



# Sustainability Report

2017



The role of universities has never been more important – helping to build social capital and working towards a sustainable future for everyone.



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# Our commitment to sustainability



Professor Attila Brungs  
Vice-Chancellor and President

## Statement from the Vice Chancellor

At UTS we talk about the value of sustainability, by which we mean producing global citizens who appreciate diversity, human rights, ecology and the importance of contributing to society. A great example this year was Advancing the Public Benefit of Universities, a symposium held in December. The event explored how, in a rapidly changing world with rising inequality, ecological decline and competition over resources, the role of universities has never been more important – helping to build social capital and working towards a sustainable future for everyone.

This year our success in sustainability research continued to develop, with our flagship Institute for Sustainable Futures celebrating its 20th Anniversary. ISF is an international leader in transdisciplinary inquiry and practice, and now more than ever, their work towards a sustainable future is critical. Our success in research funding this year was truly outstanding with 42 projects across the Australian Research Council's (ARC) Discovery, Early Career, Indigenous and Infrastructure schemes, securing a total of \$15 million.

We also installed a record amount of solar energy on our own campus buildings, and I was proud to open the new UTS Rugby Australia Building at Moore Park incorporating best-practice environmental design. Excitingly, this new facility is the first of its kind in Australia to embed university programs within a major sports venue, putting fitness, wellbeing and social sustainability at the heart of what we do.

It's been a fulfilling year and we aim to build on this success. The thing that inspires me most is working with our students, staff and industry partners on a journey of continual improvement, which is a concept at the core of sustainability.

## Statement from the Sustainability Manager

Sustainability at UTS continues to develop across the key areas of teaching and learning, research, campus operations, and community engagement. This report covers our performance and achievements for the 2017 calendar year.

One of the achievements I am most proud of this year is finalising our UTS Sustainability Strategy 2017-2020, incorporating firm goals and Key Performance Indicators across the full spectrum of sustainability activities. I'd like to thank all the students, staff, academics and interested stakeholders who took part in the process of developing the Strategy.

Another major achievement was the steep increase in renewable energy technology on campus, with solar panels installed on three more city campus rooftops and a second direct Power Purchase Agreement signed with an off-site solar farm in regional NSW.

It was also a successful year for engaging with the student and staff body with more than 58 sustainability events held, along with tours of the campus to showcase our sustainable buildings and infrastructure.

I'd like to thank the rest of the UTS Sustainability team, members of the Sustainability Steering Committee, and last but not least, all the sustainability champions across the University who make everything we do possible.



Danielle McCartney  
Manager, Sustainability

# 2017 highlights

## Partnerships and Engagement

**30%**  
increase



**In Walk to UTS  
participants**



**15**

**Sustainable Campus  
tours for**

**170**  
participants

**30%**  
increase



**Subscribers to  
our sustainability  
newsletter**



**Think Sustainability  
radio program  
has over**

**116,000**  
weekly listeners &  
**5,700**  
podcast subscribers

**58**

**Sustainability events  
held, attended by**

**1961**  
people



**1,100**

**Free sustainable  
meals served  
to students  
each week  
by Bluebird  
Brekkie Bar**

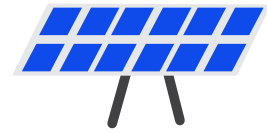
## Operations



Operational waste reduced by **10%**



New indigenous medicinal garden



**288kW** new solar installed, enough to power 67 houses

## Research



Australia's **1st** algae bioreactor installed

Institute for Sustainable Futures



anniversary

## Teaching & Learning



UTS Hatchery **WINS** Australian Financial Review Higher Education Award

Celebrates facilitating



startup businesses



Over **1,000** people attend UTS public lecture series

All figures are for the 2017 calendar year, with percentages comparing 2017 to 2016.

# Awards and recognition



Radio 2SER staff at the New York Festival International Radio Program Awards

- **Winner** – Technology Against Poverty prize of \$500,000 awarded by Google and InnovationXchange to UTS Professor Saravanamuth Vigneswaran and Dr Tien Vinh Nguyen for their project to remove arsenic from drinking water in the Red River Delta of Vietnam.
- **Winner** – NSW Government Travel Choices Award, Initiative Of The Year category for Walk to UTS Day.
- **Winner** – Australian Financial Review Higher Education Awards, Learning Experience category awarded to UTS Hatchery, where students regularly tackle ‘wicked’ sustainability problems.
- **Finalist** – Think Sustainability radio program and podcast in the New York Festival International Radio Program Awards, Environment and Ecology category.





