entrepreneurs from all backgrounds should be supported to bring their ideas to life,' she said.

'By attracting diverse participants, we also attract diverse ideas – ideas that we know will better address the needs of the whole community.'

iAccelerate's commitment to gender equality plays out across several key programs. The RISE program supported entrepreneurship-led recovery in communities affected by bushfire, with 30 women-led regional businesses participating over 5 years. Meanwhile, the LIFT program encourages greater participation of women and girls in STEM, with an emphasis on those from diverse communities and backgrounds.





CASE STUDY

New guide tackles age discrimination to build stronger communities

To mark Intergenerational Month in September 2025, researchers from UOW's Early Start launched a free evidence-based resource to help break down age barriers and create stronger community connections.

Being and Becoming Intergenerationally Inclusive: A Practical Guide to Age-Inclusive Language and Practices was developed by Research Fellow Dr Lois Peach and Professor Lisa Kervin AM, in collaboration with public libraries, Kids' Uni, Illawarra Multicultural Services, the Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District, Catholic Care Wollongong, and local schools, councils and organisations.

'Language matters,' Dr Peach said, describing age-related discrimination as an often-overlooked pattern normalised in everyday language. 'This is about fostering belonging, respect and connection across ages. A small change in language can make a big difference in how people feel included and valued.'

The free guide provides practical tools and reflective questions to help organisations and communities adopt more thoughtful and inclusive approaches and embrace diversity across all stages of life.





CASE STUDY

Alternative reporting options help victim-survivors of sexual assault

In Australia, sexual assault remains widely underreported to police, despite sustained efforts to reform policing practices and responses. Drawing on years of research, a team of experts, co-led by UOW's Dr Rachel Loney-Howes, have developed the first blueprint for evidence-based alternative reporting options for victim-survivors.

The blueprint guides the design, implementation and operation of trauma-informed alternative reporting tools, grounded in the perspectives of key stakeholder groups across Australia. The alternative reporting tools enable users to report sexually violent behaviours in their own words, using best-practice cognitive interviewing prompts. Crucially, it gives victim-survivors full control over what happens to their information and their preferred level of police contact, including none.

Since 2020, the collaborative research team from UOW, RMIT and La Trobe universities have worked to understand the needs of survivors and the impact effective alternative reporting options could have on therapeutic and criminal justice outcomes.

'Something needs to change,' said Dr Loney-Howes, who is a senior lecturer in criminology from UOW's School of Social Sciences. 'If our recommendations are taken on board, we can give survivors a gold-standard reporting experience and substantially improve their access to support and justice.'





CASE STUDY

UOW project documents refugee experiences in regional Australia

Led by Associate Professor Natascha Klocker from UOW's School of Social Sciences, Settling well in regional Australia: Experiences of people from refugee backgrounds aims to provide the first comprehensive assessment of the impacts of refugee settlement in regional Australia. The project, which is funded until 2026, examines how regional settlement impacts people of refugee backgrounds, as well as the communities in which they settle.

In collaboration with partner organisations and universities, UOW researchers use qualitative and quantitative research methods to generate in-depth knowledge of the opportunities and challenges for sustainable refugee settlement in regional Australia. To date, the team has conducted hundreds of interviews and surveys with former refugees, community stakeholders and First Nations custodians, operating across 8 study sites in New South Wales, Queensland and Victoria.

Interim research findings show that living in regional towns overwhelmingly supports wellbeing and belonging for former refugees, with 97% of respondents saying their experience in town has been good, and 81% reporting feeling welcomed by community.

However, challenges remain, including discrimination, a lack of suitable rental housing and public transport, and limited access to diverse higher education opportunities. The settling well project will provide insights and guidance to policymakers to help improve settlement outcomes for both former refugees and their destination communities.





CASE STUDY

Children inform autism inclusivity at Early Start Discovery Space

To mark World Autism Understanding Day in April 2025, UOW's Early Start Discovery Space held a special after-hours event for children with autism or sensory sensitivities, with reduced noise, staggered entry and select play experiences adjusted to lower sensory input.

To coincide with the event, the Early Start Discovery Space also launched 2 new resources for families and educators: the Discovery Space Social Story to help children know what to expect during their visit, and the Discovery Space Sensory Map to identify high and low sensory areas. The resources were developed by Early Start's Community Partnership Team in collaboration with Aspect (Autism Spectrum Australia), one of Australia's leading providers of autism-specific services and education.

Stef Hawker, Leader of Learning and Wellbeing at Aspect South Coast School, said the collaboration was driven by the lived experiences of the children from Aspect and their families, with the partnership exemplifying how 'co-designing resources with the autism community can create lasting, inclusive practices'.

The Discovery Space has since been listed as an official sunflower-friendly location under the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower scheme, with both resources available to all visitors.





CASE STUDY

New podcast deep dives into the people and politics of the sea

A new podcast, spearheaded by UOW's Australian National Centre for Ocean Resources and Security (ANCORS), is diving deep on the complexities of our ocean and how issues such as climate change, pollution and fisheries management are negotiated on the international stage.

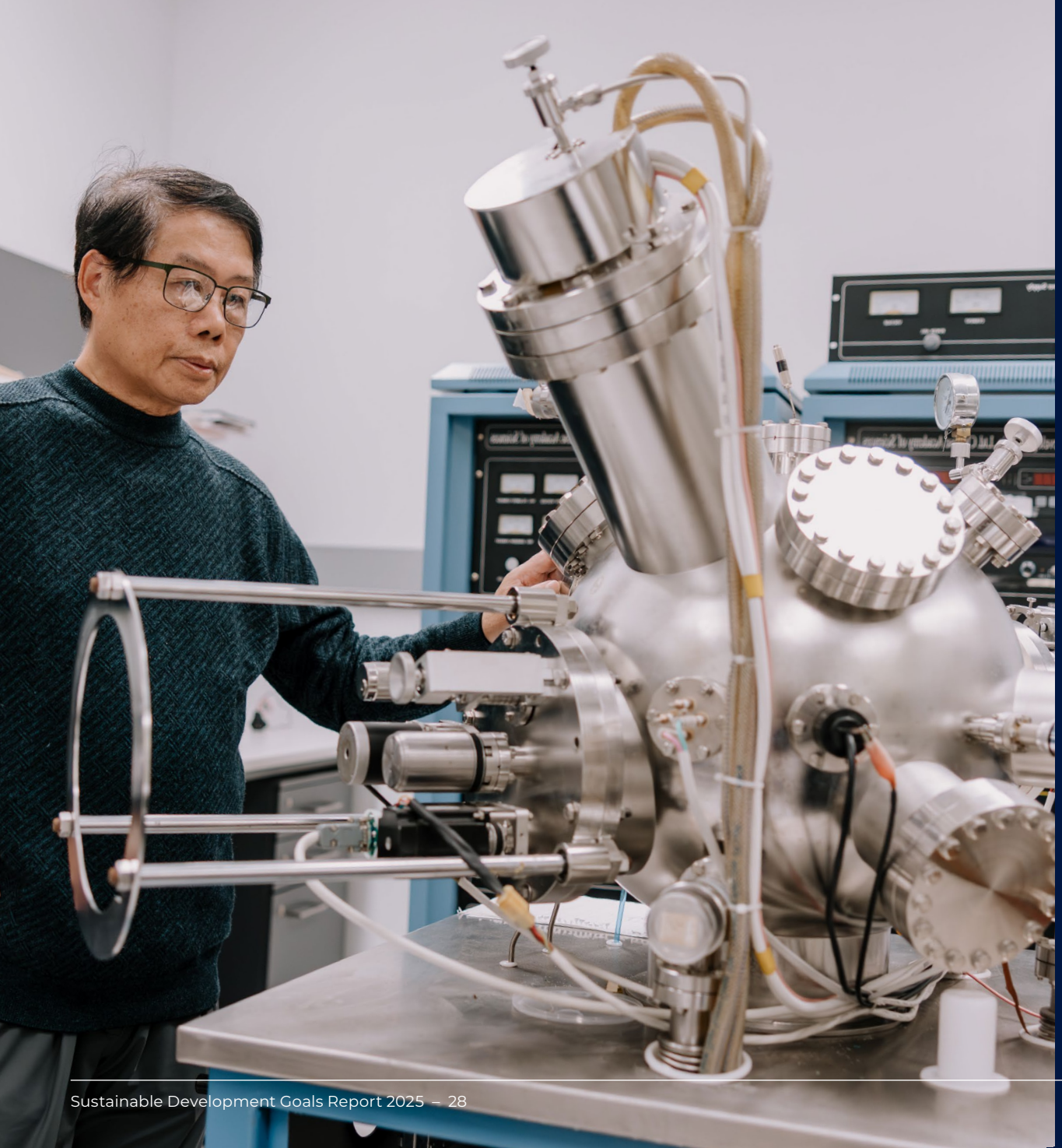
Hosted by Dr Ina Tessnow-von Wysocki, ANCORS Research Fellow Dr Bianca Haas, and journalist and UOW PhD candidate Jennifer Macey, Negotiating the Ocean examines the state of our ocean through the lens of equity and social justice.

