HIGHER EDUCATION PARTICIPATION AND PARTNERSHIPS PROGRAM: SEVEN YEARS ON

Make tomorrow better.
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Every Australian should have the opportunity to build the best possible future for themselves, regardless of personal circumstances, and education is widely seen as the basis for nothing less. In fact, students from low socioeconomic status (SES) may not consider the possibility of higher education. However, many students from disadvantaged backgrounds have been widely documented as likely to reach the same level of attainment at school as their non-disadvantaged peers has been widely documented. The fact that many of these students do not have the necessary circumstances and the nature of their student body. University programs frequently include partnerships with local primary schools, secondary schools, vocational education and training providers, other universities, State and Territory governments, community groups, and other relevant stakeholders. In addition, there are a variety of programs to support current students in their transition into and through university. HEPPP: SEVEN YEARS ON

Under the HEPPP, Australia’s 37 public universities have designed equity programs in response to local community circumstances and the nature of their student body. University programs frequently include partnerships with local primary schools, secondary schools, vocational education and training providers, other universities, State and Territory governments, community groups, and other relevant stakeholders. In addition, there are a variety of programs to support current students in their transition into and through university. The HEPPP funded programs showcased in this publication illustrate the diversity of successful initiatives undertaken under the HEPPP umbrella. The case studies document the longevity, growth and diversification of several flagship outreach programs, with the scale and sophistication of many of these initiatives now covering all phase of the student lifecycle, notably pre-access/access; participation, and approach completion (attainment). Seven of the case studies have a major access component and are important illustrations of good practice. However, the lack of access-only strategies emphasizes the opportunity for increased investment in comprehensive and rigorous outreach initiatives. This demonstrates the traditional focus of HEPPP funded work which aims to increase student engagement with communities and the difficulties involved in documenting these successes in comprehensive and rigorous ways as well as the challenges in evaluating programs which show less measurable outcomes.

As a collection, the case studies underscore one of the key findings of the above mentioned Equity Fellowship for Higher Education Reform Package (2011-2014). This publication is a celebration of what has been achieved and a reminder of what remains to be done. The remaining five case studies highlight participation and transition out phase. This is not surprising given the longitudinal nature of this publication and the fairly recent shift in the success of efforts to create a more inclusive curriculum and pedagogical approaches to meet the needs of identified target groups, or provide a continuation of support from school to university.

The HEPPP: SEVEN YEARS ON

Over the last three decades, the Australian Government has developed targeted policy initiatives to address inequalities in educational outcomes for young people from equity groups. Under the Australian Government’s Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program (HEPPP), introduced in 2010, this comprehensive national equity program provides and Partnerships Program (HEPPP). Introduced in 2010, in educational outcomes for young people from six equity groups (pre-access or outreach), help them get into university (access) and provide support once they commence in their transition into and through university. The HEPPP funded programs showcased in this publication illustrate the diversity of successful initiatives undertaken under the HEPPP umbrella. The case studies document the longevity, growth and diversification of several flagship outreach programs, with the scale and sophistication of many of these initiatives now covering all phase of the student lifecycle, notably pre-access/access; participation, and approach completion (attainment). Seven of the case studies have a major access component and are important illustrations of good practice. However, the lack of access-only strategies emphasizes the opportunity for increased investment in comprehensive and rigorous outreach initiatives. This demonstrates the traditional focus of HEPPP funded work which aims to increase student engagement with communities and the difficulties involved in documenting these successes in comprehensive and rigorous ways as well as the challenges in evaluating programs which show less measurable outcomes.

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Equality is giving everyone a shoe. Equity is giving everyone a shoe that fits.

- Unknown

HEPPP: SEVEN YEARS ON

This case study publication is the third in the NCSEHE series, detailing the successful practices used by universities to meet the expectations of equity groups. Pre-access/ outreach initiatives are helping to get more university access and provide support once they commence in their transition into and through university. The HEPPP funded programs showcased in this publication illustrate the diversity of successful initiatives undertaken under the HEPPP umbrella. The case studies document the longevity, growth and diversification of several flagship outreach programs, with the scale and sophistication of many of these initiatives now covering all phase of the student lifecycle, notably pre-access/access; participation, and approach completion (attainment). Seven of the case studies have a major access component and are important illustrations of good practice. However, the lack of access-only strategies emphasizes the opportunity for increased investment in comprehensive and rigorous outreach initiatives. This demonstrates the traditional focus of HEPPP funded work which aims to increase student engagement with communities and the difficulties involved in documenting these successes in comprehensive and rigorous ways as well as the challenges in evaluating programs which show less measurable outcomes.

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ACU gate is a suite of 16 programs offered by Australian Catholic University (ACU) that open pathways, provide opportunities for people within ACU's low SES partner schools. Principals can recommend eligible students, and students can also self-nominate. The principal's letter of recommendation outlines the reason for the application, details students can also self-nominate. The principal's letter of recommendation outlines the reason for the application, details school assessment, and nominate three referees. ACU's Equity Pathways Officer interviews the candidate, their preferred faculty is notified and they may be invited to attend an interview. The candidate is notified of the interview results.

Both programs were created and implemented to assist in raising and access. Of these, the Principal's Recommendation Program (PRP) and Education Reconnect (ER) focus on opportunity to access a degree course at ACU. Similarly, ER provides opportunities for people without an Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) or who have not achieved an ATAR but have been out of the education system for a long period. Both programs offer opportunities for people within ACU's low SES partner schools. Principals can recommend eligible students, and students can also self-nominate. The principal's letter of recommendation outlines the reason for the application, details school assessment, and nominate three referees. ACU's Equity Pathways Officer interviews the candidate, their preferred faculty is notified and they may be invited to attend an interview. The candidate is notified of the interview results.

In contrast, ER targets people who have not achieved an ATAR, or have achieved an ATAR but have been out of the education system for a long period. Applicants submit a curriculum vitae, academic transcripts of any other courses completed, and three references. ACU's Equity Pathways Officer interviews the candidate, their preferred faculty is notified and the application is discussed. If it is considered that the candidate is capable enough, a direct entry offer is made.

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The PRP focuses on students who have come to education ‘after the fact’. ACU has in excess of 200 secondary partner schools in Australia that cater to these needs. The PRP seeks to offer opportunity to access a degree course at ACU. Similarly, ER provides opportunities for people without an Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) or who have not achieved an ATAR but have been out of the education system for a long period. Both programs offer opportunities for people within ACU's low SES partner schools. Principals can recommend eligible students, and students can also self-nominate. The principal's letter of recommendation outlines the reason for the application, details school assessment, and nominate three referees. ACU's Equity Pathways Officer interviews the candidate, their preferred faculty is notified and they may be invited to attend an interview. The candidate is notified of the interview results.

Susan now studies nursing at ACU and will graduate in 2017. She was supported through her first year of study by the Office of Student Success and the Equity Pathways Officer on campus. Ben is now engaged in his third year of study and moving confidently towards a fulfilling career in law. However, Ben's home life was challenging with the passing of one family member and the ill health of another. The family relied on Ben's time and energy, which impacted significantly on his emotional wellbeing, study commitments and ATAR results.

Don’t give up on education ... don’t think it is unattainable ... there are ways and means of getting around apparent hurdles ... (and) access resources at unis that are available as I did.

AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY
DESCRIPTION

The Whole of Community Engagement (WCE) initiative commenced in July 2014, led by the Office of the Pro-Vice-Chancellor Indigenous Leadership at Charles Darwin University (CDU). WCE aimed to shift away from static partnerships into higher education to support the aspiration and expectation of remote Indigenous communities in the Northern Territory. Using a place-based, Indigenous-led community development approach, the program developed a model which could be applied by agencies engaging with Indigenous communities. Strategy and action were informed by participatory action research and developmental evaluation approaches. Campus-based and remote Indigenous community-based staffs worked together to identify needs, priorities and initiatives from the ground up. A strategic project on Indigenous adult English language literacy and numeracy was put in place to respond to emerging Indigenous concerns.

Formal partnerships included:
- Yirrkala, Galiwin’ku, Maningrida, Gunbalanya, Tennant Creek and Yuendumu organisations and communities
- Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education
- Northern Territory Department of Education
- Northern Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance
- Australian Centre for Indigenous Knowledges and Education
- Aboriginal Research Practitioners’ Network (ARPNet), West Arnhem
- Research Training for the Environment and Livelihoods
- CDU Research Centre for Health and Wellbeing

OBJECTIVES

For Indigenous people living remotely, who often speak English as a second or third language, the road to higher education is an uneven and unpredictable journey. With middle childhood-assigned ages of learning, teaching and learning environments that differ dramatically, it is important to understand why people do not speak English as their primary language, and how other cultural, social and economic factors influence pathways into higher education.

The WCE model comprised more Indigenous than non-Indigenous staff, and local teams planned and implemented activities together in their community. Although the six implementation sites were remote and geographically dispersed, community-owned Indigenous language and cultural knowledge emerged over time. Local teams responded respectfully in each place, anticipating and delivering a diverse range of interest-driven research, strategies and activities. Artfully focused areas included youth leadership, facilitating school-based partnerships and engaging Indigenous students in higher education, establishing school-based programs, and focusing on the importance of early education.

OUTCOMES

The WCE model recalibrated power arrangements, amplified Indigenous voices, established Indigenous leadership and governance capacity and led to unique outcomes at each site.

WCE contributed to increased: cross-sectoral communication and coordination; interest in schooling and understanding of pathways into higher education; Indigenous researcher capacity and organization; and the development of Indigenous role models and mentoring programs. Research and strategies yielded positive results in engagement with Indigenous leadership and governance in remote education. The WCE model cultivated partnerships with northern Indigenous communities and included multiple timelines and goals.

WCE operated in a complex, unpredictable and challenging setting across the Northern Territory. Travel requirements were significant, and the environment and language and culture were unfamiliar. Indigenous people speak multiple languages (54 per cent do not speak English as their primary language), and have diverse cultural identities and strong cultural and community obligations. Establishing trusting relationships, meeting with all stakeholders, communicating the aims of the project and getting people interested and engaged took time. Sustainability was directly impacted by the short timeframe. Sustainable impacts relate strongly to:

- establishing strong relationships between and within education institutions and remote Indigenous communities;
- creating the development of a genuine belief about how to make education culturally and physically relevant and accessible as told through the Indigenous lived experience.

It is important that people on the mainstream side understand the right of Aboriginal people to have a powerful voice in decisions that affect them and their communities — as a principle.

– Community leader (Galiwin’ku)

Emerging perspectives were shared with each community, at meetings, workshops and participatory activities, including facilitators of, and barriers to, entry and participation; student mentoring and support; youth leadership; addressing school bullying; promotion and accessibility; link Indigenous perspectives and aspiration to design and delivery of higher education courses.

Progress was informed by an internal evaluator who fed into the team’s reflective cycle. The systems component of the WCE was focused primarily on a strategic project on Indigenous adult English language literacy and numeracy. WCE activities ceased at the end of September 2017.

SUSTAINABLE IMPACTS

Funded initially for three years and extended to five years, WCE developed a substantial number of strategic relationships and strategic collaboration for future partnerships between CDU, the six Indigenous communities and other organisations. The WCE also contributed to the furthering of long-term community partnerships and goals.

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- creating the development of a genuine belief about how to make education culturally and physically relevant and accessible as told through the Indigenous lived experience.
Starting with 10 school-partners in 2010, Charles Sturt University (CSU) developed Future Moves to address the underrepresentation of students from low SES areas in higher education. Future Moves has since expanded to become the university’s mainstream aspiration program, delivered across six campuses and partnering with over 80 primary and secondary schools in regional New South Wales and North-East Victoria. Future Moves’ activities encourage students to set on their aspirations in informed ways by taking their awareness of opportunities among them from a junior level and their understanding of how university might be part of their future, making school students more resilient.

OBJECTIVES

Future Moves aims to shift the views of school students and their parents to consider university as a realistic and achievable pathway to success for many pathways and assisting students to identify and overcome real or perceived barriers to tertiary education. On-campus events introduce students to university and seek to change students’ perceptions of university as an intimidating place for smart people, to a friendly environment accessible through many pathways.

In-school workshops cover a range of age-appropriate topics including: self-development; higher education awareness; study skills; courses and careers; time management; and pathways to university. These include: self-development; higher education awareness; study skills; courses and careers; time management; and pathways to university.

On-campus events introduce students to university and seek to change students’ perceptions of university as an intimidating place for smart people, to a friendly environment accessible through many pathways. Workshops and on-campus events build awareness of university, and encourage students to explore careers. Future Moves’ activities also help students identify appropriate pathways and assist students to identify and overcome real or perceived barriers to tertiary education.

Future Moves also engages with parents to encourage and support their understanding of tertiary education, and works collaboratively with partner schools to identify opportunities for teacher professional development. Since 2010, Future Moves has also run a suite of Indigenous-specific programs called Ganygamalanga, meaning ‘to excel’.

These include:

• Sky Stories — connecting Indigenous knowledge to science, engineering, technology and mathematics
• Strong Moves mentoring — a four-session on-campus intensive university experience, and Indigenous on-campus overnight camps.