Staff and students participating in Walk to UTS Day

## Continuous improvement: Institutional Change Award

Each October UTS organises 'Walk to UTS Day' as part of national Walk to Work day. The aim is to raise awareness of active transport and encourage staff and students to consider walking as part of their commute to UTS. Colleagues and friends are encouraged to form teams and the day involves prizes and free breakfast for all walkers. This year UTS won the Travel Choices Award for a 65% increase in participation from 2015 to 2016. We built on that success with a further 30% increase at this year's event.

# Teaching and learning

## The Hatchery

Now in its second year the UTS Hatchery accelerator program celebrated facilitating 25 startup businesses, with 13 of their first 15 businesses still active. Many students in this program choose projects with a strong sustainability theme, including Nick Berriman (Electrical Engineering and Creative Intelligence and Innovation student) who worked on an app to gamify waste education to improve recycling on campus.

**“The best thing I learnt was that I was capable of working in the start-up community. Originally, I didn’t know how the start-up space worked or even whether it was something I wanted to do, but having gone through the program I’m more sure than ever about continuing on this trajectory.”**

– Nicholas Berriman, UTS student

## Design students tackle food waste

This year Dr Dena Fam from the Institute of Sustainable Futures facilitated a collaborative team of undergraduate design students, along with staff from Central Services to develop ways to improve food waste recycling on campus. Students were briefed on the operational challenges faced by staff composting food waste on campus and had to develop solutions to reduce contamination in the food waste stream. The students applied theoretical learnings to real world applications and Dena Fam went on to win the UTS Green Hero award for utilising the campus as a ‘living lab’ to enhance the student learning experience.





## Coffee cups

A team of students from the School of Design worked on the problem of disposable coffee cups. Most disposable paper cups have a fine plastic lining meaning they are not recycled and end up in landfill. The students spent a session developing strategies to reduce coffee cup waste and presented design proposals to the UTS Sustainability team. Some will be considered for implementation on campus next year.

## Public lectures

The University runs the public lecture series UTS Speaks and Science in Focus to engage the broader community in topical issues. More than 1000 people attended talks on:

- **Australia's new energy ecosystem** with Research Principal Dr Sven Teske discussing Australia's position on renewable and decentralised energy.
- **Are we losing the koala and quoll?** with Dr Willa Huston and Dr Jonathan Webb exploring threats to two of Australia's most loved furry animals.
- **The truth about rising temperatures and the surprising impacts on human and environmental health** with Associate Professor Shauna Murray and Dr Andrea Leigh examining climate change impacts on plants and the marine environment.
- **The algae revolution** with Professor Peter Ralph and Dr Janice McCauley exploring new products and the potential in the emerging algae-based biotechnology sector.

## Visiting climate expert

Visiting climate expert Christiana Figueres, Vice Chair of the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy, and ex Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) visited Sydney this year, facilitating a round table discussion at UTS on actions being undertaken by cities, businesses and communities around the world in the transition from fossil fuels to a low carbon future.

## Student leading lights

UTS engineering student Alli Devlin was a recipient of the Australian Government New Colombo Plan scholarship and chose an internship in Vietnam with the environment team of the Asia Foundation, examining climate change and natural disaster relief in Asia.





UTS design students (left to right) Eva Li, Sonia de Pellegrin, Jack Fahy and Cory Dolman with Ariel Wang.

## UTS students on the world stage

A group of UTS design students collaborated with students at Tsinghua University in Beijing to develop an entry in this year's Beijing Design Week. Called Helping Hands Notice Board, their entry tackled ageing population issues in the Asia-Pacific. The software interface, designed specifically for the elderly with large high-contrast text and an easy-to-use interactive screen linked elderly people with community centres and health and well-being services in their local area.

**“The design activates underused spaces in the lobbies of housing complexes in Beijing to promote self-sufficiency for the elderly so that mental and physical pressures of ageing are alleviated.”**