The podcast speaks with experts, scientists and policymakers to explore how fairness and inclusion are considered in international negotiations over the ocean's future and resources. Episodes focus on topics including marine biodiversity, tuna fisheries, deep-sea mining and the new High Seas Treaty.

Dr Haas said the podcast's importance lies in how ocean conservation intersects with issues around social justice, addressing 'not only who bears the brunt of pollution and climate impacts, but who benefits from conservation efforts.'

'True equity means prioritising communities who are often most dependent on the ocean yet least protected from harm,' she said. 'Protecting the oceans must include protecting the people who rely on them most.'





Future technologies, industry and workforce

For the past 50 years, innovation has been central to UOW's research and education approach, with deep expertise in materials science, engineering and energy helping shape new technologies and modernise industries.

Today, that capability is evolving to meet a rapidly changing future. Working closely with industry, government and research partners, the university is translating discovery into practical applications across renewable energy, advanced manufacturing, artificial intelligence and emerging technologies. At the same time, our education and research activities are building the skills and workforce capability needed to support future industries, helping grow sustainable economies in Australia and across the world.

Future technologies, industry and workforce in numbers

30th
SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth
THE Impact Ratings 2026

78th
SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production
THE Impact Ratings 2026

Top 50
Materials Science
US News Best Global Universities Ranking 2026

Top 50
Nanoscience and Nanotechnology
US News Best Global Universities Ranking 2026

Top 50
Energy and Fuels
US News Best Global Universities Ranking 2026

Top 75
Mining and Mineral Engineering
ARWU 2026

Top 100
Energy Science and Engineering
ARWU 2026

Top 100
Mineral and Mining Engineering
QS World University Rankings by Subject 2026

Top 100
Materials Science
QS World University Rankings by Subject 2026



Reducing our emissions footprint

75.4%
reduction in greenhouse gas emissions since 2019 (scope 1 and 2) in 2025

53.3%
of energy consumed from low carbon sources (15% in 2019) in 2025

1755MWh
of total onsite renewable energy generation

1.8MW
of solar PV capacity operating on campus in 2025

Partnerships

$18.2M
received from industry partnerships*

$42.9M
received from government agencies*

214
active research partnerships with industry and government*

*Data from 2025 HERDC submission

RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT

Blue Energy Futures Lab

The Blue Energy Futures Lab is a collaborative research network focused on providing evidence-based advice to inform policy development, industry investment and community engagement for sustainable offshore energy futures. The lab brings together diverse expertise across law, social sciences, policy, economics, engineering, business and marine sciences to address the complex challenges of offshore energy transformation.

As an anchor institution in the Illawarra region – one of 6 areas in Australia identified as suitable for offshore wind development – UOW is uniquely positioned to lead research into Australia's energy transition. Research capabilities at Blue Energy Futures Lab include social dimensions of energy transitions, ocean governance, blue economy planning, maritime law, regulatory frameworks, and environmental impact assessment. Central to the lab's approach is respectful acknowledgement of the critical role First Nations communities play in sustainable transitions through the Blue Futures Translational Research Initiative.





RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT

Australian Institute for Innovative Materials

The Australian Institute for Innovative Materials (AIIM) is a purpose-built facility transforming multi-functional materials research into commercial reality. It is the first facility that bridges the gaps between breakthroughs, prototyping and commercialisation, with AIIM researchers positioned at the cutting edge of developing and applying new and innovative materials. Based at UOW's Innovation Campus, the multidisciplinary focus of the institute brings together biologists, clinicians, chemists, physicists, engineers and materials scientists. AIIM comprises the Intelligent Polymer Research Institute (IPRI), the ARC Centre of Excellence for Electromaterials Science (ACES), the Institute for Superconducting and Electronic Materials (ISEM), and the UOW Electron Microscopy Centre (EMC).





RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT

Steel Research Hub

The ARC Research Hub for Australian Steel Innovation (Steel Research Hub) is a $28 million research program, led by UOW and run in collaboration with several universities and industry partners. The hub's goal is to support the transition of Australia's steel manufacturing industry to a more sustainable, competitive and resilient position based on the creation of higher value-added products and advanced manufacturing processes. Across 4 integrated research programs, the hub has evolved into a multidisciplinary team of academics, researchers and leaders, building the skilled and diverse workforce required to achieve industry transformation.





INITIATIVE

Clean Energy Living Laboratory (CELL)

The Clean Energy Living Laboratory (CELL) is a groundbreaking microgrid project led by the Australian Power Quality Research Centre (APQRC), providing critical research infrastructure for microgrid-based electricity generation, storage, consumption, demand management and control technologies.

A microgrid is a small subset of an electricity grid that provides energy generation and storage at a local level and may be capable of operating independently from the wider electricity infrastructure. Microgrids have the potential to deliver resilient, low-cost, low-carbon electricity solutions.

Based at UOW's Innovation Campus, CELL is Australia's premier real-world facility for holistic microgrid technology research, representing an ambitious step towards sustainable energy solutions. This precinct-scale microgrid showcases the technical, economic and social potential of clean energy technologies, providing a platform for researchers and students to explore and advance the future of energy management.





INITIATIVE

Energy Futures Zone brings Australia's clean energy innovations to life

The Energy Futures Zone at UOW Science Space opened in November 2025, unveiling an immersive, hands-on exhibition that explores the technologies powering Australia's clean energy transformation.