OUTCOMES

Future Moves aims to impact students’ awareness of, and aspiration to, attend university, and on university enrolments. Future Moves partner schools. Interviews and surveys with teachers and parents show that they perceive Future Moves activities and events to have an ongoing impact that extends beyond actual activities and events.

Future Moves has built strong, responsive partnerships with partner schools and volunteer university student Leaders. Schools take an active role in the program, engaging with the program’s outcomes that nurture mutual understanding while university Leaders support program delivery on campuses and in classrooms, demonstrating their enthusiasm and knowledge of university life to the school students. Many Future Moves volunteer Leaders were participants and Future Moves whilst at school. Future Moves is embedded in the Office for Students’ HEPPP funded equity programs at CSU and in working collaboratively with universities and communities in its footprint to continue to deliver the program.
The Retention and Return to Study program was initiated in 2015 to identify the key factors that contribute to attrition and the supports required to improve the retention and success of disadvantaged students. The Retention and Return to Study program was initiated in 2015 to identify the key factors that contribute to attrition and the supports required to improve the retention and success of disadvantaged students. The findings from interviews confirm that the major factors contributing to high levels of student attrition are: personal health and family responsibilities; work–study balance; commitments to ensure that they were not overcommitting to unrealistic workload; inability to complete their studies, and what might have helped them to stay. The findings also pointed toward further recommendations toward the key factors that contribute to attrition and the supports required to improve the retention and success of disadvantaged students. The Retention and Return to Study program was initiated in 2015 to identify the key factors that contribute to attrition and the supports required to improve the retention and success of disadvantaged students. Program findings suggest several strategies universities can adopt to improve the retention and success of students from low SES backgrounds. These provided the evidence to support the following initiatives at CQUniversity:

• a pilot pre-commencement interview strategy trialled with commencing Bachelor of Nursing students in 2015, which demonstrated the benefits of early intervention to better prepare transitioning students for realistic pathways and work–life–study balance; and
• a current National Priorities Pool funded project extending the trials of the pre-commencement interview strategy across disciplinary fields and university contexts in 2017.

CQUniversity experiences a comprehensive regional university with 25 campuses across Australia. Fifty per cent of its domestic undergraduate students are from low SES backgrounds, and 62 per cent are rural and remote locations. With this proportion of disadvantaged students, CQUniversity experiences high student retention and attrition rates. The findings from interviews confirm that the major factors contributing to high levels of student attrition are: personal health and family responsibilities; work–study balance; commitments to ensure that they were not overcommitting to unrealistic workload; inability to complete their studies, and what might have helped them to stay. The findings also pointed toward further recommendations toward the key factors that contribute to attrition and the supports required to improve the retention and success of disadvantaged students.

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AHEAD

DESCRIPTION

The Curtin-Addressing Higher Education Access Disadvantage (AHEAD) program aims to provide pre-tertiary learning experiences and resources, in collaboration with school and community partners, that facilitate student belonging in low SES school and community groups to overcome the challenges to participation in higher education.

AHEAD works with over 80 SES Year 12 school and community groups in three distinct clusters: metro; regional; and remote. AHEAD also partners with organisations that share similar mandates to provide exemplary aspiration-focused learning experiences for people from low SES backgroun
ds, and to develop the aspirations and ability of pre-tertiary students. AHEAD collaborates with over 80 external school and community groups, as well as local governments, including: Role Models Support Group; Pre-Release Centre for Women; Women in Leadership Driving Australia; Follow the Dream (the Graham Farmer College); university aspiration camps; and AHEAD with Acacia Prison; and Future Footprints.

AHEAD collaborates with over 80 external school and community groups, all for low government, including: Role Models Support Group; Pre-Release Centre for Women; Women in Leadership Driving Australia; Follow the Dream (the Graham Farmer College); university aspiration camps; and AHEAD with Acacia Prison; and Future Footprints.

ACTIVITIES AND PROGRESS

AHEAD was formed in 2014 by bringing together the platforms Pre-Access and Transition Ahead. AHEAD focuses on creating and facilitating career development opportunities and resources, in collaboration with school and community groups, that foster unique learning experiences that build the potential of promising underrepresented students. The program harnesses aspiration, literacy, and facilities to create unique learning experiences that foster tertiary interest.

AHEAD has achieved significant growth in demand for its services and facilities to create unique learning experiences that foster tertiary interest.

OUTCOMES

AHEAD’s successful outcomes are represented by shifting perceptions, which enable it to engage with and support over 2,000 low SES school and community members a year. Since 2014, AHEAD has supported 1,674 students into university, and 11 prison members through the Curtin Offending program, of which 10 members transferred into university. AHEAD developments, as it is able to work closely with many different areas of the university to create comprehensive and innovative support mechanisms for potential higher education students from low SES backgrounds. Since 2012, 1,674 AHEAD students have applied for university.

SUSTAINABLE IMPACTS

AHEAD: funded primarily through the HEPPP. Its achievements have been recognised and celebrated, having recently won the Vice-Chancellor's Excellence Award for Professional Staff in 2018 for Engagement and Collaboration. AHEAD is situated within the Learning Futures directorate, as part of Curtin Learning and Teaching. Learning Futures develops innovative learning strategies, promotes talent development for high potential students and builds strategic partnerships. The innovation of AHEAD within learning Futures is fostering the development of new opportunities for AHEAD participants, including blended learning opportunities, processes for validating and rewarding AHEAD student achievement, and documenting evidence of learning through innovation, creativity, and entrepreneurship activities.

OBJECTIVES

AHEAD is an ongoing and enriching opportunity for new development and university readiness learning experiences, designed to raise aspirations and strengthen capability for higher education. The aims of increasing participation of underrepresented individuals and groups, AHEAD experiences are designed to increase confidence and capacity to make informed choices, expose people to new and enriched opportunities, and change perceptions and attitudes about higher education. AHEAD is a collaborative and innovative outreach hub that develops the potential of promising underrepresented higher education students. The program harnesses literacy, literacy, and facilities to foster unique learning experiences that foster tertiary interest.

AHEAD participants have grown from 1,000 in 2010 to over 4,000 in 2016. Over the years, AHEAD has developed engagement strategies to foster progressive learning experiences that build the knowledge and confidence that empowers students and community partners to enter higher education.

I have been a part of this program since Year 8. If I hadn’t been a part of this, I would not have believed university was a possible option for me.

– Year 10 student
ATTAINMENT
ACCESS/TRANSITION

The Inclusive Curriculum and Capacity Building (ICCB) program has enabled more than 25 projects to transform curriculum and develop a stronger university culture of inclusive teaching and learning over the past three years. The ICCB funded project has brought together academic and professional staff to explore and develop a range of initiatives, each identifying the partners themselves. Informed by Internal Design for Learning principles, each project has aimed to embed and scaffold inclusive pedagogy and practice, academic skills and horizons, and digital literacy in the curriculum at an course level.

Outcomes

An ongoing action research approach is used to ensure that achievements are highlighted, continuously improved and sustained into the future. Student statistics, survey and focus group data, focus groups and interviews are used to identify student impact, sustainable practices and models, and systemic issues. For example, the introduction to University Study retention and success outcomes for the 2015 and 2016 cohorts indicated a seven per cent greater retention rate for low SES, 10 per cent for Non-English Speaking Background, 9 per cent for students with disability, 6 per cent for gender identity and 6 per cent for Indigenous students.

The other successful practices and models have been similarly sustained. For example, the model in an accessible, engaging and collaborative way. The template has been trialled in two faculties, with further customisations underway for multiple units in the remaining faculties.

The ICCB project has changed practice and influenced the systems and the way that this university is doing its business. I think that is significant and we should not underestimate that achievement...I think that is what is being achieved, one course at a time.

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Some have attracted further funding. Evaluation suggests that the ICCB program has produced systemic changes. Faculty, teaching and learning planning documents are now taking explicit inclusive teaching and learning goals. Several recent program and course redesign documents have included intrinsic inclusive teaching and learning goals. As a result, six staff employed specifically for ICCB projects have been retained as permanent staff and continue to apply their knowledge of inclusive design and teaching. Many project partners have leveraged the ICCB unit to develop inclusive curricula in other units and courses.

SUSTAINABLE IMPACTS

The ICCB program grew out of several independent HERD funded projects undertaken by faculty and divisional teams beginning in 2011. Equity and Diversity combined these into a collaboration with faculty and professional staff to create the ICCB program. This has multiplied opportunities to share ideas, resources and evidence around inclusive teaching and learning, and has deepened relationships between academic and professional staff. A major effort is now underway to disseminate learning, models and lessons widely.

Equity and Diversity have just launched a comprehensive ‘Inclusive Teaching and Learning’ website for all Deakin students showing fully accessible web design and including inclusive teaching tips, exemplars, resources and discussions. This builds on existing successful university-wide online staff development modules.

The Faculty of Health has published its own Inclusive Learning Series to support its professional development programs.

More than 60 journal articles and conference presentations have been written/presented on ICCB initiatives/outcomes.
The Girls in ICT — Venus project wanted to engender aspirations with regard to careers in the often perceived male-dominated area of Computer and Security Sciences, and raise awareness of higher education opportunities in non-traditional female careers.

**OBJECTIVES**

The focus was to raise awareness of non-traditional pathways for students (those from low status and low socio-economic status) into universities, highlighting higher education and career opportunities in C&SS, and increase awareness and promote aspirations towards C&SS.

Currently, there are different perceptions in relation to working in C&SS. The project wanted to break down some of these barriers, engender aspirations with regard to careers in this often perceived male-dominated science area, and raise awareness of higher education opportunities in non-traditional female careers.

**ACTIVITIES AND PROGRESS**

Two interactive C&SS experience sessions were conducted with schools — the main objective being to provide information to students about studying C&SS. The first interactive session was focused on ‘engagement’. This involved female Year 9 and 10 students listening to their school’s perspectives on people who are studying or working within this field. The fun activities specifically focused on the analytical, creative, interpersonal and practical skillsets required to work in C&SS. The second interactive session was focused on ‘exposure’. This involved male Year 9 and 10 students learning about the different jobs and the different skills required to work in C&SS. The girls were female, who now understand and are more knowledgeable about courses and careers of C&SS. The focus was to showcase the presents of the various C&SS career paths, and therefore increase their knowledge.

**OUTCOMES**

By the end of 2016, over 200 Year 9 and 10 students from local secondary schools had taken part in the Girls in ICT — Venus project.

The Girls in ICT — Venus coordinator

*Girls in ICT — Venus coordinator*

*Girls in ICT — Venus coordinator*
The SFP focuses on using students’ successes to create a positive environment for student transition.
The River Journey was developed after discussion and consultation with educators and students about the benefit of higher education in achieving their career objectives and life goals. Students learn, from upper primary to senior secondary, to map their education and career futures using the metaphor of a winding river, recognising that life journeys do not always progress in a straight line.

The River Journey aims to encourage students to explore and imagine their education and career futures using the metaphor of a winding river, recognising that life journeys do not always progress in a straight line. This revealed a gap in understanding about what participation in higher education could benefit their students. The program is supported financially through HEPPP and was developed to help students remain motivated toward achieving their education/career goals.

Feedback received from school staff involved in the project suggests that students who participate are more engaged in their schooling, talk openly about opportunities to go to university and are generally more motivated for success. Students learn, from upper primary to senior secondary, to map their education and career futures using the metaphor of a winding river, recognising that life journeys do not always progress in a straight line.

The Flinders University River Journey program has enabled many disadvantaged students to learn about courses and campus experiences that enable students to experience university life as a university student and learn about courses and career pathways. Since 2012, the River Journey has assisted 9,969 students from low SES schools and education communities. This is particularly the case for engagements with upper primary to middle secondary students.

Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Schools</th>
<th>Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>2015</td>
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<td>23</td>
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<tr>
<td>2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5,603</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5,603</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5,603</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5,603</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since 2012, the River Journey has assisted 9,969 students from low SES backgrounds to learn more about careers and university participation through various interventions. Feedback received from school staff involved in the project suggests that students who participate are more engaged in their schooling, talk openly about opportunities to go to university and are generally more motivated for success. Students learn, from upper primary to senior secondary, to map their education and career futures using the metaphor of a winding river, recognising that life journeys do not always progress in a straight line.

The program is supported financially through HEPPP and was developed to help students remain motivated toward achieving their education/career goals.

The initial presentation aimed to trigger interest in higher education as a viable post-school option. It gives me more of an understanding about my career and how to go about getting there.

The River Journey commenced in 2012 with the participation of a single primary school in an Adelaide outer southern suburb involving 20 students. The majority of students involved in the pilot had limited knowledge of higher education as a viable post-school option. The pilot involved 20 students from one school. The River Journey has proven to be effective, as illustrated in data suggesting increased applications to Flinders University for 2015. A sample of eight participating secondary schools indicated increases between seven per cent and 10 per cent in applications to Flinders University for 2015.