– Jack Fahy, UTS student

## New faces



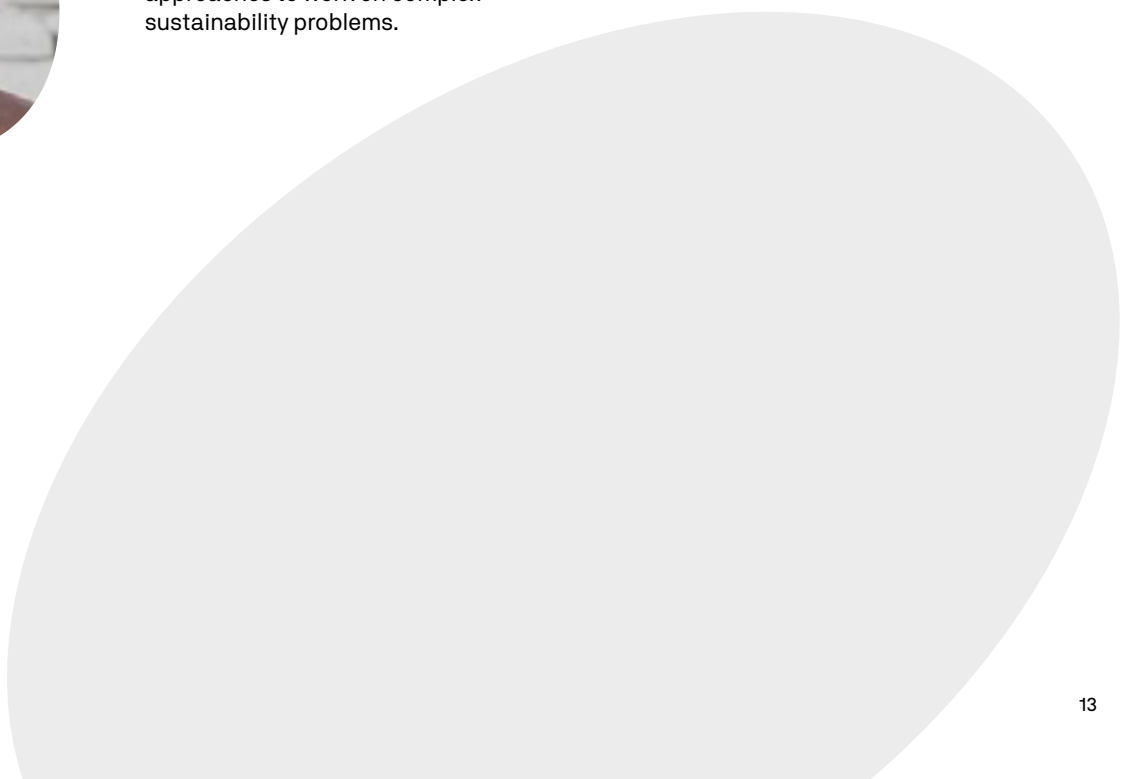
**Professor Alexey Voinov** joined the School of Systems, Management and Leadership within the Faculty of Engineering and IT. He teaches systems modelling, in particular socio-environmental modelling and is editor of the Journal of Environmental Modelling and Software.



**Associate Professor Tatiana Filatova** joined the School of Systems, Management and Leadership within the Faculty of Engineering and IT. She specialises in economic modelling, with a focus on climate change risks and associated political and social change.



**Domenic Svejkar** is a strategic designer in the Design Innovation Research Centre. He uses design and transdisciplinary approaches to work on complex sustainability problems.



# Research

**This year a Research Sustainability Steering Committee was formed in order to explore the breadth and opportunities in sustainability research, and to inform the development of the integrated UTS 2027 strategy.**

In 2017 Katie Ross from ISF was a contributing author to a guide for universities Getting Stated with the SDGs in Universities published for Australasian Campuses Towards Sustainability (ACTS).

## **Algae on the roof**

This year the UTS Deep Green Biotetch Hub took another step towards the commercial manufacture of algae products with the installation of a new facility on the roof of the Vicki Sara Building. The first of its kind in Australia the facility incorporates an algal bioreactor to produce algae from the sun. Able to operate with both fresh water and marine algae, the facility produces material for a diverse range of applications from human food to dyes, animal feeds, and bioplastics. "The bio economy will be key to addressing food and energy security by 2050, and algae will be a large part of this bio economy," Professor Peter Ralph, Founder of the Deep Green Biotech Hub.





## Climate justice

In a collaborative initiative between the Institute for Sustainable Futures, Jumbunna Institute for Indigenous Learning and Research, and the Centre for Social Justice and Inclusion, Indigenous activists from Canada and Australia shared stories and experiences in a public forum on climate justice in March. International guest Melina Laboucan- Massimo, a Lubicon Cree woman from Northern Alberta shared her story on the battle against tar sand mining in Canada. Similar experiences in Australia were presented by young leader Murrawah Johnson on her people's battle to stop the Adani coal mine in Queensland, and Dolly and Steve Talbott discussed the fight against coal seam gas projects on traditional lands in NSW.