Featuring 29 interactive exhibits, the Energy Futures Zone invites visitors to gain hands-on experience with renewable energy and sustainable manufacturing innovations, showcasing how science and technology are shaping a cleaner, smarter future. By making complex energy systems tangible, interactive and accessible, the Energy Futures Zone allows people to connect with world-leading energy research while strengthening public awareness of climate action and clean energy.

UOW Vice-Chancellor and President Professor G.Q. Max Lu AO said the exhibition builds on more than 35 years of Science Space inspiring young people's curiosity in STEM.

'The Energy Futures Zone is where research meets real-world impact, celebrating local achievement and inspiring the next generation to pursue STEM skills and energy careers critical to our clean energy transition,' Professor Lu said.

Since opening, the Energy Futures Zone has welcomed more than 30,000 visitors, engaging families, school groups, students and lifelong learners from across the Illawarra and beyond. Developed through collaboration with researchers, industry partners and government, the initiative exemplifies UOW Science Space's role as a bridge between university research and community impact, supporting accessible science education while helping build future workforce capability for clean energy industries.







INITIATIVE

Community batteries power UOW research and sustainability

Throughout 2025, work continued on an innovative project to help organisations install batteries that benefit the community while unlocking potential income streams – with UOW becoming an early adopter.

The project, which received funding from the Australian Renewable Energy Agency (ARENA) and was coordinated in partnership with Momentum Energy, saw 10 community batteries installed across the UOW Wollongong and Innovation campuses.

The batteries help power research laboratories, medical research and teaching facilities, while reducing electricity costs and allowing excess solar PV or grid energy to be stored and sold into the National Electricity Market when needed.

With work now complete, the university aims to inspire businesses and households in the Illawarra to embrace the benefits of clean energy transformation by demonstrating the feasibility and value of these technologies firsthand.





CASE STUDY

ARC Centre of Excellence for Renewable Fuels set to lead global clean energy transition

The University of Wollongong will lead a new $72 million Australian Research Council (ARC) Centre of Excellence for Renewable Fuels in a landmark national collaboration that aims to position Australia as a global leader in the clean energy transition.

The centre brings together world-class researchers from 7 Australian universities with 16 industry and international partners to develop next-generation sustainable fuel technologies. Led by ARC Industry Laureate Distinguished Professor Gerry Swiegers, the collaboration will accelerate the shift from fossil fuels to renewable sources, including green hydrogen, green ammonia and green methanol.

'Our vision is to make Australia a world leader in renewable fuels,' Distinguished Professor Swiegers said, adding the centre would drive the country's shift from a major fossil fuel exporter to a leading exporter of renewable energy.

The initiative will unite expertise in electrochemistry, energy systems, and chemical and materials engineering to design and scale technologies for producing and processing renewable fuels.

'Our research will underpin new industries and jobs, strengthen national energy independence, and decarbonise sectors that cannot easily be electrified, such as steelmaking, shipping and aviation,' Distinguished Professor Swiegers said. 'It will enable Australia to export renewable fuels and green products, ensuring prosperity while reducing emissions.'





CASE STUDY

NSW Government backs UOW for world-leading hydrogen pipeline research

The NSW Government awarded UOW with a $650,000 grant to lead critical research into hydrogen pipeline safety, reinforcing the university's position at the forefront of Australia's growing hydrogen industry.

As the only institution in Australia – and one of only 5 globally – with the capability to conduct the required type of hydrogen pipeline testing, UOW has the potential to transform safe hydrogen transportation across NSW and around the world.

Announced by NSW Minister for Innovation, Science and Technology Anoulack Chanthivong, the 2-year project will identify the leading causes of hydrogen pipeline failures and develop risk assessment and design tools to address them.

'The University of Wollongong has produced nation-leading and globally recognised work on hydrogen in the past,' Minister Chanthivong said. 'The NSW Government is excited to see UOW, in partnership with industry, pave the way for a more sustainable and innovative future.'

UOW Vice-Chancellor Professor Max Lu AO acknowledged appreciation of the NSW Government's funding for the hydrogen pipeline research, noting this is a priority area for the university. 'With expertise in green hydrogen and renewable energy, UOW is driving innovation in sustainable fuels to support economic growth in NSW and Australia,' he said.





CASE STUDY

UOW leads the charge on AI ethics in health research

The University of Wollongong will lead a $2.25 million national initiative to address the ethical challenges posed by artificial intelligence in health research, following a grant through the National Health and Medical Research Council's (NHMRC) Partnership Projects scheme.

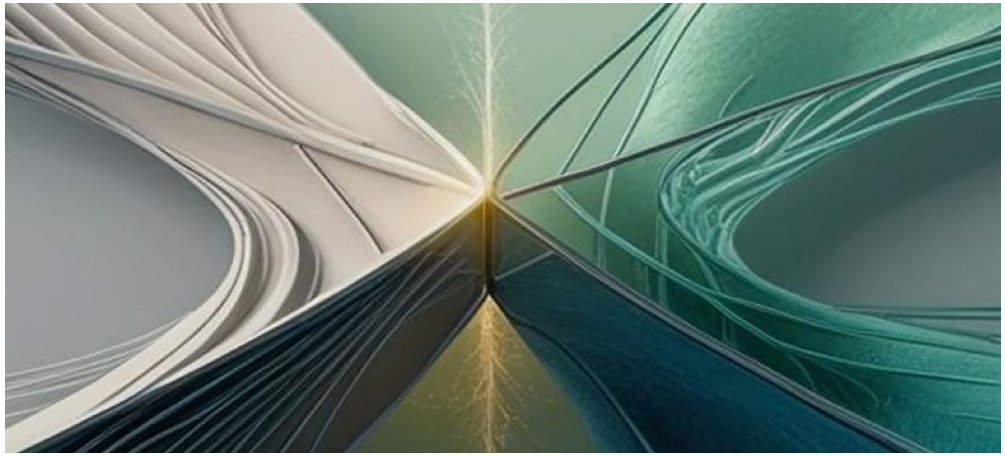
Led by UOW's Australian Centre for Health Engagement, Evidence and Values (ACHEEV), the project will develop innovative solutions and practical resources to help committees and governance units make informed decisions about AI-related health research.

'The pace and volume of AI research is extraordinary, and it's creating new ethical questions and challenges,' said Professor Stacy Carter, former director of ACHEEV. 'Our goal is to support human research ethics committees and research governance professionals to assess and oversee AI-related research in health and ensure public trust and confidence in these oversight processes.'

The project will engage stakeholders and the public to co-design and test resources aligned with community values, with UOW's Senior Professor Annette Braunack-Mayer and Dr Yves Saint James Aquino working alongside an interdisciplinary team from the University of Tasmania, Macquarie University and the University of Sydney.

Backed by $1.05 million in NHMRC funding and $1.2 million in industry partner contributions, the project has the potential to set a new benchmark, both in Australia and internationally, for the ethical governance of AI-related research.





CASE STUDY

International materials science symposium showcases 50 years of UOW innovation

World-leading researchers gathered at UOW's Advanced Materials Symposium in September 2025, celebrating 50 years of pioneering materials science and engineering advancements.

From supporting world-class steel-making facilities at Port Kembla to developing innovations in energy conversion and medical technologies, UOW has earned a global reputation in materials science for delivering groundbreaking advancements for industries and communities.