Feedback received from school staff involved in the project suggests that students who participate are more engaged in their schooling, talk openly about opportunities to go to university and are generally more motivated for success. Students learn, from upper primary to senior secondary, to map their education and career futures using the metaphor of a winding river, recognising that life journeys do not always progress in a straight line.

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The River Journey has proven to be effective, as illustrated in data suggesting increased applications to Flinders University by students from the SES schools and education communities. This benefit is supported by educators and students as evident through increased participation in the program.

Currently the River Journey program relies on HEPPP funding allocations, adding to the comprehensive nature of the program through multiple year levels. Future incarnations of the program may include the voluntary participation of current university students sharing their ‘River Journey’ with prospective university students.

The Flinders University River Journey program has enabled many disadvantaged students to learn about courses and campus experiences that enable students to experience university life as a university student and learn about courses and career pathways. Since 2012, the River Journey has assisted 9,969 students from low SES backgrounds to learn more about careers and university participation through various interventions. Feedback received from school staff involved in the project suggests that students who participate are more engaged in their schooling, talk openly about opportunities to go to university and are generally more motivated for success.
Uni-Reach and Uni-Key are complementary programs supporting aspiration, access, participation and success. The Uni-Key and Uni-Reach program (were) absolutely sensational. It helped me transition from high school to uni and learn those real key aspects as to how to be a successful uni student.

The Uni-Key and Uni-Reach program (were) absolutely sensational. It helped me transition from high school to uni and learn those real key aspects as to how to be a successful uni student.

Uni-Reach is supported in both the university curricular and co-curricular space by collaborative partnerships in Learning and Teaching, Student Support and Development services, and community feedback also confirms program best practice. Stard and professional mentor network whose participation in the mentoring process and data also shows improved retention outcomes. The combination of academic and personal co-curricular activities increase learning confidence, create a sense of belonging and improve student success.

Uni-Reach's school and community partners in Griffith's South East Queensland and northern New South Wales catchment include:
- 23 Queensland primary schools
- 19 Queensland adult education centres
- 22 Queensland secondary schools
- 4 TAFE institutes in Queensland and New South Wales.
- 23 New South Wales primary schools
- 10 Queensland primary schools
- 22 New South Wales secondary schools
- 3 Queensland adult education centres
- 23 New South Wales primary schools
- 4 TAFE institutes in Queensland and New South Wales.

In 2016 Uni-Reach and Uni-Key marked 20 years, providing a chance to reflect on two decades of program evolution and success. Griffith has a strong commitment to these programs, and the HEPPP has enabled them to develop, expand and grow with the changing needs of prospective and current students. The strong evidence base has driven innovation and improvement in a climate where national funding has been reduced. Unprecedented registrations for Uni-Reach in 2017 means Griffith will continue to work with partners to develop innovative and engaging programs which reflect student needs.

The University of Queensland (Uni-Reach) and Griffith University (Uni-Key) are part of the University of Queensland Widening Participation Consortium. The program's scaffolded activities from Years 6 to 12 help prepare mentor career practitioners and equity specialists engaging with students, educators, and families to support aspirations and participation in university. The Uni-Reach and Uni-Key programs are underpinned by best evidence-based outcomes. A 2011 Australian Learning and Teaching Council award and continuous positive participant feedback also confirms program best practice.

The Uni-Reach and Uni-Key programs began in 1996 and part of a university model in which Griffith has had a strong focus on equity and social inclusion. In its first year, Uni-Reach and Uni-Key participants were successful in university. In the last five years 450 mentors have participated in Uni-Key, supporting around 1,730 students.

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James Cook University’s Get Into Uni program is a major initiative to work with targeted primary and secondary schools and community hubs to stimulate interest in, and awareness of, tertiary study.

GET INTO UNI

James Cook University's Get Into Uni program is a major initiative in regional and remote school and community engagement. It works with targeted primary and secondary schools and community hubs to stimulate interest in, and awareness of, tertiary study.

It aims to allocate potential barriers to access and participation faced by targeted low SES and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups. Get Into Uni delivers in-community and on-campus activities across a region that spans 100,000 km² of North and Far North Queensland, including isolated communities in the Torres Strait, Cape York Peninsula and the east coast.

OBJECTIVES

The program aims to ensure all students in identified low SES schools and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in identified low SES communities/shells, have access to tertiary awareness and preparation. The program supports JCU’s strategic intent through meaningful engagement that embraces the diversity of communities we serve, creating opportunities and enduring benefits for our region. The program is aligned to JCU’s Access, Participation and Success Plan in particular supporting the delivery of activities to address pre-entry and access barriers.

ACTIVITIES AND PROGRESS

Over time we have responded to the needs of our communities, learned from experience and adapted to changing resource parameters to evolve our programs offering. Currently the program features in-school (Study Explorer), and on-campus (Campus Explorer) engagements.

Campus Explorer: schedules visits to JCU’s Centre and Townsville campuses for groups of students from Year 9 to Year 10 and engage them in hands-on activities with academic staff, while providing insight into life as a university student. A team of student ambassadors known as the School Squad members who share authentic experiences and JCU officers to visit regional and remote schools and community hubs to stimulate interest in, and awareness of, tertiary study. In 2016, 22 per cent of this cohort identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and engage with tertiary education. In 2016, 22 per cent of this cohort identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and engaged with tertiary education. In 2016, 22 per cent of this cohort identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and engaged with tertiary education.

The program is HEPPP funded, however, collaboration with other sectors and other university initiatives, including a partnership with a local secondary school to create an annual Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) academy for students in Years 5 to 9, contributes to cost efficiency and greater reach.

SUSTAINABLE IMPACTS

Building sustainable relationships and delivering meaningful service over a geographic area twice the size of Victoria is a resource-intensive activity. In recent years, funding constraints have limited the scope of engagement and necessitated an adaptation of the delivery model. Solid relationships have been established with the target secondary schools and these will continue to be nurtured in the future while investing in building links with target primary schools to facilitate engagement with younger students, their parents and the community.

The program is funded by a number of government and non-government sources, including the Australian Research Council and the Queensland Department of Education.

OUTCOMES

During 2016, Study Explorer engaged 3,883 students from 29 participating schools while Campus Explorer attracted 3,149 students from 62 schools. 12 of these school groups travelled over 100 km to participate. Students report high levels of satisfaction with the program, particularly interaction with the School Squad ambassadors who share authentic experiences and describe their university journeys.

Wish to express big ego [thanks] to your team for visiting our school and supporting our students to explore higher education options. It was a very successful visit — your activities were very engaging and you have planted the seed with several students to seriously consider tertiary studies or otherwise at least seriously think about their interest, goals and futures.

• Community Education Champion

Meeting the needs of regional and remote schools by taking university to them has allowed Get Into Uni to influence many students who otherwise would not have the opportunity to engage with tertiary education. In 2016, 22 per cent of the cohort identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and we got over 80 per cent of them to identify tertiary studies. The impact of the program is best illustrated by student feedback, which indicates that in 2016, 73 per cent of students considered university an option prior to participating in the activities, however after participating in the program this increased to 81 per cent.

2016 university aspirations of program participants

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Pre-Program</th>
<th>Post-Program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tertiary Study</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Considered attending</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with Program</td>
<td>72%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exploration</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>73%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Awareness of Study</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>73%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Achievements</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>73%</td>
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<tr>
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<td>7%</td>
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SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS PROGRAM

DESCRIPTION
La Trobe University’s School Partnerships Program is designed to increase the number of students attending university from low SES backgrounds. The University collaborates with 32 low SES schools in metropolitan and regional Victoria to deliver a sequential framework of engagement activities that support the demystification of higher education and expand access to curriculum support, academic preparation, and awareness of university courses and future careers.

OBJECTIVES
La Trobe University campuses are situated in regions where several schools record relatively low transition rates of their students to higher education. The School Partnerships Program addresses this issue by providing students from 32 low SES schools with greater knowledge of higher education and related careers, inclusive through discipline-specific workshops; and increased learner confidence and capacity, allowing students to have more informed explorations and capabilities around post-secondary education.

ACTIVITIES AND PROGRESS
In 2011, the School Partnerships Program commenced with 15 low SES schools in regional and metropolitan areas. Since then, the program has expanded to 32 disadvantaged schools. In 2016 there were over 18,000 student attendances in the program.

Activities undertaken include curriculum-linked workshops or laboratories; university campus tours and engagement activities; and school-based presentations. Through carefully planned and delivered by La Trobe University’s campuses located in Melbourne, Berwick, Albury Wodonga, Shopper Street and Mildura, students participate in interdisciplinary, innovative, challenging and flexible workshops.

In 2016, over 300 events were conducted to stimulate student interest in the following disciplines:
- science
- technology
- engineering
- mathematics
- arts
- social sciences
- commerce

Post workshops have included media studios, videography, creative writing, printmaking, business, biology, chemistry, electronic engineering, information technology and physics. In response to initial evaluations, participating schools worked with the University to revise expectations of student performance, and to embed knowledge of the program across the entire school. Biannual evaluations, involving surveys of around 6,500 students and 750 staff across the participating schools, has enabled each school to benchmark their performance against other program schools and address specific issues of interest.

OUTCOMES
Evaluations have found improved post-secondary transition rates for students at participating schools. For example, from 2012-15, La Trobe University’s enrolments from School Partnerships Program schools increased by 38 per cent, compared to 18 per cent for comparator schools.

Evaluations have also identified a measurable increase in student confidence since the start of the School Partnerships Program. Students reported an improved understanding of the partnership scheme; increased parental support for university study; and were more likely to feel that university study was a good option for themselves and their peers.

With the support of the HEPPP, the School Partnerships Program is improving access for low SES students, to La Trobe’s increased university enrolments and the establishment of teachers that the program is contributing to positive change. The program has been regularly evaluated, and the comprehensive biennial surveys have enabled longitudinal data to be collected to inform program expansion and reform.

The program is also now being expanded to further educational sites. Following the University’s research into care leavers in higher education, the program now plans to extend outreach activities to alternative schools and other non-traditional learning sites.

The School Partnerships Program is fully HEPPP funded and is being prioritised as an integrated program within La Trobe University’s broader equity strategy.

SUSTAINABLE IMPACTS

The program is designed to improve post-secondary education outcomes of students from disadvantaged areas by facilitating a wide range of outreach activities.

- School Partnerships coordinator

Since 2011 the program has expanded to 32 disadvantaged schools in 2016 there were over 18,000 student attendances in the program.

- School Partnerships coordinator

16 per cent of students not considered university before, are now interested.

87 per cent of students felt that events had helped them decide about considering university.

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The LEAP program provides mechanisms to provide sustained, goal-directed support to students from refugee backgrounds for higher education. 

**OBJECTIVES**

There is very limited support for students from refugee backgrounds to make the transition to higher education. The LEAP program is developing specific strategies and programs to engage students from refugee backgrounds with the aim of increasing student motivation and self-confidence, and to increase their awareness of higher education possibilities.

**ACTIVITIES AND PROGRESS**

The LEAP program engages university student mentors, some of whom are from migrant or refugee backgrounds themselves, to mentor students from refugee backgrounds with whom they have a 1:1 mentoring relationship. The program comprises a flexible three-part structure that allows mentors to tailor the program to the individual needs of their mentees.

The LEAP program has partnerships with 10 schools across the Greater Western Sydney area since its inception in 2011. The program was set up in consultation with the NSW Department of Education, partner schools and with input from students from refugee backgrounds.

**OUTCOMES**

To date, 1,203 secondary school refugee students have benefited from participation in the program, with 86 students now in universities across Australia. From 2013–16 a mixed methods approach was used to evaluate the effectiveness of the LEAP program, encompassing three focus groups with 12 mentors in each and paper-based surveys. A student satisfaction survey was used to evaluate the effectiveness of the LEAP program, encompassing three focus groups with 12 mentors in each and paper-based surveys. A student satisfaction survey was used to evaluate the effectiveness of the LEAP program, encompassing three focus groups with 12 mentors in each and paper-based surveys.

**SUSTAINABLE IMPACT**

The LEAP program provides mechanisms to provide sustained, goal-directed support to students from refugee backgrounds for higher education. More importantly, the program contributes to the development of educational and social capital for students to develop their confidence, awareness, motivation and perception towards university, and to aid in the participation in higher education of students from refugee backgrounds.

**Education is not just about intensive studying. It is also about having fun, enjoying your time and contributing to your society.**

**- Mentor**

**- LEAP program coordinator**
ACCESS MONASH MENTORING

DESCRIPTION
The Access Monash Mentoring program was introduced in 2012 to make university study a reality for more young people from low SES communities. The program aims to provide professional support to inform students’ decision making and preparation for university and careers by matching them with highly engaged and successful Monash student mentors to work in a one-to-one mentoring relationship over the final two years of their schooling. The student-to-mentor connections help secondary students from low SES communities to bridge the gap from school to university and encourage them to view higher education as an obtainable goal.