## Food Agility

The UTS-led Food Agility Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) based at the Faculty of Engineering and IT secured \$50m of funding over ten years through the Federal Government's CRC program. The Food Agility bid raised over \$160m in commitments for the proposal and has 54 partners across the food value chain. The Food Agility innovation hub is creating new digital technologies and services to benefit the Australian agrifood industry and aims to help producers adapt and develop food that will have good safety records, be of high quality, and is environmentally and socially sustainable.



## Oyster research

UTS microbiology researchers will be part of a new team investigating the causes of oyster disease outbreaks. Sharing a grant from the Australian Research Council Linkage fund, the team is a collaboration between UTS, the University of NSW and the NSW Department of Primary Industries. Researchers will work to identify the main ecological and environmental drivers of oyster disease outbreaks in NSW.

## Renewable energy report

A new report written by Dr Sven Teske at the UTS Institute for Sustainable Futures for The Renewable Energy Policy Network for the 21st Century (REN21) revealed that achieving 100% renewable energy globally by 2050 is both feasible and realistic. Two thirds of the international energy experts interviewed for the report expect renewables to outpace fossil fuels economically within the next decade. "There is an overwhelming consensus among the experts we interviewed that renewable power will dominate in the future, even with rising global energy demand. The question is not if we can achieve the transition to renewables, but when. Numerous companies, regions, islands and cities are tracking towards their 100 percent renewable energy targets," Dr Teske said.

## Social sustainability

This year the Ignite Small Business Start-ups Program, run by UTS Business School Professor Jock Collins, released a research report showing refugee entrepreneurs have the potential to make a significant economic contribution to Australia through their ability to generate jobs, tax revenue and reduced welfare support. Research from the pilot revealed that 66 entrepreneurs helped develop 20 new jobs and provide a savings of \$880,000 per year in Centrelink payments.

## 2017 sustainability highlights from our research centres include:

- **The Centre for Clean Energy Technology:** Gained a new partner, joining forces with the Rail Manufacturing Collaborative Research Centre and HEC Business Group as a new participant on an innovative lithium battery project. The initiative will focus on developing new materials for lithium ion batteries used in rail vehicles.
- **C3 Climate Change Cluster:** Associate Professor Suggett and Dr Shimoni were joint winners of AMP's Tomorrow Fund to carry on their work researching 'super corals' resistant to climate change.
- **Centre for Compassionate Conservation:** Announced a new collaborative research partnership with The Green Collar Group working on conservation programs in Australia's rangelands.
- **Institute for Sustainable Futures (ISF):** Developed energy Network Opportunity Maps in collaboration with industry and business partners, providing the technical information necessary to drive more renewable energy, battery storage and smart demand management in the Australian electricity grid. ISF researchers also presented at the Ecocities World Forum in Melbourne exploring how successful urban design now requires transdisciplinary and collaborative approaches beyond the traditional domain of town planners.

- **Centre for Technology in Water and Wastewater:** Developing innovative technologies for recycled, desalinated and harvested storm water.
- **Materials and Technology for Energy Efficiency:** Working to develop new energy efficient devices and materials for sensing, lighting and bio-imaging.

## New faces



**Dr Claudine Moutou** is a transport sociologist at the Institute for Sustainable Futures. Her research focuses on understanding culture and systems to improve urban transport.



**Dr Janice McCauley** joined the C3 Research Cluster. Her research focus area is bio-products and potential industrial uses for algae including enzymes and pharmaceuticals.



**Kylie McKenna** joined the Institute for Sustainable Futures and researches corporate social responsibility and natural resource conflict.





**Dr Jennifer Loy** is Professor of Product Design whose research focus is advanced manufacturing and sustainability, with a special interest in disruptive design of production systems and supply chains.



**Jason Twill** is an Innovation Research Fellow in the School of Architecture and leads research into sustainable urbanism, housing affordability, and green building economics.



**Dr Hamish Robertson** joined the Centre for Health Services Management. He is a medical geographer whose research focuses on how big data is impacting health policy and service delivery.



**Dr Mark Liu** is a UTS Alumni and joined the School of Design this year as a post-doctoral fellow. He specialises in fashion and textile design, using advanced mathematics to improve pattern-making and reduce waste.



**Associate Professor Tim Schork** co-leads the Transformative Technologies and Data Poetics Research Group in the School of Architecture. His work focuses on the use of robotics and digital fabrication to help reduce waste and improve efficiency.