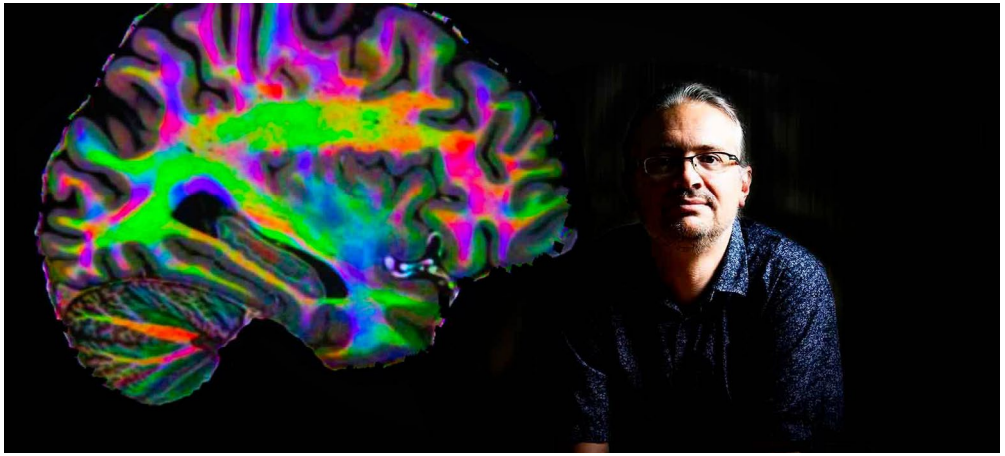
The 3-day event brought together internationally renowned scientists, clinicians and industry experts, led by Distinguished Professor Gordon Wallace, Director of UOW's Intelligent Polymer Research Institute.

'The symposium provided an opportunity to celebrate what UOW has achieved over the past 50 years while building on our legacy to expand our impact through bold, interdisciplinary approaches,' Distinguished Professor Wallace said.

During the symposium, UOW also launched the Research Initiative for Interface Science and Engineering (RIISE), a new interdisciplinary network driving discovery in areas including energy conversion, storage technologies and implantable bioengineered devices.

UOW Vice-Chancellor Professor Max Lu AO said materials science and engineering had always been at the heart of UOW. 'Our future ambition is clear: to lead the next wave of breakthroughs that change lives, industries and economies, both in Australia and around the world.'





CASE STUDY

UOW awarded $7.8M for AI, climate science and sustainable tech innovation

University of Wollongong researchers have been awarded $7.8 million in Australian Research Council (ARC) funding to support breakthrough projects across engineering, health, climate science and artificial intelligence.

The projects demonstrate the breadth and depth of UOW's research excellence, from decoding DNA repair mechanisms and child brain development to advancing renewable energy technologies.

Funded projects include research and development of: advanced AI models for complex probability calculations, with applications including bushfire detection (Professor Sumeetpal Singh); digital tools to help reduce energy costs and support Australia's clean energy transition (Professor Zhenjun Ma); pioneering magnetic materials to revolutionise data storage and energy efficiency in computing (Professor Zhenxiang Cheng); next-generation battery-powered smart bandages to enhance wound healing (Dr Caiyun Wang); and advanced controls and suspension systems for safer, more energy-efficient rail transport (Professor Haiping Du).

Pro Vice-Chancellor (Industry and Engagement), Dr Paul Di Pietro said the projects reflect UOW's strengths in innovative, interdisciplinary research with real-world impact.

'These awards show how UOW researchers are tackling some of the most complex scientific, environmental and social challenges of our time,' he said. 'They reflect our commitment to research and innovation excellence and impact, building interdisciplinary teams, deepening partnerships, and translating discovery into outcomes that strengthen communities and create a more sustainable future.'





CASE STUDY

NSW Minerals Council partnership strengthens future mining workforce

The NSW Minerals Council has committed $1.25 million to UOW's mining engineering program, enabling the university to deliver a cutting-edge curriculum, expand student leadership and industry engagement opportunities, and position graduates at the forefront of a rapidly evolving resources sector.

The strategic investment helps strengthen and modernise UOW's mining engineering program over the next 5 years, aiming to build a pipeline of industry-ready graduates for the state's resources sector.

Senior Professor Gursel Alici, former Executive Dean of the Faculty of Engineering and Information Sciences, said the university had always 'played a pivotal role in training mining professionals, working with industry partners to ensure our graduates are ready to meet real-world challenges.'

'The partnership will enable us to embed emerging technologies, sustainability practices, and innovative approaches throughout our program, ensuring UOW mining graduates continue to be highly sought after by employers,' he said.

UOW Vice-Chancellor Professor Max Lu AO said the partnership aligns with the industry needs of the future: 'It also enables us to open up opportunities for a more diverse generation of mining professionals, creating pathways for students from all backgrounds to contribute to a sector that remains critical to Australia's economy and clean energy transition.'



World-ready education and student success

Education at UOW is designed to create opportunities and prepare students for what comes next. From first learning experiences through to university graduation and beyond, UOW is focused on providing accessible, high-quality education that builds knowledge, confidence and capability for real-world success.

Our students learn through research-informed teaching, practical experiences and connections with industry and community, while new approaches to digital and lifelong learning extend educational opportunities beyond the classroom. By supporting learners from diverse backgrounds to engage and succeed in a changing world, UOW is helping equip graduates with the skills and experiences to shape their own futures and contribute to those of their communities.

1st in Australia
Undergraduate Teacher Education

QILT 2026

2nd in Australia
Undergraduate Communications

QILT 2026

2nd in Australia
Undergraduate Nursing

QILT 2026

=37th
in the world

QS World University Rankings: Sustainability 2026 – Impact of Education

=109th
in the world

QS World University Rankings: Sustainability 2026 – Environmental Education

UOW's Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching (QILT) rankings use the most up-to-date data on the ComparED website to rank UOW against other universities in Australia.



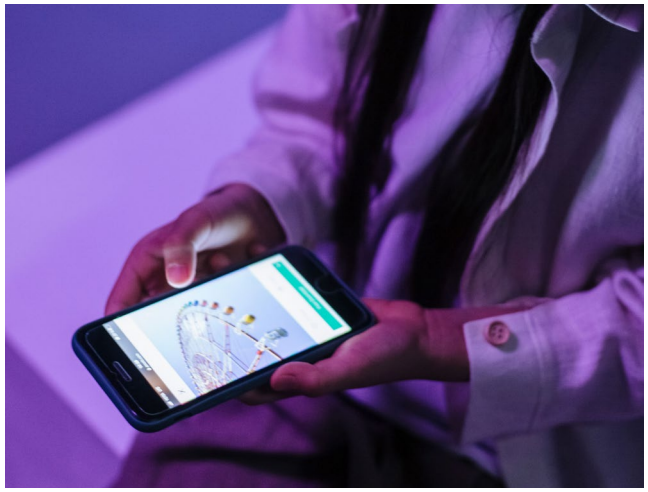


RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT

Early Start

The UOW Early Start Institute is a collaborative initiative that strives to connect research, education and community to improve the life trajectories of children and their adults. It achieves this by prioritising connections to Country, healthy bodies and minds, interactions and relationships, learning, creativity and play, and development and assessment.

In 2025, Early Start celebrated its 10th anniversary with the Festival of Play, a diverse public program of experiences and workshops held at the Early Start Discovery Space. The Discovery Space welcomes thousands of visitors every year and is the first dedicated children's museum in the world based on a university campus.



RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT

ARC Centre of Excellence for the Digital Child

The Australian Research Council (ARC) Centre of Excellence for the Digital Child meets the ongoing challenge of supporting young children growing up in a rapidly changing digital age. As 1 of 6 university partners involved in digital child research, UOW is home to the Children's Technology Play Space, with a focus on how digital technologies impact children's understanding and development. The university also contributes to all 3 of the centre's research programs, including a global-first Longitudinal Family Cohort Study helping shape the future of learning and education.





INITIATIVE

Free online courses empower global learners with climate education

In an era of widespread climate anxiety and misinformation, UOW is inviting participants worldwide to build climate literacy and understand more about the UN SDGs through 2 online short courses.

The Climate Challenge helps learners understand more about climate change and its causes, consequences and solutions on an individual and societal level. The second course, SDGengage, explores the role of the SDGs and their relevance to learners' daily lives.

In 2025, 1,684 learners from 80 countries enrolled in the Climate Challenge, with 633 learners from 20 countries participating in SDGengage. The free courses demonstrate UOW's commitment to democratising climate education through accessible, high-quality online learning.





INITIATIVE

UOW launches Indigenous curated library database

In 2025, UOW launched the Indigenous curated library database, a collection of Indigenous digital resources. The project centres First Peoples' knowledge in information discovery by improving access to culturally appropriate learning and research materials and supporting Indigenous knowledge in education.

As an openly accessible digital platform, the project leverages the UOW Library's digital architecture to allow more inclusive access to curated resources. In alignment with the UOW Healing and Recognition Track (HART) plan 2024–2027, the database also showcases community-led and co-created research to enhance intercultural knowledge for students and educators.



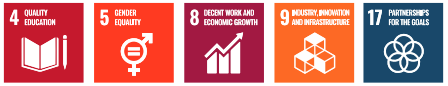


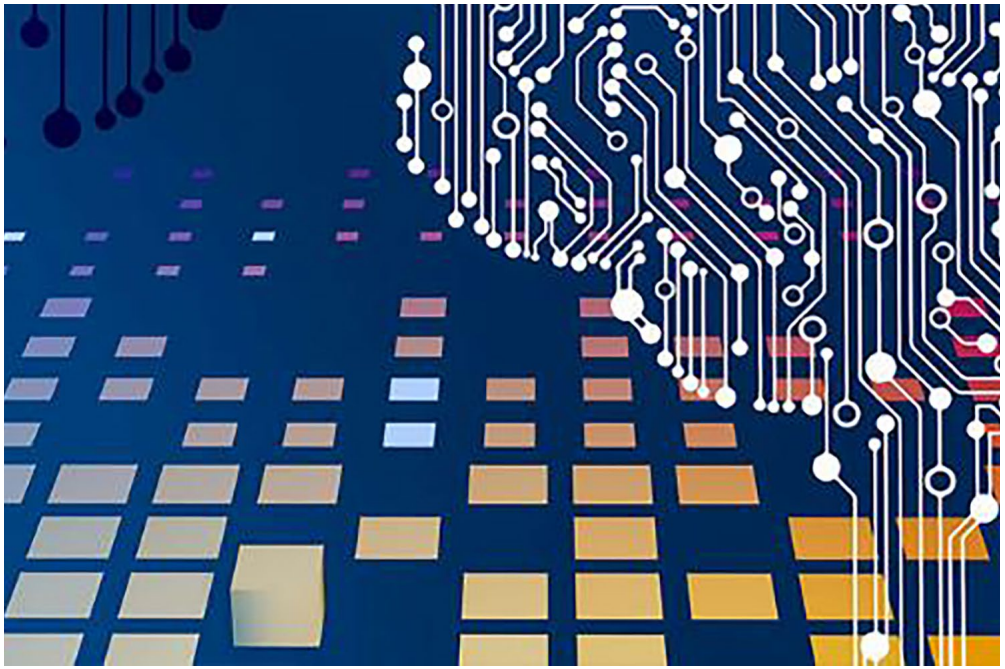
INITIATIVE

EmpowerHER opens STEM pathways for female students

The EmpowerHER STEM Summit returned in 2025 with a series of 2-day, hands-on industry experiences for female secondary school students. Held during school holiday periods, the program aims to inspire and support girls exploring careers in science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM), with separate events designed for students in years 7–9 and years 10–12.

The program is run in partnership with BlueScope, an Illawarra-based global steel manufacturer committed to delivering sustainable solutions for customers and communities. During the summit, students explored STEM taster sessions at UOW Wollongong, before visiting BlueScope to experience real-world STEM in action. Participants were also able to connect with UOW students and industry experts and learn first-hand what it means to be a woman in STEM.





INITIATIVE

AI competence courses build future-ready skills

Two open-access UOW short courses are helping learners build the skills needed to use artificial intelligence responsibly, ethically and effectively.

Funded by the NSW Government and UOW's Faculty of Arts, Society and Business, the AI for Learning and Future Careers and Introduction to AI Image Generation courses aim to strengthen AI literacy and capability. Alongside building AI fluency, participants develop strategies to maintain human agency while amplifying learning, critical and ethical reasoning, creative thinking, and professional judgement.

The free courses have been designed by Associate Professor Dr Christopher Moore and team as part of a response to the growing divide between those with access to augmentation technologies and those without. By promoting ethical, critical and creative engagement with AI, the initiative helps equip learners and educators from all backgrounds with the skills to thrive in an AI-enabled world, while highlighting the importance of equitable AI education.





CASE STUDY

Students rate UOW Australia's #1 public university for educational experience

The University of Wollongong has been named Australia's top-ranked public university for undergraduate student experience in the national Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching (QILT) Student Experience Survey.

The 2024 Student Experience Survey National Report, released in September 2025, found UOW achieved the highest overall educational experience rating of any public university in Australia, with a positive rating of 80.9% – well above the national undergraduate average of 76.4%. UOW also outperformed the national average across every focus area for undergraduates, including teaching quality and engagement, skills development, learning resources, student support services, and peer engagement.

Vice-Chancellor and President Professor G.Q. Max Lu AO said the result reflected the university's commitment to placing student experience and success at the centre of UOW's future.

The annual survey includes feedback from hundreds of thousands of university students from across Australia. The strong result was echoed in the latest QILT Employer Satisfaction Survey, where UOW received an 83.6% overall satisfaction rating, ranking highest nationally in the foundation skills category and above the national average across all other measures.





CASE STUDY

UOW recognised nationally for teaching excellence

The University of Wollongong's commitment to high-quality, student-centred education received national recognition in 2025. For the second consecutive year, students ranked UOW first in Australia for undergraduate Teacher Education in the federal government's QILT survey, reflecting strong results across teaching quality, learning resources, skills development and student support. Two UOW educators also received prestigious national teaching awards for their transformative approaches to higher education and their contribution to shaping the next generation of leaders and professionals.

Associate Dean (Education) in the Faculty of Science, Medicine and Health, Professor Tracey Kuit was recognised with the highly competitive Award for Teaching Excellence at the Australian Awards for University Teaching. Dr Erin Twyford, a Senior Lecturer based in UOW's School of Business, was honoured with a Citation for Outstanding Contributions to Student Learning at the same awards, announced in 2025.