The program is targeted at underrepresented schools and schools across the south-east of Melbourne and Gippsland regions. The Access Monash Mentoring partners with 46 secondary schools to prepare secondary students from low SES communities. The program aims to provide intensive support to inform students’ decision making and awareness of higher education as an achievable post-school option, and to link them with higher education providers. The two-way benefit ensures:

- Mentors are supported in their preparation for university and careers
- Mentors develop their leadership and employability skills and experience the value of giving back to the community

OBJECTIVES
- Help students gain awareness of higher education as a viable post-school option
- Support mentees in improving their understanding and enthusiasm for higher education and understanding of what is needed to succeed.
- Mentors draw on their own experiences to support mentees in improving their understanding and awareness of higher education as a viable post-school option, and to link them with higher education providers.

PROGRAM PARTNERS
- Access Monash Mentoring partners with 46 secondary schools across the south-east of Melbourne and Gippsland regions.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION
The program aims to help mentees explore and extend their interests and career and study options. Mentoring sessions and activities are designed to help mentees gain awareness of higher education as a viable post-school option, increase their understanding and enthusiasm for higher education and understanding of what is needed to succeed. Mentors draw on their own experiences to support mentees in improving their understanding and awareness of higher education as a viable post-school option, and to link them with higher education providers.

ACTIVITIES AND PROGRESS
- Mentoring sessions and activities are designed to help mentees gain awareness of higher education as a viable post-school option, increase their understanding and enthusiasm for higher education and understanding of what is needed to succeed.
- Mentors draw on their own experiences to support mentees in improving their understanding and awareness of higher education as a viable post-school option, and to link them with higher education providers.

Outcomes
Since 2012, Access Monash Mentoring has been successful in increasing the number of students from underrepresented communities continuing to higher education. The program has grown from 54 mentees in 2012 to 642 in 2017, with the number of mentors increasing from 75 to 343 in that time. 589 mentees have graduated from the program and Monash has been able to track the outcomes of 431. Of those contacted, 93 per cent went on to university, study, and four per cent undertook other forms of further study (TAFE, for example).

SUSTAINABLE IMPACTS
Monash University’s commitment to support the access and social mobility of students from low SES backgrounds is evidenced in its Widening Participation Strategy 2016–2020. The strategy prioritises mentoring of secondary students and pioneers high-impact engagement activities for Monash students.

Monash has ambitious plans to ensure disadvantaged students are not only supported in their transition to university, but throughout their degrees and into fulfilling careers. The strategy addresses the whole student lifecycle. We cycle, with plans to align the program from ‘mentoring for university transition’ to ‘mentoring for lifetime success’.

Monash has begun to recruit business and community leaders, including Monash alumni, who will provide targeted and structured individual and alumni mentoring to student leaders with a focus on industry knowledge, career planning and personal development. Extending this high performing structured alumni mentoring program is a way for these students to be supported in navigating the challenging transition from university to work.
MAP4U

DESCRIPTION

Murdoch’s Aspirations and Pathways for University (MAP4U) program supported schools and agencies to develop and implement a range of innovative programs designed to increase the participation in higher education of underrepresented students from the south-west corridor of Perth. MAP4U was conceived as applied research, with high accountability for schools in the region through mutually developed key performance indicators to monitor progress.

The MAP4U programs were:
1. Building Academic Aspirations and Achievement: Three programs were implemented using innovative methods to engage students in higher education. Developed programs included individual pathway plans, scholarships, parent and carer programs, and partnering with the Australian Indigenous Mentoring Experience.
2. Innovative Curriculum and Pedagogies: This supported aspirational curriculum and pedagogies to better engage and support students with university mentors and industry professionals that shared the same interests. Developed long term programs included the establishment of science and robotics clubs and English support.
3. School Within a School/Big Picture Academy: Students disconnected with existing curriculum accessed Big Picture Education programs that provided alternative models of empowering young people in their learning while linking to university preparation.
4. University Enabling Programs: These supported Year 12 students who aspired to study university but did not study ATAR (for direct entry). An after-school program supported schools and agencies to develop and implement a range of innovative programs designed to increase the participation in higher education of underrepresented students from the south-west corridor of Perth.

OBJECTIVES

The key project goal was to develop sustainable school-led programs to build aspirations in schools and learning links to university for schools in the region applying to university. The Compacts designated the level of program commitment to increase students’ performance indicators.

OUTCOMES

• A 20 per cent increase in the number of students from the region applying to university.
• Improved engagement with schools across the region to implement sustainable innovative programs, which encouraged students to aspire to university. Totaling 172 programs over the four years.
• Increased community engagement through the development of sustainable academic pathways for students. Increased university applications up to 2016, above and beyond the percentage of students completing ATAR pathway eligibility, was achieved through nurturing the aspirations of students via providing alternative pathways including initiatives such as the University Enabling programs, providing alternative pathways to higher education, such as TAFE Certificate IV.

Many MAP4U programs are now embedded within schools and curriculum. Robotics and STEM clubs continue to flourish, and robotics forms part of the curriculum. Individual pathway planning and academies have been incorporated within school structures. Murdoch University supported the University Enabling Program in 2011 and 2012 before continuing in subsequent years. Engagement between stakeholders continues with a university staff fulfilling roles on school boards, education departments, and training committees and development commissions. Deriving the value change, to provide opportunities for students from the region to study in higher education, continues.

SUSTAINABLE IMPACTS

No one in my family has been to university. I was also the first person to graduate from high school. [TLC110] drives me to take those baby steps and keep going. Degrees aren't everything. So I want to go for something that's going to be beneficial for me in the long run.

TLC110 student

Increased university applications up to 2016, above and beyond the percentage of students completing ATAR pathway eligibility, was achieved through nurturing the aspirations of students by providing alternative pathways including initiatives such as the University Enabling programs, providing alternative pathways to higher education, such as TAFE Certificate IV.

Percentage of total number of Year 12 students that obtained an ATAR versus percentage of total number that applied for university

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50%
0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50%
0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70%
0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

TLC110 student

Increasing the percentage of Year 12 students that study ATAR from the region means schools have developed a culture of higher attainment and challenging staff to build opportunities and deliver higher performance outcomes with more effective pedagogies.
Explore Uni (EU) is Queensland University of Technology (QUT)'s signature Widening Participation (WP) program. It is a holistic program of residential camps and an on-campus days immersing school students from the SES background across all Queensland schools from Year 6 to Year 12. It is designed to prepare these young people for tertiary study. EU is offered to schools with low rates of progression to tertiary study is a journey, not a single revelatory experience, and is informed by research on the crucial role of the pre-tertiary scaffolding for school-age low-income and Indigenous students. 

The program’s strong sustainability factors are now the role models, inspiring the next generation of low SES students by visiting their old schools as ambassadors. It is the power of partnerships that maximises the program’s effectiveness. The on-campus career development component has more recently been reinforced by in-school activities (in response to teachers’ feedback) to deepen and consolidate learnings. 

The pre-tertiary scaffolded journey for school-age low-income and Indigenous students demonstrates that the program debunks myths, particularly the myths that ‘people like me don’t go to university’ and ‘it’s too expensive’, and builds aspiration for post-school education. The program also benefits from faculty staff collaborations. Seventy engaging hands-on, ambassador-led, discipline-related activities have been developed, ranging from engineering to dance, from mock law trials to slam poetry, and dynamic curriculum-related workshops which bring future opportunities to life. 

EU has recently been reinforced by in-school activities (in response to teachers’ feedback) to deepen and consolidate learnings. These include the development of pre- and post-EU Career Conversation resources and on-school tertiary admissions and career sessions. The on-campus career development component has more recently been reinforced by in-school activities (in response to teachers’ feedback) to deepen and consolidate learnings. These include the development of pre- and post-EU Career Conversation resources and on-school tertiary admissions and career sessions.

OUTCOMES

Student and teacher feedback demonstrates that the program debunks myths, particularly the myths that ‘people like me don’t go to university’ and ‘it’s too expensive’, and builds aspiration for post-school study. Students and teachers consider that the program’s success arises from the opportunity to experience the campus first-hand, and the personal contact with student ambassador role models. Queensland Tertiary Admissions Centre (QTAC) applications data indicates that interest in tertiary education is being stimulated.

University applications from QUT target schools increased by 20 per cent between 2011 and 2016 (compared with a 15.8 per cent increase across all Queensland schools). In addition, 56.5 per cent of EU camp attendees made tertiary applications via QTAC.

SUSTAINABLE IMPACTS

It is the power of partnerships that maximises the program’s effectiveness. Over the last five years, trusting and respectful relationships have developed across QUT faculties and divisions, and with participating low SES schools. QUT staff have formed communities of practice based on shared areas. The program has evolved as a circuit of deepening school, student and university collaboration.

School staff consider the program has positively influenced school culture. It also appears to have a ripple effect with peers and family, as evident when the student quoted above concluded, “My brothers aged three and four tell me they are going to uni when they are older, just like me!”

Students who attended EU days and camps as school students and who were inspired by QUT ambassadors have come full circle and are now the role models, inspiring the next generation of low SES students by visiting their old schools as ambassadors. It is the power of partnerships that maximises the program’s effectiveness.

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OBJECTIVES
With the focus on providing students with a positive experience of university and Melbourne, opportunities for career exploration, and accessible information about application processes, I Belong endeavours to address many of the barriers to higher education that students from low SES backgrounds face.

Programs are designed to:
• enhance students’ knowledge of entry pathways to university, study, and career options and other opportunities
• improve students’ self-confidence
• increase students’ motivation for study
• increase or affirm students’ enthusiasm about current and future studies
• expand students’ study and career aspirations by addressing perceptions about the unreachability and unattainability of tertiary study

I Belong also has a strong focus on peer role modelling through the involvement of SNAP Champions, who are current RMIT students who studied at SNAP secondary schools.

ACTIVITIES AND PROGRESS
Middle years student undertake applied learning experiences drawing upon key industry partnerships and the opportunities available at an urban university of technology, design and enterprise. Education deficits, equity issues, career knowledge, and discipline exploration.

Senior years programs build on students’ discipline and career knowledge, with particular focus on equipping them to succeed in tertiary education. Programs include short, intense master classes in art and design, engineering, study skills, and mathematics and statistics.

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SUSTAINABLE IMPACTS
I Belong is currently funded through the HEPPP: enabling the university to build and deepen partnerships with schools and communities and to increase awareness of, and interest in, tertiary study among underrepresented students. Without HEPPP funding, the sustainability of I Belong programs is not yet resolved. In 2016, RMIT was successful in securing funding through the HEPPP National Priorities Pool to expand beyond I Belong’s existing model of on-campus, city-based engagement programs. RMIT will deliver targeted digital content and workshops that can be accessed by regional students from low SES backgrounds, parents and carers. These new resources will make it possible for regional students to engage with RMIT students, teaching staff and facilities, increase their understanding of university life, and develop study skills that will assist them should they choose to enroll in tertiary study.

YI, 2018
Southern Cross University’s Uni-Bound program supports the University’s commitment to improving access, participation and success of students from equity groups. Uni-Bound currently works with 17 secondary schools, three central schools and 19 primary schools in the Pittsworth, Toowoomba, rural and remote regions. Schools in these regions have high concentrations of low SES communities and high Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enrolments. There has been significant growth in the number of students participating in Uni-Bound with the broadening of our engagement to primary schools, engaging greater capacity building and partnership with rural regions of focus. Cohort-wide workshops and games and career education programs provide a connected learning framework with resources developed to support teachers, families and community. Uni-Bound’s outreach scope has expanded to include primary schools in addition to secondary schools, and now offers experiences for students in Years 5 to 9.

**OBJECTIVES**

Uni-Bound provides scaffolded, tailored programs that deliver inspiring educational experiences designed to:

- Improve imagination and creativity and encourage risk-taking.
- Promote knowledge and understanding of higher education and career options.
- Build confidence and motivation towards higher education.
- Improve readiness for higher education.
- Support teachers, families and community to assist students to reach their potential for higher education.

**ACTIVITIES AND PROGRESS**

Uni-Bound’s outreach scope has expanded to include primary schools in addition to secondary schools, and now offers experiences for students in Years 5 to 9.

- **Year 5: Dreaming About Your Future**
  - A special presentation on campus designed to inspire students to dream about their future careers and pathways. Students gain an understanding of university pathways, explore university career pathways through fun activities reflecting a range of academic disciplines. Identifying personal strengths and exploring teamwork and problem solving in the context of career pathways is a key focus.
- **Year 6: Believe in Your Potential**
  - Delivered in schools, students gain a greater understanding of university career pathways through fun activities reflecting a range of academic disciplines. Identifying personal strengths and exploring teamwork and problem solving in the context of career pathways is a key focus.
- **Year 7: Recipe for Success**
  - Delivered in schools, workshops designed to help students identify and develop skills such as resilience, positive peer culture, motivation to learn, goal setting and decision making.
- **Year 8: Thinking About Uni**
  - Delivered in schools, these workshops pose more detailed questions about why people choose to study at university. Delivered in schools as workshops designed to help students explore culture, motivation to learn, goal setting and decision making. Questions about why people choose to study at university are focused.
- **Year 9: Going to Uni**
  - An on-campus visit to one of three university campuses designed to inspire students to dream about their future careers and harness the power of their imaginations. Students get to experience the physical environment of the university and meet current SCU students.