**Associate Professor Simon Fane** is Research Director at the Institute for Sustainable Futures. His focus is sustainable urban water management including water conservation, adaptive planning, options analysis and water modelling.

# Facilities and operations

## Energy and greenhouse

The UTS greenhouse gas emission target is a 30% reduction by 2020-21, against a 2007 baseline. To help achieve this, our strategy involves energy saving through demand management, improved efficiencies, shifting the energy mix to less intensive carbon sources, and new PV solar energy installations on and off campus. In 2017 we continued our work to improve energy efficiency by linking occupancy counters to air-conditioning controls in Building 11 teaching spaces. These counters not only turn the air-conditioning off when class rooms are unoccupied, but also adjust the settings based on the actual number of people in the room at any given time, thereby saving energy when class rooms are only half full.

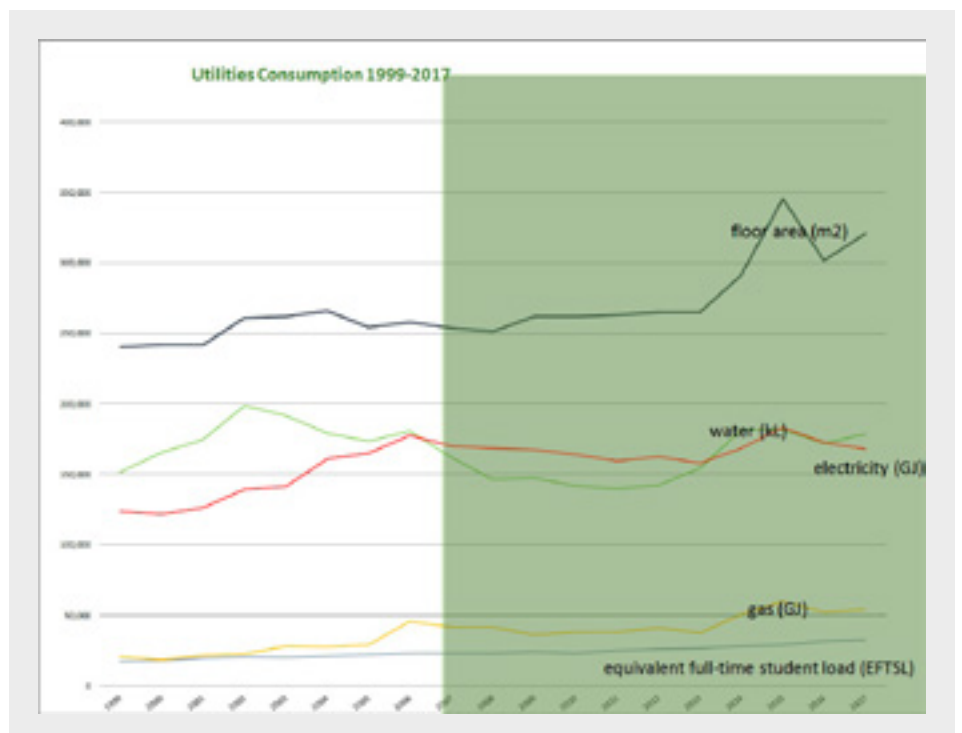
While the University's overall floor area in 2017 grew by 6.4%, gas consumption rose by 4% and electricity consumption fell by 2.5% compared to the previous year, helping deliver a 2.1% reduction in overall greenhouse gas emissions.