The annual awards celebrate the contributions of educators who have demonstrated excellence in teaching, leadership and enhancing the student experience across higher education in Australia. The approaches of Professor Kuit and Dr Twyford combine inclusive, student-focused learning with practical and industry-connected experiences that build confidence, professional capability and employment readiness.

'My goal is to foster a culture of innovation that adapts to our students' and society's changing needs, ensuring a top-tier educational experience,' said Professor Kuit. 'I am so very privileged to work with amazing students and educators within UOW and beyond who continually inspire and challenge me.'





CASE STUDY

Designing for Action builds teacher capability for climate education

Discovering new knowledge about Australia's Indigenous and environmental history was a centrepiece research program for the ARC Centre of Excellence for Biodiversity and Heritage (CABAH) in 2025, with UOW researchers translating findings into tangible learning opportunities for students and teachers.

Led by Professor Shirley Agostinho from UOW's School of Education, the CABAH team partnered with the Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) to produce a professional resource that helps teachers design action-oriented learning experiences about climate change. Entitled 'Designing for Action', the module offers teachers a design framework and examples of learning activities based on CABAH research.

Designing for Action aims to build teacher capacity to design learning experiences that meet the requirements of the Alice Springs (Mparntwe) Education Declaration, a national vision to improve education outcomes for all. A particular focus of the resource is supporting goal 2 of the declaration – supporting all young Australians to become confident and creative individuals, successful lifelong learners, and active and informed members of the community.





CASE STUDY

Work-integrated learning equips students for success

More than 400 UOW postgraduate students have applied their learning to real-world industry challenges through a new large-scale partnership between the School of Business and Whale Logistics.

Since trimester 2 2025, students completing a business research capstone have worked with the leading freight forwarding company on applied research projects spanning management, HR, international business, finance, marketing, supply chain, project management and business analytics. Previous students have developed practical, evidence-based recommendations for Whale Logistics, gaining industry experience while building their professional capability and networks.

The capstone subject is designed around an inclusive work-integrated learning model, ensuring students have access to authentic industry experience regardless of their background. This approach helps widen participation in employability-enhancing opportunities for cohorts including international, regional, remote, Indigenous and first-in-family students.

The partnership also supports knowledge exchange with local industry. Whale Logistics' Innovation Department is led by UOW alumni, with the organisation engaging with the university across several initiatives, including capstone and internship programs. In 2025, Whale Logistics was named freight forwarder of the year at the DCN Australian Shipping and Maritime Industry Awards.





CASE STUDY

Exceptional students recognised for leadership and innovation

Six UOW students were awarded prestigious Westpac scholarships in 2025, recognising their potential to become future leaders in technology and international relations.

Kalea Ford, Amelie Hutchins, William Ilic, Joshua Moran and Sophie Weppler each received a 2025 Westpac Young Technologists Scholarship, worth $15,000 over 3 years plus $5,000 to attend the Disruptive Leaders Program in Singapore. The sixth student, Zoe Barden, was awarded a Westpac Asian Exchange Scholarship, funding up to 2 semesters of study at a leading Asian university. The scholarships offer the students valuable opportunities to expand their knowledge, develop leadership skills and build professional networks.

Former Interim Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic and Student Life) Professor Sue Bennett said the scholarships reflected Westpac's commitment to supporting innovation and global perspectives among Australia's future leaders, aligning with UOW's focus on world-ready student success.

'These Westpac scholarships provide our students with much more than financial support – they offer access to unique experiences, industry connections, and leadership development that will shape their futures,' Professor Bennett said.

The scholarships form part of UOW's ongoing partnership with the Westpac Scholars Trust, which began in 2014 and has supported 77 Young Technologists Scholars and 4 Asian Exchange Scholars to date.





CASE STUDY

UOW law student takes First Nations leadership to the United Nations

University of Wollongong law student Tiarna Williams, a proud Awabakal-Dharawal woman, travelled to the United Nations Headquarters in New York in 2025 as part of the Global Voices Policy Fellowship, an initiative supporting young Australians who are passionate about policy, human rights and international engagement.

During her time in New York, Williams attended committee sessions and met with representatives from UN departments, NGOs and the Australian Permanent Mission to the UN. The fellowship offered the opportunity to contribute to discussions shaping international law and gain invaluable experience in an environment surrounded by delegates, legal experts and diplomats from across the world.

Williams said being in the room while global decisions were being made about international law was a life-changing experience, opening her eyes to career paths she hadn't known existed.

'This fellowship has helped me to understand the different entry pathways and what skills are valued in the international sector,' she said. 'It gave me direction and confidence.'

As part of the fellowship, Williams also authored an independent policy paper examining challenges for First Nations communities under Australia's *Native Title Act 1993*, recommending a stronger legal framework for community-led decision-making. She hopes her experience encourages other young Indigenous people to consider careers in law, advocacy or international affairs.



CASE STUDY

UOW Liverpool grows higher education access in South Western Sydney

In September 2025, Vice-Chancellor Professor Max Lu AO joined construction and council representatives to mark a new stage of expansion for UOW's Liverpool campus.

Due for completion in 2028, phase 2 of the landmark Liverpool Civic Place development will deliver 11 storeys of university space alongside flexible life sciences facilities. The expansion will enable student numbers to grow from 1,500 to 4,000, helping meet demand for high.er education in South Western Sydney.

With UOW's relocation to Civic Place taking place in 2026, the new campus delivers comprehensive teaching facilities in a vibrant precinct, renewing the university's commitment to collaboration in education, research and the development of the region.

'This is about giving students in South Western Sydney access to world-class education where they live and work,' Professor Lu said.

'Liverpool is one of Australia's fastest-growing regions and we are proud to be part of its future. Our new campus will put students at the centre, strengthen our local social and economic impact, and create exciting opportunities through partnerships with the community that will help shape the region's future.'







Community, government and industry engagement

Across the university, collaborations with governments, industries and communities are creating opportunities to strengthen our capabilities while extending the impact of our research and education. Our partnerships connect UOW's knowledge and expertise with the people and organisations that can help turn it into meaningful change – fulfilling our purpose to create and apply knowledge that empowers people, strengthens communities and supports a resilient and sustainable world.

Our strategic relationships reach from the Illawarra across national and international partnerships, bringing together different perspectives to address shared challenges. Whether supporting sustainable industries, widening access to essential services or helping global communities build resilience, UOW takes pride in its role as an active partner in the regions where we operate and across the wider world.