**OUTCOMES**

Uni-Bound’s outreach has expanded to include primary schools in addition to secondary schools, and now offers experiences for students in Years 5 to 9.

- **UNI-BOUND**
  - [Uni-Bound provides] scaffolded, tailored programs that deliver inspiring and educational experiences.

**SUSTAINABLE IMPACTS**

- **An extremely positive experience for all students, a welcoming, supportive environment that engaged and inspired them to expand their interests.**
  - Primary school teacher

- **There has been significant growth in the number of students participating in Uni-Bound with the broadening of our engagement to primary schools, engaging greater capacity building and partnership with rural regions of focus.**
- **A special presentation on campus designed to inspire students to dream about their future careers and pathways.**
- **These are discussed and presented through the shared experiences of university students using media, interactive activities and games.**
  - University students

- **An on-campus visit to one of three university campuses designed to inspire students to dream about their future careers and harness the power of their imaginations.**
  - Uni-Bound coordinator

- **Greatly increased knowledge about course options and university pathways.**
  - Year 9 student

- **It opened my mind to university and gave me a wider understanding.**
  - Year 9 student

- **As a fully funded HEPPP program, there has been uncertainty in the year to year funding model. However, Uni-Bound has established a sustainable model of delivery and known minimum resource requirements, enabling a flexible and responsive approach to delivery.**
  - Uni-Bound has established a sustainable model of delivery and known minimum resource requirements, enabling a flexible and responsive approach to delivery. As funding for the future is secured for maintaining these established school partnerships and a continued commitment to low SES communities in our university footprint.**

- **Uni-Bound’s outreach has expanded to include primary schools in addition to secondary schools, and now offers experiences for students in Years 5 to 9.**
  - Year 9 student
The Strategies for Success (SFS) program at Swinburne was developed to address this situation, aiming to:

• facilitate students’ transition to university through a comprehensive one-day Program Engagement Unit

The program commenced in 2012 under the auspices of the University’s newly-formed Student Engagement unit. The program is open to all new and current students, with some targeting disadvantaged students. Participation has progressively increased over the three years since it began. The following table shows that, representing over 30 per cent of undergraduate intake.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Participation (%)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Semester 1</td>
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The program has become a key and ongoing component of Swinburne’s transition strategies. Development and delivery of the program has been largely HEPPP funded over the last three years. This funding has enabled the program to grow significantly, including being able to offer targeted faculty-specific versions of the program.

In 2016, students who attended SFS achieved significantly higher marks at the end of Semester 1 than those who did not attend. In Semester 2, there was a smaller, but still significant difference between students who had attended the initial SFS and those who had not. These results suggest that the program acts as a significant confidence booster for students, supporting adaptability to the demands and requirements of their studies. Significantly, the analysis also found this overall positive effect for these students falling into low SES categories.

One area for development is to maximise attendance of low SES and other disadvantaged students. Our evaluation processes have found that a factor preventing some students from participating has been work commitments, as the program is currently only provided on campus during the day, before semester commence. Continued funding will enable adaptation of the program for online delivery, thus ensuring expanded access to disadvantaged cohorts.

The main purpose of program performance has been students’ academic performance. The main measure of program performance has been students’ academic performance. The program commenced in 2012 under the auspices of The program has been to shift from a generic program to a faculty-based one — students in each of Swinburne’s three faculties attend separate, guideline programs. Program content is targeted to the specific study requirements of the broad areas of study: STEM, business, or social and health sciences/design.

Along with helping develop key academic and transition skills, the program is designed to be the first point of contact for support services including academic development, consultation services, language and academic skills support, student mentor orientation, and careers guidance. Participation has progressively increased over the three years the program has run. In Semester 1 2014, 1,290 students attended, representing over 30 per cent of the undergraduate intake.

The SFS program has been invaluable and will greatly impact my first year and beyond.

– Student

In 2016, students who attended SFS achieved significantly higher marks at the end of Semester 1 than those who did not attend. In Semester 2, there was a smaller, but still significant difference between students who had attended the initial SFS and those who had not. This suggests that the program acts as a significant confidence booster for students, supporting adaptability to the demands and requirements of their studies. Significantly, the analysis also found this overall positive effect for these students falling into low SES categories.

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The SFS program was developed in the context of growing academic performance, including for disadvantaged students. The program is designed to be the first point of contact for support services including academic development, consultation services, language and academic skills support, student mentor orientation, and careers guidance. Participation has progressively increased over the three years the program has run. In Semester 1 2014, 1,290 students attended, representing over 30 per cent of the undergraduate intake.

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PARTICIPATION

PRE-ACCESS/TRANSITION

OBJECTIVES

CUA offers superior educational experiences for young people through extra-curricular activities and recognises their achievements through the award of formal certificates and graduation ceremonies. CUA provides opportunities for children to explore new ideas, concepts and experiences via public or school-based ‘Learning Destinations’, engaging in a new way of learning that sits outside their normal school experience. CUA leverages local education and learning activity providers including libraries, sports clubs, museums, galleries and school clubs, reinforcing that learning is something that can happen in a wide range of places and contexts. This is especially valuable in families and communities with a history of disengagement with education.

Activities and Progress

Activities take place in Learning Destinations which have been validated and quality-assured through the CUA accredited ‘Planning for Learning’ program. Learning Destinations can range from a museum to a farm to an airport or even a business, provided the activity connects with clear learning outcomes and has credible links to future study opportunities.

Participants are issued with a ‘Passport to Learning’ to record their learning journey. For every hour of activity, they receive a stamp in their passport. When they reach the hours needed to graduate from CUA, they participate in formal graduation ceremonies at high-profile locations like The University of Adelaide’s Bonython Hall. In response to feedback from older participants but also for families and communities who are looking to graduate from CUA, they participate in formal graduation ceremonies at high-profile locations like The University of Adelaide’s Bonython Hall. In response to feedback from older students a ‘Passport to Volunteering’ was created which provides the scaffolding to develop self-efficacy, confidence and aspirations. There is a strong emphasis on exploration and experiential learning tools, with participants encouraged to reflect on their passions. CUA is at the forefront in establishing a love of learning and raising aspirations among young people who are interested in the diversification from education.

Partners

CUA currently partners with 117 schools and 137 Learning Destinations across Australia, including many local councils, sporting clubs, museums, galleries and school clubs, satisfying that learning is something that can happen in a wide range of places and contexts. This is especially valuable in families and communities with a history of disengagement with education.

SUSTAINABLE IMPACTS

CUA has also demonstrated the impact that the program has on students and their communities. A National Centre for Vocational Education Research report in 2016 noted that parents and teachers agreed that CUA was very positive for the school and community and that participants enjoyed school more, had improved engagement with learning.

CUA encourages children to explore new ideas, concepts and experiences via public or school-based ‘Learning Destinations’, engaging in a new way of learning that sits outside their normal school experience.

CUA coordinator

THE UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE

CHILDREN’S UNIVERSITY

DESCRIPTION

The University of Adelaide is the national license holder for the Children’s University program in Australia. Children’s University Australia (CUA) provides validated, extra-curricular learning opportunities for aged 7-14 years, and volunteering opportunities for 15-18 year olds.

CUA engages children in learning in the broadest sense, planning and developing learning opportunities for children across the University’s campus, partner universities, libraries and art galleries, and this continues to grow. Major partners: Bunnings, Questacon, Zoos SA, Bonython Hall, Hunter Medical Research Institute, Mobile Science Education.

Part of the effectiveness of CUA is that it disrupts normal classroom experience and provides out-of-school learning opportunities for young people who have broader interests and goals than those typically covered in the formal education system. CUA is best suited to groups of students who are from communities with a history of disengagement with education.

Program evaluation

Partner Group 2013 2014 2015
Partnerships 10 14 17
Partnerships 10 14 17

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CUA was very positive for the school and community. Participants enjoyed school more, had improved self-confidence and had greater engagement with learning.

CUA coordinator

CUA coordinator
The Stronger Smarter Schools Program (SSSP) is a University of Canberra (UC) partnership program designed to break down barriers to higher education for students from low SES, regional and remote, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background. It works with teachers and school leaders to build leadership capacity and enact transformational change within schools. Participating schools generally have an ongoing relationship with UC’s Rakkipath schools outreach programs. Apart from UC, by delivering professional development to teachers and other educational professionals, the SSSP complements the partnerships formed between schools and UC, and extends the capacity of schools to raise the aspirations and expectations of students from equity backgrounds.

**OUTCOMES**

Participants rated the program exceptionally, highly on both personal and professional measures. As a feature of the program, participants nominated a challenge to focus on in their workplace. These projects reflect the diversity of schools and the ranging challenges facing educators, and were broadly focused on four main areas:

1. Cultivating high-expectations classroom pedagogy and activities to introduce students to future-oriented goals, including university study.
2. Creating high-expectations and an excellence-oriented whole school culture.
3. Developing innovative approaches to engaging students and community members.
4. Cultivating high-expectations relationships with students and community members.

These projects ranged in scale and scope from altering individual classroom practices, to improving relationships with staff, to making changes to the physical school environment.

Workplace projects provided over 50 examples of activities designed to improve student engagement in the classroom, over 70 examples of activities focused on staff relationships, such as professional learning, building networks and cultural action plans, and 25 searches of opportunities targeted to implement within the school or community. Some projects focused on improving relationships between schools and their communities such as revitalising National Aboriginal and Islander Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) Week celebrations, and creating additional opportunities for meaningful community involvement in school programs.

**SUSTAINABLE IMPACTS**

The SSSP has already worked directly with 89 participants in 31 schools. A number of participants reported that the support, collegiality and communication among cohorts were a large source of encouragement, unlike that which has been experienced in other professional learning programs. Participants have organised visits to neighbouring schools and communities such as revitalising National Aboriginal and Islander Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) Week celebrations, and creating additional opportunities for meaningful community involvement in school programs. Many participants reported significant positive changes in their school, including reports of improved relationships between colleagues, within the classroom, and throughout the school as a whole.
DESCRIPTION
Strengthening Engagement and Achievement in Mathematics and Science (SEAMS) is a partnership program between Monash University and the University of Melbourne that began in 2014. The program grew from a shared commitment to increasing the participation of low SES and Indigenous students in science and maths-related degrees at university.

The universities collaborated to deliver a series of activities designed to improve students’ achievement and engagement with maths and science, and help them explore relevant study and career options. The program’s success in delivering educational and social program that has a long-term positive impact on young people’s educational outcomes in maths and science.

OBJECTIVES
• Strengthen students’ conceptual understanding of mathematics and science, and increase their fluency and confidence in maths and related degrees at university.
• Provide insight into key concepts the students will learn during their Victorian Certificate of Education studies. The activities are designed to strengthen students’ conceptual understanding of mathematics and science, and help them acquire university skills.

ACTIVITIES AND PROGRESS
SEAMS focuses on improving Year 11 and 12 students’ knowledge and skills in mathematical methods, chemistry and physics. Three-day camps are held in January and July, with one day spent at Monash and one day at the University of Melbourne. The program’s success in delivering educational and social program that has a long-term positive impact on young people’s educational outcomes in maths and science.

Outcomes
• 269 (98 per cent) received a university offer.
• 89.7 per cent are studying in STEM-related fields.
• 38 per cent are studying at Monash University and 21.6 per cent at the University of Melbourne.

SUSTAINABLE IMPACTS
The SEAMS program was fully HEPPP funded until December 2016. Due to the demonstrated success of the program, Monash University and the University of Melbourne have committed funding until December 2018. In 2017 the program introduced a SEAMS e-mentoring program for Year 12 students. Students have the opportunity to be paired with a tertiary student mentor to work in a one-on-one mentoring relationship throughout Year 12. The SEAMS program is also working in partnership with the John Monash Science School to develop an online program that can be accessed through the Emerging Scientists Utoro program into the future.

Field of post-secondary study of SEAMS 2014–16 graduates

University destinations of SEAMS 2014–16 graduates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Monash University</td>
<td>105</td>
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<tr>
<td>University of Melbourne</td>
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<td>89%</td>
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Other Victorian universities

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<td>La Trobe University</td>
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<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Swinburne University</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>RMIT University</td>
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<td>2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deakin University</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>University of Wollongong</td>
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<tr>
<td>University of South Australia</td>
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Monash University

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<tr>
<th>Field of post-secondary study</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>21.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
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<td>12.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biomedical Sciences/Health Sciences</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pharmacy/Pharmaceutical Sciences</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>22.7%</td>
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University of Melbourne

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<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>13%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biomedical Sciences/Health Sciences</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pharmacy/Pharmaceutical Sciences</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>19%</td>
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</table>

The key benefit is introducing students to concepts in advance of classroom experiences, allowing them to focus more effectively on what will help them learn. This increases students’ confidence and skill through preparing them for learning experiences.
The program was the first of its kind to provide care leavers with a range of tailored support services including subsidised on-campus accommodation, supervised work placement and access to academic support.