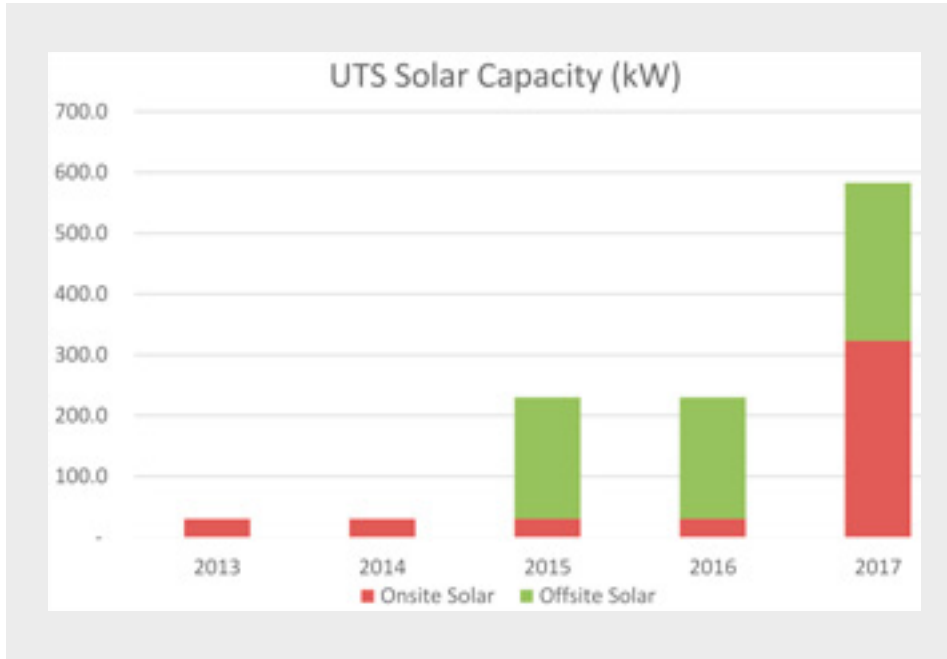
## Behaviour change

This year we ran a campaign to encourage students, staff and visitors to choose the stairs over the lifts when travelling short distances between floors. 'Go lift free' branding was developed and playful signage with feet installed in the foyer of the main UTS tower building highlighting that using stairs saves energy (reducing greenhouse gas emissions), is good for your health, and can sometimes be faster. Lift usage data during the campaign showed a significant improvement with short trips from the foyer falling from 9.3% to 7.2% of all journeys.

## Water

Water saving initiatives included improved leak detection and management systems across the campus, and the installation of overflow detection in the cooling towers servicing Building 10. Total staff and student numbers grew by 3.7% with a comparable rise in water consumption of 4%.





## Reducing drink bottle waste

As part of a campaign to reduce the use of single-use plastic cups and bottled water on campus, the team running Open Day, our largest event of the year, decided not to provide disposable cups and water bottles. Instead, extra water re-fill stations were installed for the day and all participants were encouraged to bring their own re-usable drink bottle. A limited number of re-usable bottles were also available on the day. The stations recorded 1300 re-fills, avoiding the use of 1083 single-use plastic bottles. Best of all, the initiative received positive feedback from Open Day visitors.

## Waste and recycling

Total operational waste fell 10% this year from 1071 tonnes in 2016 to 960 tonnes in 2017. Total waste to landfill fell 12% from 119 tonnes to 104 tonnes. In addition, we recycled 1.44 tonnes of disposable batteries, 2 tonnes of Styrofoam, and 607kg of computer cables. We also installed two dehydrator machines in Buildings 8 and 10 to process food waste from cafes and offices. The process produced a total of 17.8 tonnes of “soil conditioner” in 2017. UTS is a member of the national Fluorocycle program, committing to recycle all of our fluorescent lighting waste. This year we sent 1.4 tonnes of fluorescent light tubes and globes for recycling, capturing and recycling the mercury, aluminium and glass.

## Going solar

2017 was a big year for renewable energy at UTS. We increased our total solar energy capacity by 288kW, representing an increase of 124%. Encouragingly, most of this was installed on rooftops within our city campus – an additional 736 PV panels or 228 kW. In addition, we also entered into our second direct Power Purchase Agreement with a solar farm in Orange in regional NSW.

UTS solar capacity



## Green Star buildings

This year the Vicki Sara building was awarded a 6 Star Green Star Education v1 As-Built rating certified by the Green Building Council of Australia. This represents 'World Leadership' in sustainable building practices. Only 11 buildings Australia-wide have achieved this rating, with the Vicki Sara building the first university building in NSW.

The building received its 6 star Design rating in April 2015. Sustainable design features include recycled glass cladding, green roof, solar hot water and stormwater recycling.

## Best practice office fit-out

This year our flagship Institute for Sustainable Futures moved into a stylish new office space showcasing best practice sustainable design. The renovated space is within an existing older building which limited the architect's options. Despite this, the fit-out is targeting 6 star Green Star certification and incorporates features such as open plan activity based work zones, ergonomic sit/stand work stations, natural and LED lighting, plantation and recycled timbers, low VOC and sustainability certified finishes and furnishings, and a worm farm in the kitchen.

## Sustainable campus tours

Throughout the year we ran fifteen green campus tours for 170 participants showcasing UTS sustainable buildings and infrastructure. The highlight was 'Green Campus Day' during National Green Building Week in September.