45th
(1st in Australia)

SDG 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure

THE Impact Ratings 2026

=63rd

SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals

THE Impact Ratings 2026

Community engagement and partnerships in numbers

WORKING WITH LOCAL AND GLOBAL COMMUNITIES

67*
active research partnerships in 2024 were with not-for-profit organisations

62%^
of research publications contributing to the SDGs in 2025 featured international collaboration

TEACHING, LEARNING AND ADVOCACY

183
subjects were about the SDGs in 2025

32,253
students studied subjects about the SDGs in 2025. An increase of 34.2% from 2024

3,942**
UOW publications in 2025 written in collaboration with unique organisations from government, industry, university and community

RESEARCH

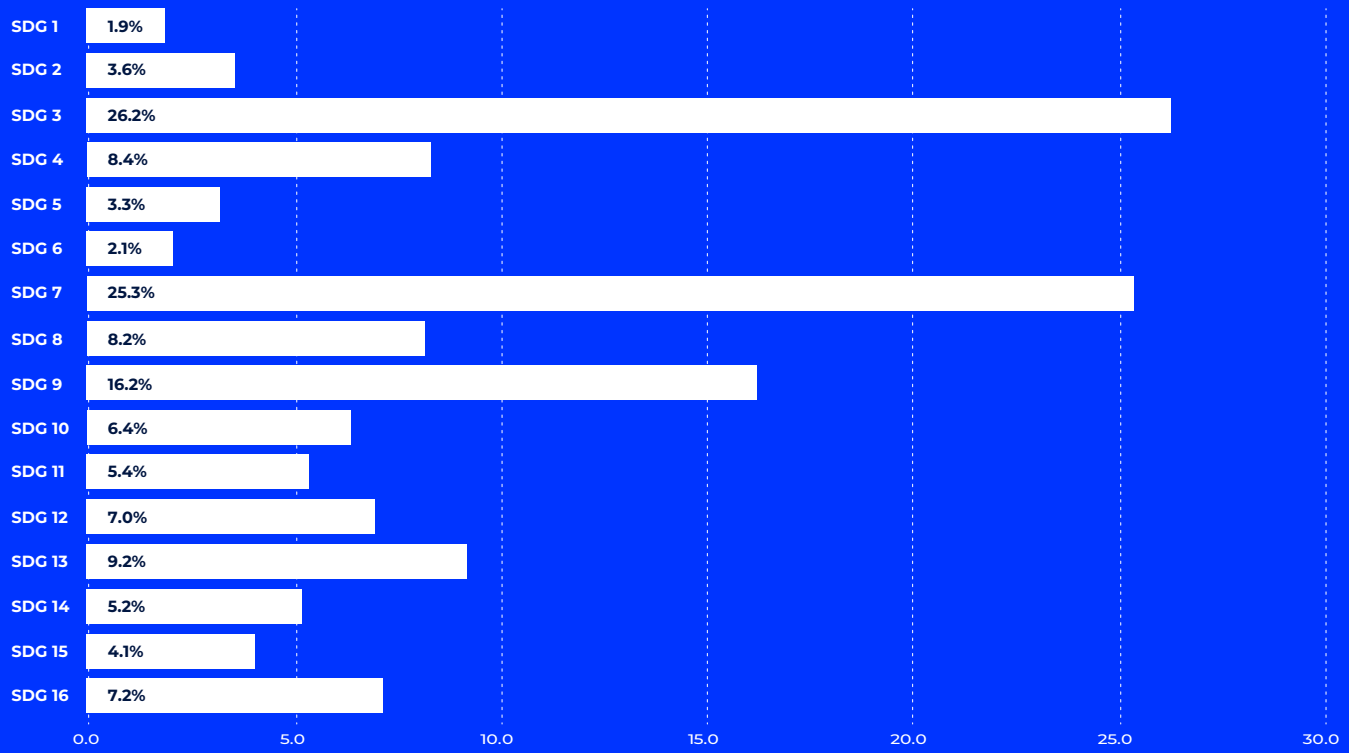
6.8%^
of UOW publications contributing to the SDGs in 2025 were in the top 1% of journals

39%^
of all UOW publications in 2025 (3,664) were aligned to at least one SDG (not including SDG 17)

UOW PUBLICATIONS CONTRIBUTING TO THE SDGS

Chart 1: Percentage of publications associated with each goal, based on the total 1,436 UOW publications that contributed to the UN SDGs in 2025[1].

Publications may be associated with more than one SDG.



* 2025 HERDC data

^ SciVal Scopus 2025 data

**Data Sourced from OpenAlex. SciVal (3,158) used as independent corroboration.



RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT

ARC Training Centre in Energy Technologies for Future Grids

The pace of change in the energy sector has been rapid, and many industry sectors are finding the renewable energy transition challenging. In response, the ARC Training Centre in Energy Technologies for Future Grids aims to provide industries with a new generation of engineers who are equipped with the multidisciplinary skills required to facilitate sustainable energy futures. The ARC Future Grids Training Centre provides an opportunity for industry partners to proactively contribute to a cohort of highly skilled individuals, while offering access to cutting-edge research, ongoing training and a reliable recruitment pool.





RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT

Australian Power and Energy Research Institute (APERI)

The Australian Power and Energy Research Institute (APERI) works to prepare industry for the global energy transition, fostering innovation through research and technology to equip engineers, scientists and professionals. APERI researchers are recognised for their high-quality research and strong partnerships with industry and government, playing a significant role in transforming the power and energy sector for a sustainable energy future.





INITIATIVE

UOW Tax Clinic

The UOW Tax Clinic is a free service that helps individuals and small businesses from the Illawarra and South Coast regions who are experiencing hardship and unable to access professional tax advice.

Staffed by students from UOW's School of Business, under the supervision of qualified tax professionals, the clinic provides friendly and professional guidance about debt management, tax returns, tax obligations and related accounting advice. Since opening in 2025, the Tax Clinic has provided valuable work integrated learning and internship opportunities for students, while improving access for local underserved communities.

The clinic receives funding from the Australian Government as part of the National Tax Clinic Program, and offers face-to-face advice at UOW's Wollongong, and Innovation campuses. Students and members of the public can also access support via phone or online.



INITIATIVE

iAccelerate

For the past decade, iAccelerate has been dedicated to supporting innovation, job creation and economic impact in the Illawarra region. As Australia's largest university-led incubator, iAccelerate has supported 608 startups and scaleups since its inception, creating more than 1,233 jobs and injecting $186.5 million into the economy. iAccelerate is the only program of its kind that integrates a pre-accelerator, accelerator and incubator under one roof.

As part of iAccelerate's commitment to the UN SDGs, each startup is introduced to the goals as a foundational subject in the education program, ensuring entrepreneurs are socially conscious and equipped to make a positive impact on the world. In 2025, 86 startups and scaleups were supported by iAccelerate across 16 out of 17 SDGs.

In the same year, in response to industry needs, iAccelerate created and delivered new programs, including an online after-hours pre-accelerator, a business innovation program for larger teams, and a PhD internship, linking research with real-world industry impact.



2025 iAccelerate impact in numbers

45
full-time and part-time jobs created

$24.8M
injected into the economy

18
female STEM PhD candidates placed in internships

25
IP applications and products launched in iAccelerate





CASE STUDY

Annual Chocolate Scorecard cracks open corporate sustainability practices

The sixth annual Chocolate Scorecard initiative returned for Easter 2025, holding global confectionery giants to account on a wide range of sustainability policies and practices.

Produced by Be Slavery Free, in collaboration with a team including UOW's Associate Professor Stephanie Perkiss alongside consultants and sustainability interest groups, the initiative evaluates and ranks chocolate traders, manufacturers, brands and retailers.

Sixty companies from around the world were invited to participate and were evaluated on key issues including traceability, child labour, deforestation and living income. Collectively, these companies purchase more than 90% of the world's cocoa.

In 2025, Tony's Chocolonely won the Good Egg award in the large company category, representing the most sustainable chocolate company across 6 key markers. Multinational chocolate manufacturer Mondelēz, producer of Cadbury, was given the Bad Egg award for refusing to participate.

Australian retailer Coles was also absent from this year's scorecard, raising questions of transparency and public accountability. However, transparency increased across the board with 82% of companies now fully disclosing child labour data, and instances of child labour reducing across the sector.