Outcomes:

New students participated in the program pilot in 2016, with seven successfully completing a full year of study. In 2017 the program welcomed nine new participants.

This program has given me confidence and also encouraged me to do some things out of my comfort zone which can be challenging but so worth it. Most of all it has been great to have that extra support at a time with so much change going on. I’ve also had the opportunity to participate in research discussions with people in the out-of-home-care community about why such a low percentage of people in care come to university and how this can be improved.

Live, Learn, Grow pilot participant

The program’s flexible structure allowed for several intakes throughout the year. To date, the program has also directly connected with almost 300 young people (both in and out of secondary school) plus 365 case workers and 137 carers.

Sustainable Impacts:

The program team are working to inform a research agenda that can effect broader systemic changes across policy and other universities. The program model has the potential to be adapted for other groups in the community who may also have lower transition rates into higher education. Live, Learn, Grow was established under a 2015 HEPPP National Priorities Pool grant and is now fully supported by the CEEHE and the UON with the intention of continuing the program annually.

The program provides free support for four years, from Year 10 to Year 13. It is designed to help young people in care or those aged 15-25 to commencing TAFE or university with up to four years of support.

Live, Learn, Grow is the first program to provide students from foster or residential care with a range of tailored support services as they transition into university.
The University of New England (UNE) Peer Learning Program, established in 2015, builds on our previous science Peer Assisted Study Sessions Program (HEPPP 2012–14). It offers a suite of pre-access and peer learning opportunities for all students. Peer learning is a robust, powerful method of learning; it is not a single undifferentiated educational strategy.

To capture the potential of peer learning for our diverse student population, the context, discipline and characteristics of students were considered in shaping the activities offered by each project:

- Peer Assisted Study Sessions (PASS): sciences and arts
- Peer-to-Peer Help: business and law
- Peer-Writing: multidisciplinary
- Peer-Writing Tutors: business and law
- Peer-to-Peer Help: business and law
- Peer-Writing Tutors: sciences and arts

The program develops self-efficacy, particularly for students who may have experienced educational disadvantage and those yet to develop the social and cultural capital associated with successful transition to university.

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As a mainstream program, the UNE Peer Learning Program provides suite, welcoming and informal socially constructed learning spaces that encourage participation by students in underrepresented groups. Learning communities provide encouragement to students:

- Peer Learning Program coordinator

The program is regularly evaluated through administrative data, by end of trimester survey, and comparative academic outcomes.

**SUSTAINABLE IMPACTS**

The success of the program has been acknowledged by students in their enthusiastic decision to fund the program through their Student and Services and Amenities Fee.

Further research has been funded through the HEPPP in 2017 to undertake ongoing development and inform the future direction of the program. Some initiatives in this area include centralisation of the program and the development of a web presence, making the program accessible to students studying online.
ASPIRE is a multifaceted outreach program working with 56 partner schools in educationally disadvantaged communities in Sydney and regional and remote NSW. The program provides age-appropriate educational activities within a scaffolded learning framework, both in school and at the University of New South Wales, to facilitate learning about university and the benefits of a university education. Activities address barriers made by students from low SES backgrounds in accessing university education. Integral to the program is the involvement of UNSW students as ASPIRE Ambassadors, acting as role models to the program students.

ASPIRE aims to:

• assist students to make informed decisions that are right for them for their progression to higher education.
• assist in raising the academic attainment of students.
• raise awareness and enable aspirations of students to access to university.

ASPIRE takes an innovative approach to addressing inequity of access to university for students from educationally disadvantaged backgrounds. It is multi-faceted and multi-dimensional, addressing significant barriers in a way relevant to the communities in which it works. The program is not a ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach including: embedding ASPIRE officers in context of the particular schools, for example the Homework Centre in Condobolin which operates two nights per week. It engages longitudinally with the same communities over a number of years. The whole school is engaged, with scaffolded activities in class for every age group from Kindergarten to Year 12. An big points students are brought on campus and into Sydney for residential experiences.

Since 2010, ASPIRE has engaged with over 45,000 students. Offer rates for students from ASPIRE’s schools to universities have increased by over 120 per cent from 2010–16. Data from this same period shows that a university offer is being made to students from ASPIRE schools that had very low offer rates prior to ASPIRE’s involvement in 2010. Schools that had a higher number of students receiving offers have significantly increased their offer rates by up to 90 per cent and in one case offers increased threefold.

Since 2010, ASPIRE has engaged with over 45,000 students. Offers to higher education institutions for students from ASPIRE partner schools from 2010 to 2016:

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<thead>
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The program raises aspirations and builds capacity of people from low SES backgrounds by developing activities in partnerships with primary, secondary and tertiary schools and thereby connect with the Partnerships component of the HEFF-Pre-Access/Transition (ASPIRE) was really invaluable for me as a student. I had a misconception that I needed to study medicine to be a medical researcher. But it was by talking to the ASPIRE Ambassadors that I learned I could do a science degree.

– Student from ASPIRE partner school

There were events where we got to go to the university and explore the campus, and see what students and researchers do on a daily basis.

– Student from ASPIRE partner school

SUSTAINABLE IMPACTS

ASPIRE is a multifaceted, longitudinal approach working with the same group of schools over a number of years has enabled the program to:

• Build strong and lasting relationships within communities.
• Engage multiple times with students.
• Ensure that the workshops and interactions are tailored to address barriers and provide students with targeted information to make informed decisions about their future.
• Engage longitudinally with the same communities over a number of years has enabled the program to:

The program to:

• assist students to make informed decisions that are right for them for their progression to higher education.

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DESCRIPTION
The University of Queensland’s (UQ) Young Achievers Program (UQYAP) supports the tertiary study and career aspirations of motivated secondary school students from low-income families who might not otherwise have access to university. The program nurtures and develops the educational ambitions of these students through a combination of on-campus and off-campus experiences, information on university study options, pathways and application processes; opportunities for personal, spiritual and financial assistance in the form of bursaries and scholarships. The program operates in state secondary schools in Ipswich, Logan, the Lockyer Valley, Toowoomba and the Darling Downs, Wide Bay and Central Queensland.

OBJECTIVES
UQYAP aims to:
• raise awareness and interest in tertiary education within educationally disadvantaged communities
• increase the number of students from low-income families enrolling in, and graduating from, tertiary study
• develop role models for students inside and outside the university
• assist lower SES students who may not have access to tertiary studies

OUTCOMES
Success of the program is measured through:
• the number of participants who successfully complete Years 11 and 12
• active engagement of participants (and their families) in all program events and activities
• feedback from survey, reflection workshops and interviews (with participants, parents/guardians, mentors and school staff)
• the proportion of participants who apply, receive and accept an offer at a university
• UQ completion and graduations

The impact this program makes on the lives of the mentors is incredible. It has driven students to reach heights they ever thought imaginable.

– UQYAP Mentor

ACTIVITIES AND PROGRESS
The program was established in 2009 with financial support from university donors to assist with scholarships and bursaries. HEPPP funding covers all operational costs, including staffing, mentor training and development, residential camps, publications and program tracking.

In 2016, 19 former Young Achievers joined the UQYAP Student Mentor Team, giving their time to support Year 11 and Year 12 participants, often from their own schools. Almost 850 Young Achievers have benefitted from the program, with eight cohorts of Young Achievers completing the in-school component of the program to date. As the ninth cohort of students enters the program in 2017, an increasing number of earlier Young Achievers are graduating from university. Since the first cohort of students commenced at UQ in 2012, the total number of Young Achievers who have graduated has now reached 50.

SUCCESSFUL PATHWAYS
One hundred per cent of the eighth cohort submitted a QTAC application; 99 per cent of these students were awarded and accepted a tertiary offer.

Outcomes indicate that: Young Achievers extended their knowledge about university pathways, study options and application processes, the program contributes to building student confidence and helps students through the critical Year 12 decision-making process, the program facilitates Young Achievers’ access to tertiary study, family stress is eased by the financial assistance provided, as well as the support network of mentors, other Young Achievers and program staff.

The focus of further program development is based upon embedding the academic and emotional support systems in tertiary study; in particular, peer information sharing and considering or persisting with the goal of tertiary study.

SUSTAINABLE IMPACTS
A strong working model and solid student pipeline is in place and Young Achievers are serving as key role models within their schools, families and communities. Outcomes and feedback indicate that the UQ Young Achievers Program is helping to raise educational aspirations of students from low-income families.

The University of Queensland
A UQYAP coordinator
UQ is committed to the long-term sustainability of this program and the benefits it will bring, not only to participants, but also to their families, schools and communities.

PRE-ACCESS
PARTICIPATION
ACCOMPLISHED TRANSITION
YOUNG ACHIEVERS
2009
2017
2009
2017
he number of participants who successfully complete Years 11 and 12, and helps students through the critical Year 12 decision-making process.

The program facilitates Young Achievers’ access to tertiary study.

Family stress is eased by the financial assistance provided, as well as the support network of mentors, other Young Achievers and program staff.

We continue to seek regular feedback from Young Achievers and their families, mentors and secondary school staff, to inform the future development of the program.

School staff reported observable effects from program involvement within schools, in particular, peer information sharing and encouragement about university and considering or persisting with the goal of tertiary study.

Stakeholders also reported the benefit of information provision via multiple channels, and support during “critical times”, such as when submitting tertiary applications.
UNISA CONNECT

DESCRIPTION
University of South Australia/UniSA Connect curriculum enrichment programs involve over 8,000 senior secondary students annually, enhancing their STEM skills. The programs inform further STEM study, educational attainment and understanding of STEM career pathways.

UniSA Connect’s strong equity focus targets students that historically have been disengaged with STEM, such as girls and indigenous students, and fosters consultancy and collaborative school partnerships across the low SES areas of Adelaide and regional and remote South Australia.

Recent:
• University of South Australia
• Division of Information Technology, Engineering and the Environment
• Division of Health Sciences
• Division of Education, Arts and Social Sciences
• Over 100 secondary schools
• Port Adelaide Football Club
• South Australian Aboriginal Sports Training Academy
• The Smith Family.

OBJECTIVES
UniSA Connect programs address the decline in secondary school students—particularly those from the SES backgrounds—studying STEM subjects. Inquiry-based learning focuses on engaging students with the excitement of science and mathematics learning.

A Career Awareness program links students’ learning with relevant secondary subjects and engages students to achieve their goals, make informed decisions and pursue STEM learning and career options.

ACTIVITIES AND PROGRESS
UniSA Connect programs are often designed in partnership with secondary schools to inspire and engage students in STEM study and to integrate with, enhance and deepen concept knowledge of STEM learning.

Growing from a few two-hour programs, the range of programs available to secondary schools has expanded to full-day programs, including:
• STEM Enrichment Programs, immersing students in deep STEM learning, while providing authentic learning links to the Australian Curriculum, Reporting and Assessment Authority and South Australia Certificate in Education (SACE) curriculum
• A Career Awareness program links students’ learning with relevant secondary subjects and engages students to achieve their goals, make informed decisions and pursue STEM learning and career options.

OEUVRE
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• A Career Awareness program links students’ learning with relevant secondary subjects and engages students to achieve their goals, make informed decisions and pursue STEM learning and career options.

SUSTAINABLE IMPACTS
HEPPP funding has provided the impetus for UniSA Connect to build capacity within low SES school communities. University funding supplements the HEPPP funds, enabling UniSA Connect programs to go well beyond experience programs and ‘taster’ days that target individuals as potential students.

Our whole cohort model will continue to develop sustainable collaborative partnerships and, to borrow from Behrendt et al., "unlock capacity and empower children".

I have seen Year 9 students involved in Connect programs reach Year 12 this year. Connect has been an important contributor to an increase in the number of students studying STEM subjects in Year 12.

– Participating school principal

An analysis of nine metropolitan secondary schools involved in UniSA Connect since 2012 showed a 31 per cent increase in acceptances of offers to UniSA, and a 19 per cent increase in student first preferences.

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Growing from a few two-hour programs, the range of programs available to secondary schools has expanded to full-day programs, including:
• STEM Enrichment Programs, immersing students in deep STEM learning, while providing authentic learning links to the Australian Curriculum, Reporting and Assessment Authority and South Australia Certificate in Education (SACE) curriculum

The consultative model of program development, review and refinement ensures programs are responsive to client needs and that ownership is shared. Issues such as low student achievement or engagement are framed as challenges that can be addressed through the reform of curriculum and pedagogy, rather than remediating individual student deficits of learning capacity or interest in education.

OUTCOMES
UniSA Connect programs, commenced in 2011, with six schools and 650 students engaged. With the impact of HEPPP funds these numbers have increased. In 2016, 101 schools statewide were engaged, and 8,700 students attended Connect programs. Growth has resulted from

• STEM Student Networks and STEM Girls, enabling like-minded students to learn together
• Career Awareness Programs linked to the SACE Personal Learning Plan subject
• STEM School and Cluster Programs, meeting the needs of each school’s STEM strategy by linking to their STEM curriculum improvement agenda
• STEM Teacher Professional Learning Programs
• STEM Innovation Experience: promoting STEM and career pathways in the community.