On this day university campuses across Australia and New Zealand opened their Green Star certified buildings to the general public. Initiated by Australasian Campuses Towards Sustainability (ACTS) with a UTS pilot in 2016, this year the day grew to six universities – UTS, RMIT, University of Melbourne, University of NSW, University of Tasmania, and Victoria University of Wellington in New Zealand. Together we ran nine tours for 132 attendees.



Participants on one of the Green Campus tours.



Ride to UTS Day lucky draw winner Kate Cormie with her new bike.

## Transport

The University's inner city location is well suited to active transport and staff, students and visitors are encouraged to walk, ride and skate to UTS. Cycling promotion this year included the annual Ride to UTS Day that recorded a 25% increase in participation compared to the previous year. We also introduced a regular monthly bike mechanic service on campus to make it more convenient for staff and students to maintain their bike. Walk to UTS day in October also recorded a 30% increase compared to the previous year.

## New Indigenous garden

An indigenous garden was created this year by a team from Jumbunna, the UTS Institute for Indigenous Education and Research, UTS Art, and other collaborators. Named Waraburra Nura (The Happy Wanderer's Place) the garden contains native plants with medicinal uses and is designed to showcase companion planting, where indigenous species planted together in a cluster support and nourish each other. The garden is on the north facing balcony on level 6 of the main UTS Tower building, just outside Jumbunna's offices and is a space of relaxation and tranquillity for everyone to share and enjoy.



# Partnerships and engagement

## Internal collaboration

Staff and students get involved in sustainability on campus in a variety of ways. Green Week is our major annual event of the year held each May. A collaboration with neighbours TAFE Ultimo and the ABC, this year the program incorporated 20 events - talks, films, workshops, the Green Week debate and more. This year's debate saw academics from the Faculty of Law debate students from the UTS Debating Society on the topic "Private land rights are killing nature". Another highlight was the Green Week Photography competition with an exhibition of the Finalists' photos in the ABC foyer.

## World Environment Day

A morning tea to celebrate World Environment Day is held on June 5th each year. At this event Patrick Woods, Deputy Vice Chancellor and Vice-President Resources announced the winners of the UTS Green Hero Awards. For these awards staff, students and alumni nominate their peers in recognition of their sustainability achievements. In 2017 the winner was Dr Dena Fam, a passionate academic who uses the campus as a 'living lab' with her students undertaking real world projects on campus. Second place was a tie between Masters student Rebecca Pagnucco who is exploring a new type of boom to clean up oil spills, and staff member Gillian Leahy who coordinates the Whites Creek Community Garden. Third place went to staff member Jing Zhao for her work coordinating the switch from paper to digital files in the Graduate Research School.





Winning photo from the Green Week Photography Competition 'No job is too big for small hands' by student Tiffany Vella.

## Green staff network

The Green Staff Network is another mechanism for staff to get involved. This year they helped develop the BYO cup campaign and initiated a campaign to reduce plastic bags on campus. A bag share station was established at the main concierge desk in the main UTS Tower building, where staff and students borrow a cloth bag to go shopping, then return it for others to use again. The campaign also included cloth plastic bag holders in office kitchens to make it easy to re-use plastic bags. The dispensers are now in use in 19 staff kitchens across the University.

## Christmas competition

For our annual Christmas decorating competition in offices, staff worked individually and in teams to decorate workstations and offices using recycled materials. The winning entry was an office Christmas tree made of recycled copy paper boxes.

## Student initiatives

The Students Association Enviro Collective held regular meetings throughout the year and continued their involvement in the national fossil fuel divestment and Stop Adani campaigns. Along with the EcoSoc student club they held numerous events throughout the year including stalls, a vegan dinner and Stop Adani action at Bondi Beach.

UTS Landscape students participated in international PARK(ing) Day for the fourth year in a row, heading to Manly beach this year. The students took over a parking spot to create a mini pop-up park, inviting passers-by to consider the amount of urban space devoted to car parking, and think about creative ways to change that. Fruit, lemonade and a sausage sizzle kept the conversation and ideas flowing.

The Bluebird brekkie bar is a pop-up café run by the UTS Students' Association, an initiative for students, by students. With sustainability principles at its core, all furniture is made from recycled materials, crockery and cutlery is reusable, and ingredients are sustainable. Bluebird serves over 1,100 students free healthy breakfast over two mornings. Last year they trialled the introduction of Asian Noodle Nights on Thursdays. This year the initiative was consolidated and now serves over 500 evening noodle meals.