With many cocoa farmers living in extreme poverty and facing the impacts of climate change, the project aims to encourage corporate transparency and improved social and environmental practices. Chocolate manufacturers have previously reported that the scorecard influences their strategic direction, demonstrating how academic research can drive change in global supply chains.





CASE STUDY

Pathways partnership strengthens climate resilience across Pacific communities

A long-running UOW partnership is helping Pacific communities strengthen coastal fisheries management, restore ecosystems and build resilience by combining local knowledge with scientific research.

Led by UOW's Australian National Centre for Ocean Resources and Security (ANCORS), the Pathways project supports community-based resource management across Kiribati, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. Working with governments, regional organisations and communities, the program aims to improve livelihoods, food and nutrition security, social and gender equity, and the sustainable management of coastal fisheries.

The collaborative project, funded by the Australian Government, also helps communities respond to the impacts of rising seas and coastal erosion. By co-developing research and providing training frameworks for capacity building, UOW researchers translate science into action by helping restore ecosystems that provide important resources for local communities.





CASE STUDY

Students turn knowledge into community impact

UOW nutrition and dietetics students have put learning into practice while supporting community health and wellbeing through a work placement with Meals on Wheels North Shoalhaven.

Students in their final year of study spent 4 weeks working across the service, assisting with meal preparation, nutrition education, and comprehensive menu and recipe analysis. In one day alone, the students helped prepare and pack 400 meals, while their broader work provided nutritional expertise to a volunteer-run organisation supporting older people, people with disability and their carers.

The students were supervised by Professor Karen Walton and Professor Kelly Lambert from UOW's School of Medical, Indigenous and Health Sciences.

'The students were able to apply their understanding of the socio-ecological relationship between food, nutrition and health,' Professor Lambert said. 'Not only did the students gain hands-on experience in a real-world setting, but they also used their nutrition know-how to make a real difference in the lives of people right here in our community.'





CASE STUDY

Wolves partnership supports high-performance female athletes in the Illawarra

A partnership between UOW UniActive and the Wollongong Wolves is creating new opportunities for aspiring female footballers to access high-performance training and develop towards elite competition.

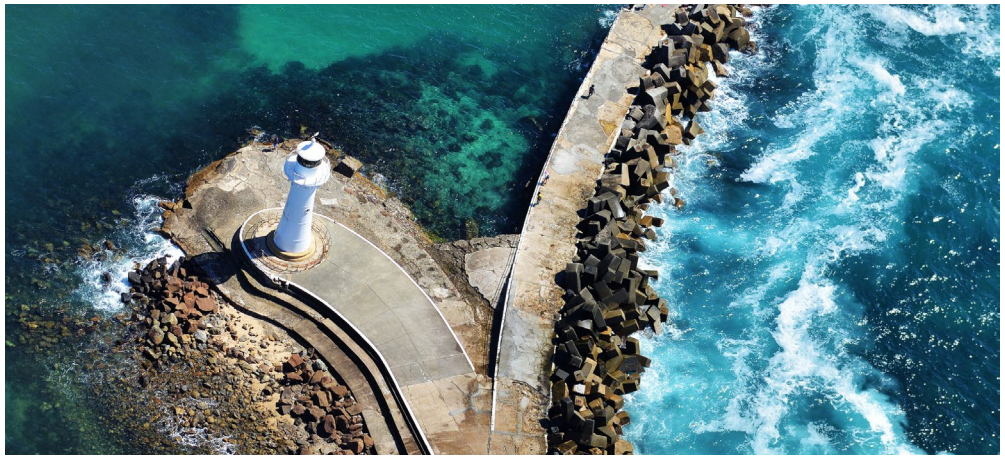
The Female Athlete High-Performance Program provides individualised training and development across strength and conditioning, nutrition, sports psychology, female health education, and technical football skills. The Wolves support the football component of the program by offering full scholarships to successful participants each year, helping young female players access the resources and support to reach their full potential.

The program marks an important step for women's football in the Illawarra.

'Currently, there is no professional women's team in the region, although the club has established clear pathways for the men's side,' said former Socceroo and Wollongong Wolves Board member Luke Wilkshire. 'We aim to support the growth of women's football in the area by offering scholarships to female players.'

By expanding access to elite-level training and resources, the partnership paves the way for the next generation of female footballers to emerge from the Illawarra, with the Wolves preparing to establish a women's team in the national second division.





CASE STUDY

Global experts unite at UOW to advance future energy systems

Researchers, policymakers, industry leaders and government organisations from Australia and around the world gathered at UOW in December 2025 to explore the future of clean, reliable and resilient energy systems.

Hosted by UOW's ARC Future Grids Training Centre, the IEEE International Conference on Energy Technologies for Future Grids (ETFG 2025) brought together global experts to address the challenges and opportunities in transforming Australia's electricity networks.

More than 700 research papers from over 60 countries were submitted to the international conference, one of the largest ever hosted by UOW. Topics included technologies for modernising grid infrastructure, emerging energy systems, and the transition to a sustainable, net-zero future.

Strong industry involvement complemented the academic program, including a grid enhancing technology showcase and focused sessions on decarbonisation, energy resilience and digital transformation of the grid.

Speaking ahead of the event, conference general chair and ARC Future Grids Training Centre Director Distinguished Professor Kashem Muttaqi said the event aligns with Australia's push to modernise electricity networks and achieve its net zero ambitions.

'ETFG 2025 will be a pivotal opportunity to bring together research excellence, industry innovation and policy leadership to shape a sustainable energy future,' he said. 'Collaboration across these sectors is key to achieving reliable, secure and affordable grids for generations to come.'





CASE STUDY

UOW's 50th Anniversary Awards celebrate legacy of impact

In September 2025, UOW marked 5 decades of research excellence, innovation, social impact and creative leadership by honouring outstanding alumni and community members at its 50th Anniversary Awards.

The milestone evening saw the presentation of UOW's annual alumni awards alongside a new 50th Anniversary Council Award for Excellence. Distinguished Professor Gerry Swiegers received the inaugural honour for pioneering electrolyser technology that sets a new global standard in green hydrogen production.

Other award recipients demonstrated the breadth of impact generated by the UOW community over the years, including: Professor Ranjith Gamage for innovations in sustainable mining and geo-engineering; Professor Scott Avery for reshaping national understanding of disability through an Indigenous lens; policy leader Carolyn Hough for work at the intersection of technology, law and ethics; and astrophysicist Dr Sabine Bellstedt for contributions to galaxy mapping and science communication. Vivid Sydney festival director Gill Minervini and multidisciplinary artist Kirli Saunders OAM were jointly recognised for their creative impact in Australia and internationally.

Vice-Chancellor and President Professor G.Q. Max Lu AO said he was inspired to join UOW by the people of Wollongong, and their shared commitment to making a difference in the community and the wider world.

'At UOW we have a clear purpose, which is to change lives through education, and to make a positive impact through research and engagement,' he said. 'It is the amazing UOW people – generations of staff, students, alumni, partners and leaders – who have helped to build this great university.'



Learn more

We invite all members of the UOW community and our partners worldwide to engage with this report, celebrate our achievements and contribute to the ongoing journey towards sustainability.

EXPLORE UOW'S SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES AND SDG ENGAGEMENT AT:

uow.info/sdgs
facebook.com/UOW
instagram.com/UOW
linkedin.com/school/university-of-wollongong

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