University of South Australia
MAKING CAREER CHOICES

DESCRIPTION

The University of Southern Queensland (USQ) Making Career Choices program works collaboratively with individuals, schools and communities across the southern and western regions of Queensland. Using career and community development frameworks of practice, this outreach service delivers a range of tailored supports to secondary school and TAFE students, students, parents, communities, organisations and their stakeholders in order to build career decision-making skills which may inform future study choices, develop or enhance awareness and understanding of pathways into higher education, and, for some regional and remote students, provide a unique university experience through participation in its annual Beyond Year 10 camps.

OBJECTIVES

- Making Career Choices coordinator

ACTIVITIES AND PROGRESS

Making Career Choices is the current iteration of USQ’s HEPPP funded career outreach initiative which began in 2013 with the Choices and Opening Doors programs. It is increasingly a vehicle for engaging secondary school-aged youth with careers from regional and remote communities, which allow participants to move beyond the geographical footprint of their home base to locations far from home. Yet, we know this project has already had a lasting effect for many. The positive relationships developed, the professional development opportunities facilitated and the knowledge of pathways to higher education gained by thousands of project participants will have a sustained impact reaching beyond the horizons of project participants and the professional development of their teachers.

OUTCOMES

Since 2014, USQ’s career development outreach activities have delivered 857 career development workshops, seminars, expos and campus experiences, and 363 individual career counselling sessions, with a total of 10,172 student participants (to 31 May 2017). In 2016, Making Career Choices successfully demonstrated it had met the objectives of increasing aspirations and knowledge about pathways to higher education through the combination of career and community development services which take the form of individual and small group career and community development experiences.

SUSTAINABLE IMPACTS

The knowledge of pathways to higher education gained by thousands of project participants will have a sustained impact.

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SUSTAINABLE IMPACTS

The knowledge of pathways to higher education gained by thousands of project participants will have a sustained impact.
DESCRIPTION

The Pathways to Success program aimed to increase participation in higher education for Aboriginal and low SES students through initiatives enabling future students, families and communities to engage with career possibilities aligned with Tasmania’s industries of the future, in advanced manufacturing, food, health and tourism.

The program delivered 83 cultural and regional initiatives, partnered with 55 Tasmanian schools and 134 industry/community partners and involved the participation of 8,566 Tasmanian students and adult learners. These were drawn from regions which included over 83 per cent of Tasmania’s disadvantaged circumstances and 87 per cent of Indigenous Tasmanians.

OBJECTIVES

The Pathways to Success program aimed to:

• improve 18 aspirations and increase understanding of the value of higher education
• increase participation in higher education through activities with schools and partnerships, to provide smooth transitions to further education and career options
• increase participation in higher education for Aboriginal and low SES

ACTIVITIES AND PROGRESS

The program offered a suite of activities that included work in four broad program areas. What’s After High School, links to all jobs; Skills for Professionals, and the TasDPE/OMA awareness program.

Activities offered covered events linked to the four industry clusters and areas included: Tech Sense; Harbouring Careers; Farm to Feast; Healthy Future; Food, Health and Future Tourism; Industry Tours; Career Conversations; Designed by Me; Creating My Career; Cruise into a Career, and 24 Carrot Jobs. The various program foci and activities offered were guided by industry and education partners.

OUTCOMES

A new Schools Engagement Strategy has been approved following extensive consultation with internal and external stakeholders. The strategy builds on learnings from Pathways to Success and the development of coordinated aspiration, raising awareness and transition programs and initiatives modelled on successful partnerships and ongoing initiatives of Pathways to Success. Project outcomes, transition programs and initiatives modelled on successful partnerships and ongoing initiatives of Pathways to Success. Project outcomes, transition programs and initiatives modelled on successful partnerships and ongoing initiatives of Pathways to Success.

A significant outcome of this program was the need to continue involvement in, and development of, aspiration informing and transition programs and initiatives modelled on successful programs within Pathways to Success. Project outcomes, transition programs and initiatives of Pathways to Success are ongoing.”
The University of Technology Sydney (UTS) acknowledges Participation Strategy as a whole-of-university approach to increasing the number of students from underrepresented equity groups accessing university. In particular, students from low SES backgrounds and Indigenous students. The UTS U@Uni program is a key component of the strategy, focusing on outreach to schools and communities.

The program includes four-week summer schools and shorter workshops on campus, school-based tutorials delivered by UTS students, and teacher professional learning and networking involving UTS academics. This integrated set of evidence-based activities aims to holistically and responsively address the needs of target students in their secondary school years.

Partners:
- Department of Education NSW and 20 south-western Sydney high schools
- The Smith Family, Public Education Foundation, NSW Department of Education NSW and 20 south-western TAFEs and communities.
- Industry partners including: Cisco Systems Australia; Google Australia; and the Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

The program aims to encourage student aspiration for university study, and support academic achievement well before the point of enrolment, through an integrated suite of activities developed in partnership with targeted schools, UTS academics, and teacher professional learning and networking involving UTS academics. This integrated set of evidence-based activities aims to holistically and responsively address the needs of target students in their secondary school years.

Partners:
- Department of Education NSW and 20 south-western Sydney high schools
- The Smith Family, Public Education Foundation, NSW
- Industry partners including: Cisco Systems Australia; Google Australia; and the Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

The current U@Uni program includes four strands of activities:
- **Summer School:** A two-week on-campus learning experience in which students take part in one of six summer schools in the areas of design, media and communications, business, science, engineering and information technology, and health.
- **HSC Tutorial Scheme:** School-based tutorial sessions delivered by UTS students to assist Year 11 and 12 students.
- **On-campus workshops:** Hand-on, interactive experiences working with UTS academics, students and resources as well as industry experts for Years 10, 11 and 12.
- **Teacher professional learning:** Builds teacher capacity and develops a shared vision of student success and school-UTS collaboration.

**ACADEMIC IMPACT**

- **Percentage of students who reported:**
  - increased confidence that they will ‘fit in’ at university (80%)
  - greater awareness of what university has to offer (80%)
  - increased motivation to study (70%)
  - increased awareness of career pathways and university courses (60%)
  - increased engagement in school (40%)
  - improved assessment marks and grades (20%)
  - greater confidence in their academic abilities (20%)
  - increased understanding of what uni life is like (10%)
  - that they are better prepared for university (10%)

**OUTCOMES**

Program impact is measured in the form of student and teacher surveys, interviews, focus groups, and informal feedback. Students are surveyed before participating in a U@Uni activity, on exiting the program, and on exiting the program.

To strengthen the focus on social justice, UTS is developing a Social Impact Framework to demonstrate its current collective impact and to guide future sustainability. UTS’s Widening Participation Strategy is a crucial component of that framework, with the U@Uni program a key intervention supporting the both wider participation outcomes and broader university aims.

In the foreseeable future U@Uni will continue to focus on south-eastern Sydney, while expanding to support UTS’s Social Impact Framework by also engaging with the schools and communities within the UTS local precinct.
Explore is a sustainable program for building career aspirations in primary schools, with a strong emphasis on early intervention and continuing engagement.

Explore coordinator

DESIGN

The University of the Sunshine Coast (USC) Explore program offers a creative approach to developing children’s career aspirations during their upper primary years to improve their understanding and awareness of higher education as a viable post-school option.

The program offers a scaffolded suite of online lessons for Years 4, 5 and 6, which are based on the themes of adventure and discovery. Students are invited to take a journey to a deserted island and use their imagination to build their ideal community.

In doing so, they develop awareness of their own skills and interests while discovering which skills are necessary for a range of different jobs.

Students are invited to take a journey to a deserted island and use their imagination to build their ideal community.

OBJECTIVES

USC has a long-term commitment to the delivery of aspiration building programs within the community. Between 2011 and 2016, USC delivered several awareness building career development programs targeting primary students. These included the USC Smart Steps program for Year 4 and the USC MyTED program for Years 5 and 6. Both comprised in-class lessons with an extensive expo. A review in 2015 identified that these programs had demonstrated a range of different jobs.

Given that these programs had demonstrated a range of different job pathways, USC developed the Explore program to ensure continuity and long-term engagement while offering an integrated and multi-layered approach.

The program was fully HEPPP funded and is available online, providing schools and other institutions with a suite of lessons for Years 4, 5 and 6, online teaching resources and a model for delivering the on-campus events in a way that provides the opportunity for the package to be embedded within other institutions’ footprints.

Due to the accessibility of the online lesson plans and resources, Explore is a cost-effective sustainable package that will lend itself to further development of a secondary school program to ensure continuity and long-term engagement with low SES communities.

USC is committed to long-term engagement when delivering outreach programs and is exploring future opportunities to collaborate with school staff, students and parents to develop the resources, focusing on an interactive approach and the possible development of an app linked to the package.

SUSTAINABLE IMPACTS

The program is fully HEPPP funded and is available online, providing schools and other institutions with a suite of lessons for Years 4, 5 and 6, online teaching resources and a model for delivering the on-campus events in a way that provides the opportunity for the package to be embedded within other institutions’ footprints.

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Great for students to link careers with strengths and weaknesses, to recognise skills needed and develop these.

OUTCOMES

Preliminary findings from the Explore pilot indicate it successfully engaged students and encouraged them to consider a range of career pathways.

Over the last three years:

- 2015: 16 schools and 4,000 students reached via Smart Steps in the Gympie region.
- 2016: 21 schools and 1,000 students reached via Smart Steps in the Gympie, Wide Bay and Sunshine Coast regions.
- 2017: Development of the scaffolded online career suite, Explore.

The lessons were piloted in a participating school to ensure they were effective and engaging for the students prior to the Explore website being launched in early 2017.

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- 2016: 21 schools and 1,000 students reached via Smart Steps in the Gympie, Wide Bay and Sunshine Coast regions.
- 2017: Development of the scaffolded online career suite, Explore.
All reasonable costs associated with attending Fairway UWA events are covered by the program, ensuring the additional support remains accessible to students.

**ACTIVITIES AND PROGRESS**

In 2012, the Fairway UWA program commenced with 42 students across 16 schools. In 2013, the program expanded to accept 97 metropolitan and regional students. Currently, the program supports over 100 Year 12 students each year. The University of Western Australia (UWA) has an integrated suite of equity outreach programs ranging from broad-based, early intervention outreach programs and access pathways to more intensive, targeted individual support programs.

Fairway UWA is an alternative entry pathway to UWA for students completing Year 12 under difficult circumstances. The program provides multifaceted support responsive to the individual and their attaining their higher education goals. The program offers more intensive, targeted individual support programs.

**DESCRIPTION**

The University of Western Australia (UWA) has an integrated suite of equity outreach programs ranging from broad-based, early intervention outreach programs and access pathways to more intensive, targeted individual support programs. Fairway UWA is an alternative entry pathway to UWA for students completing Year 12 under difficult circumstances. The program offers more intensive, targeted individual support programs.

Fairway UWA is an alternative entry pathway to UWA for students completing Year 12 under difficult circumstances. The program offers more intensive, targeted individual support programs.

**OBJECTIVES**

Fairway UWA aims to build both the academic capacity and motivation of students facing significant challenges in attaining their higher education goals. The program provides multifaceted support responsive to the individual and their circumstances through their journey from Year 11 to Year 12 and beyond.

**OUTCOMES**

Since the end of 2012, 143 Fairway UWA students have received offers from UWA. 133 (94% from all universities) have accepted offers and are currently enrolled at UWA. These students have achieved a Weighted Average Mark of 70 or higher. This success rate is significantly higher than the 57% success rate for metropolitan Year 12 students and the program supports over 100 Year 12 students each year.

**SUSTAINABLE IMPACTS**

Fairway UWA is making a real difference in improving access and success for disadvantaged students, evidenced by increased university enrolments for low SES students, positive retention data and the endorsement of parents and teachers that Fairway UWA is contributing to long-term positive change.

With the support of HEPPP funding, Fairway UWA is now positioned as an integrated program within the broader equity outreach strategy of UWA.

Degradation of collaboration within the institution, its alumni, and the larger university community will underpin the sustainability and continued success of this program, building upon available funding to continue delivering positive outcomes.
IN2UNI

DESCRIPTION

The University of Wollongong (UOW) offers a number of outreach activities to raise the aspirations, attainment, awareness and access to higher education for individuals from underrepresented backgrounds. The In2Uni program is one such activity, which fosters engagement with students from Years 6-12 in UOW’s communities with high representation of low SES students through campus visits, study skills workshops, pre-university classes and a university preparation program.

OBJECTIVES

In2Uni aims to foster and develop collaborative partnerships that:

- connect positively with individuals from underrepresented backgrounds and inspire students to reach higher educational goals;
- work collaboratively with stakeholders to develop programs that engage individuals from underrepresented backgrounds and provide tangible bridges to access higher education;
- increase the number of students from low SES, Indigenous and rural/rural remote backgrounds accessing higher education at UOW’s local campuses.