## Think: Sustainability Radio Program

Now in its second year the Think Sustainability radio program on radio 2SER consolidated its position as a thought leader, winning a finalist nomination at the prestigious New York Festival International Radio Program Awards. The show now has over 116,000 weekly listeners, over 5700 regular podcast subscribers, and has been downloaded more than 56,500 times.

[Website](#)

## Clean energy innovation

2017 was an exciting year for innovation in renewable energy. February saw the launch of EnergyLab, a startup accelerator program focused on developing renewable and advanced energy technology companies. This was followed in April with the opening of Climate Kic Australia. Both hosted by UTS. Climate Kic is part of an international network focused on public-private partnerships to transform the response to climate change, and accelerate the transition to renewable energy, electric vehicles, energy monitoring and other clean energy innovations. Together, both initiatives help position Sydney at the forefront of clean energy innovation.







## Coffee cups

Across Australia an estimated 1 billion take-away coffee cups are used each year. It's a big environmental problem because the cups fine plastic lining mean they are not recyclable and end up in landfill. At UTS we've made a start trying to tackle the problem. This year we launched a Bring Your Own (BYO) cup campaign to raise awareness of the issue with videos and screens around campus. We collaborated with campus cafés to offer discounts for BYO cups, and ran a competition with prizes to encourage staff and students to BYO cup. Activate cafes now only serve coffee in recyclable cups without plastic linings. UTS Housing issued all new residents with a re-usable cup and removed disposable cups from their coffee machines. Coffee is free but only with your own cup. The campaign will continue, with the ultimate aim of reducing the volume of single-use cups that go to landfill.

## Social Impact Framework

As public purpose institutions, universities have a responsibility to contribute to the community through research, education and practice. At UTS, the concept of social justice is key to our core purpose – driving social change in the world beyond the University.

This year the Equity and Diversity Unit released the UTS Social Impact Framework, the first of its kind in the tertiary education sector. The Framework helps demonstrate our social impact as a university, and guide our efforts to drive social change beyond UTS, to help create a more just and equitable society. In a world of increasing inequality, worsening pollution and environmental degradation, and conflicts over resources, the Social Impact Framework helps draw connections between social and environmental sustainability.

## External engagement

This year we continued our collaboration with other universities through the **Australasian Campuses Towards Sustainability (ACTS)**. Sustainability staff attended the annual ACTS conference in Melbourne and actively participate on the ACTS Executive Board and on the Learning in Future Environments (LiFE) index working group.

**UTS is a member of the City of Sydney Council's Better Buildings Partnership (BBP)**, a group of large building owners who collaborate to develop strategies to improve the sustainability performance of commercial buildings.

UTS Sustainability team members participate on the BBP Leadership Panel and the Environment and Waste Working groups.

**This year the UTS Hatchery, an incubator and accelerator program for young entrepreneurs**, collaborated with the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) to run a two day Future Cities 'hackathon'. Teams from UTS, WWF and corporate partners competed to develop innovative solutions to today's global sustainability challenges.

**Hackathons** were popular in 2017 with another event, the Stop Adani Hackathon, looking at alternatives to the proposed Adani coal mine in Central Queensland. The event attracted 40 staff, students and visitors who developed ideas to provide jobs and economic development to impacted rural communities in Central Queensland. Their solutions were as wide ranging as solar installations, algae farming, and an innovation hub focusing on rural skills and expertise.

**Media mentions** containing sustainability increased 8% compared to last year, social media engagement rose 10% and the number of people subscribing to our UTS Sustainability newsletter rose 30%. Throughout the year the University hosted 58 sustainability events attended by 1961 people. Our website was updated to incorporate the new UTS corporate branding.

# Governance

This year we released the UTS Sustainability Strategy 2017 – 2020, replacing the Sustainability Strategy 2012 – 2015. This is a high level document that outlines the University’s sustainability vision, goals, and the mechanisms to achieve those goals over the coming three years. The Strategy sits under the UTS Sustainability Policy and is the key strategic document through which the Sustainability Policy is implemented. Like the previous Strategy, the UTS Sustainability Strategy 2017 – 2020 addresses the University’s four key areas; teaching and learning, research, operations and community engagement. The new Strategy, located on Staff Connect, outlines planned initiatives, success indicators, and responsibilities for key staff across the organisation.

[Summary strategy](#)

[Detailed strategy](#)



# Contact us



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**It's been a  
fulfilling year  
and we aim  
to build on  
this success.**