ACTIVITIES AND PROGRESS

UOW has a long history of undertaking school outreach activities in the local community. In 2010, the HEPPP provided a vehicle to establish an institution-wide approach to school liaison, and the In2Uni Program was launched with the primary and secondary schools and the primary school in the region. In2Uni is underpinned by a research-driven learner progression framework and is benchmarked against the Design and Evaluation Matrix for Outreach. Since 2011, In2Uni has expanded to include over 80 primary schools and 11 secondary schools in 2017, engaging with over 15,000 students across a 430 km coastline of southern NSW.

The In2Uni program commenced on campus visits for Year 6 and Year 7 students, study skills programs for Year 11 students, and curriculum-based projects for Years 6 and 10 students, study skills programs for Year 7 and 10 students, and curriculum-based projects for Year 6 and Year 10 students. The Year 11 Summer Master Classes and Year 12 University Preparation Program in 2014 were the launches of the Year 12 Summer Master Classes and the Year 12 University Preparation Program.

In2Uni has been benchmarked against other widening participation programs and leads the subject of two internal evaluations by an independent research team. These reviews, combined with substantial collaboration and feedback between In2Uni’s partners, have led to continuous improvement and significant growth of the program over the last seven years.

OUTCOMES

The Year 12 Summer Master Classes and Year 12 University Preparation Program have demonstrated the most significant impact, with an increasing number of students engaged in both programs. The University Preparation Program students provide evidence (upon entry) that they do not have sufficient academic attainment to access higher education. As a result of participating in the program, more students not only increase their academic attainment and access a place at university but also...

SUSTAINABLE IMPACTS

The focus of In2Uni has been to develop multi-layered, sustainable and emancipatory programs between UOW and the NSW Department of Education, Catholic Education Office in the Illawarra South East Region, as well as organisations, to ensure the ongoing sustainability of the program. These range from MoUs between organisations to collaborative development of content between teachers and university staff, to positive mentoring relationships established between university and school students.

Underpinned by a continuous improvement planning cycle, In2Uni’s programs are continuously refined to ensure the activities are aligned with HEPPP objectives, as well as meeting the evolving needs of students participating in the program. 2017 will see In2Uni expand its reach into South Western Sydney, with a pilot program being launched in 10 schools in the region.

Overall I enjoyed my university experience and was not looking forward to going home. I met some fabulous people and I’m now excited for university more than anything! Mentors and staff were just as great as the experience also.

Year 8 students. These programs have been reformed each year based on survey data and stakeholder feedback, to re-focus teacher professional development activities and co-mentor for teachers to deliver in the classroom, and workshops that encourage students and parents working together in their learning journey. Priorled to the In2Uni program was the launches of the Year 12 Summer Master Classes and the Year 12 University Preparation Program. These programs provide a student-centered approach to learning and supporting students with diverse needs, while extending the school curriculum and engaging student preparation for higher education.

My daughter just completed the Year 12 Summer Master Class… what impressed me most was how openly she speaks now about wanting to work harder in a general sense. This is a really a well put together program, and I’m so impressed with the effect that it has had on a very disengaged and critical learner. She has gone back to her high school saying nothing but good about university.

– Parent of student participant

– In2Uni coordinator

Pre-access

Participation

Attainment/transition

Student success

In2Uni engages with over 10,000 students from over 125 schools across the 430 km coastline of southern NSW.
STUDENT TRANSITION MENTORS

OBJECTIVES

The goal of the STM program is to engage, guide and support students during the adjustment period of navigating university systems, processes and information to ease anxiety, enhance engagement and positively impact university retention. The program builds connection to the university, provides students with timely and relevant support and advice, positive experiences and potential STM job opportunities.

ACTIVITIES AND PROGRESS

STMs undertake biannual training to effectively support and guide their peers through face-to-face interactions at Orientation and College events, during semester drop-in sessions, and one-on-one on-campus appointments. STMs are provided with support and guidance in developing presentation, public speaking, communication, leadership and teamwork skills by the program coordinator. STMs also engage students through ‘check in’ phone calls to answer any questions or address and refer concerns to the appropriate area or person.

The program builds connection to the university, provides students with numerous ‘on-the-job’ learning opportunities to develop and strengthen graduate capabilities.

OUTCOMES

The STM program currently employs 25 Students as Staff from diverse backgrounds and equity groups, and has employed 47 since implementation. 2016 attrition rates of students between Semesters 1 and 2 from the Early-Uni Pathways (EUP) program at VU. Work is currently being done in this space to employ, train and develop former EUP students into the University. VU students come from diverse backgrounds and equity groups. Helping students solve their problems ...

The breadth of students you face is staggering at times, it really demonstrates VU’s student diversity.

"There are so many other things that he assisted with but importantly he made me feel welcomed."

STUDENT TRANSITION MENTOR

STMs are employed as ‘Students as Staff’ , work within VU’s retention program (Student Link) to engage with students who have been identified through databases as at-risk of attrition. Some student comments on the STM program include:

“My STM was great, he answered all my course and staff-related questions...”

"Being able to engage with students from a plethora of backgrounds, really demonstrates VU’s student diversity."

"[My STM] was great, he assisted with but importantly he made me feel welcomed."

... [student] told me that our conversation had been by far the most useful he had at uni and he was very grateful to have someone to talk to.

Some student comments on the STM program include:

"[My STM] was great, he answered all my course and staff-related questions...“

"...[he] assisted with but importantly he made me feel welcomed."

SUSTAINABLE IMPACTS

In less than two years since inception, the STM program has seen growth and support from VU staff and students. Further enhancements to the existing STM Facebook page, increased visibility on the VU website and enhanced collaborations will contribute to the overall sustainability of the program.

The program, which is fully funded through the HEPPP, has shown to effectively engage students and provide timely support when student stresses and anxiety are high.

Anonymous program evaluations completed by STMs highlight some aspects of the programs:

"Making a difference in another student’s experience is so fulfilling."

"The breadth of students you face is staggering at times, it really demonstrates VU’s student diversity."

"...[student] told me that our conversation had been by far the most useful he had at uni and he was very grateful to have someone to talk to."

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"I was really wont to our conversation had been by far the most useful he had at uni and he was very grateful to have someone to talk to."
Fast Forward is making a genuine difference to the lives of secondary school students in western Sydney, by improving their access and success in higher education particularly among students who would typically be underrepresented.

- Fast Forward coordinator

Fast Forward facilitates the personal, academic and professional development of students, and is a partnership of participating—secondary school students, school and teachers, parents and carers and the university community—until to secure the success of our future generations.

ACTIVITIES AND PROGRESS

The Fast Forward program commenced as a pilot study in 2004 to link students from schools in western Sydney to their local university (WSU) and to encourage students and their families to see tertiary study as a genuine post-school option. A major program expansion in 2011 saw 17 new schools added to Fast Forward, followed by further expansions during 2012, 2013 and 2016 to now reach 64 secondary school partners across western Sydney. Fast Forward student numbers have increased from 1,912 in 2012 to 3,346 in 2016.

DESCRIPTION

Fast Forward works in partnership with 64 secondary schools across western Sydney to encourage students’ participation in higher education. Through raising awareness of the many different pathways to higher education, and supporting students with activities designed to increase their aspirations towards continuing their education after Year 12 and to expand their reach of students participating in the program, the success of the newly developed primary school and secondary school programs that support and meet the additional demand from Fast Forward, and the positive endorsements of parents, teachers and students alike.

SUSTAINABLE IMPACTS

With the provision of HEPPP funding, Fast Forward is positioned to secure the success of students participating in the program, the success of the newly developed primary school and secondary school programs that support and meet the additional demand from Fast Forward, and the positive endorsements of parents, teachers and students alike.

From 2012–16 Fast Forward students completed Year 12 with 2,467 receiving offers to university (81 per cent success rate). Of those, 946 received offers to WSU. Feedback from students, teachers and parents alike demonstrate the meaningful success of Fast Forward.

From 2012–16 Fast Forward students completed Year 12 with 2,467 receiving offers to university (81 per cent success rate). Of those, 946 received offers to WSU.

• 85 per cent of students attending Fast Forward report a better understanding about what future educational pathway can offer them.


- Fast Forward coordinator

STEPS (Strive Towards Educational Participation and Success) was developed in 2014 to meet the increased demand for more secondary schools in western Sydney to be part of a secondary school aspiration building program. Providing on-campus and in-school learning sessions for Years 9 and 10 students, STEPS commenced working with 14 schools, expanding to 20 schools in 2015, and in 2016 worked with 25.644 secondary school students.

OUTCOMES

An awareness of becoming a lawyer and going to university is not to be seen as foreign and alien experience and unreachable for a little kid from western Sydney... I decided to study Laws and applied for WSU. My academic excellence Scholarship丛林河 had the privilege to win, enabling me to pursue my dream... I could barely imagine myself on my career path if not for the Fast Forward Program...” – Fast Forward Western Sydney University student.
## List of Acronyms

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<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACT</td>
<td>Australian Capital Territory</td>
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<td>ACU</td>
<td>Australian Catholic University</td>
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<td>AHEAD</td>
<td>Addressing Higher Education Access Disadvantage</td>
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<tr>
<td>ARPNet</td>
<td>Aboriginal Research Practitioners’ Network</td>
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<td>ASK</td>
<td>Academic Skills and Knowledge</td>
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<td>ATAR</td>
<td>Australian Tertiary Admission Rank</td>
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<td>B. Arts</td>
<td>Bachelor of Arts</td>
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<td>B. Laws</td>
<td>Bachelor of Laws</td>
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<tr>
<td>C&amp;SS</td>
<td>Computer and Security Services</td>
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<td>CDU</td>
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<td>CEEHE</td>
<td>Centre of Excellence for Equity in Higher Education</td>
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<td>CQU</td>
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<td>Information, Computer Technology</td>
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<td>James Cook University</td>
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<td>LEAP</td>
<td>Learning, Education, Aspiration and Participation</td>
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<td>LGBTIQ+</td>
<td>Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex or Queer</td>
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<td>LSU</td>
<td>Memorandum of Understanding</td>
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<td>MAP4U</td>
<td>Murdoch Aspirations and Pathways for University</td>
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<td>MoU</td>
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<td>SES</td>
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<td>STEM</td>
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<td>STEPS</td>
<td>Strengthening Engagement and Achievement in Maths and Science</td>
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<td>The University of Queensland</td>
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<td>UQYAP</td>
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<td>The University of Western Australia</td>
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<td>WCE</td>
<td>Whole of Community Engagement</td>
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<td>WILDC</td>
<td>Women in Leadership Change</td>
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<td>WSU</td>
<td>Western Sydney University</td>
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*List of Acronyms*
About the Centre

The National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education (NCSEHE) began operation in 2008, hosted by the University of South Australia. In May 2013, Curtin University won the bid to take over the Centre and received funding to achieve its aim of informing public policy design and implementation and institutional practice, to improve higher education participation and success for marginalised and disadvantaged people.

The NCSEHE’s objectives are:

- to be at the centre of public policy dialogue about equity in higher education
- to assist in closing the loop between equity policy, research and practice by:
  - supporting and informing evaluation of current equity practice, with a particular focus on identifying good practice
  - identifying innovative approaches to equity through existing research and the development of a forward research program to 40 years’ knowledge
  - translating these learnings into practical advice for decision-makers and practitioners alike.

The NCSEHE’s key purpose is “to inform public policy design and implementation, and institutional practice, to improve higher education participation and success for marginalised and disadvantaged people.”

In keeping with its purpose, the NCSEHE is connecting Commonwealth student equity policy with the activities of higher education institutions and national equity outcomes through its input into comparative assessment of institutional strategies, systemic assessments of policy achievements and assessments of national policy making in view of this evidence. The Centre’s focus is based on three programs of research activity:

1. Equity Policy and Program Evaluation
   The Centre is providing leadership and support in developing a national approach and resources to evaluate the impact of initiatives to increase participation of people from low SES backgrounds and other equity groups in higher education.

2. Equity Policy and Planning Research
   The Centre is furthering equity policy and planning in Australia, sharing knowledge and capabilities developed in Australia, and providing evidence on the impact of policy on equity outcomes in the system. By enabling national research and engagement on higher education policy and practice, the Centre ensures its research includes analysis of all equity groups including people from low SES, Indigenous, regional and remote communities, and people with disability.

3. Student Equity Data
   The Centre conducts analyses of higher education datasets from a student equity perspective. This encompasses:
   - compiling and analysing national equity data and survey data on student transition to higher education
   - managing a website that presents data on student equity performance in higher education
   - providing access to data and data-driven research on equity policy and programs from around Australia and the world.

Assisting in closing the loop between equity policy, research and practice.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This publication could not be completed without the work of a dedicated team of people and the support of the Australian Government Department of Education and Training and Curtin University.

Sincere thanks go to Ms Nina Thomas, Miss Marcia Schneider, Dr Kitty Drak and Dr Nadine Zacharias for their input and assistance. Thank you to the many people from each institution involved in sharing their current practice case studies which we proudly share here with you in this publication and on the web at:

ncsehe.edu.au

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