



WESTERN SYDNEY
UNIVERSITY



SECURING SUSTAINABILITY

SUSTAINABILITY REPORT 2025



OUR PROGRESS AGAINST THE UNITED NATIONS
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

With respect for Aboriginal cultural protocol and out of recognition that its campuses occupy their traditional lands, Western Sydney University acknowledges the Darug, Eora, Dharawal (also referred to as Tharawal) and Wiradjuri peoples and thank them for their support of its work in their lands in Greater Western Sydney and beyond.

We acknowledge that the teaching, learning and research undertaken across our campuses continues the teaching, learning and research that has occurred on these lands for tens of thousands of years. We pay our respects to Elders past and present.

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FOREWORD



Western Sydney University's commitment to sustainability is grounded in our mission to transform communities in Western Sydney and beyond through student success and impactful research. Sustainability is not a standalone initiative at Western; it is embedded across our teaching, research, operations and community engagement, informing how we create positive change for our students, our region and the world.

In 2025, Western was ranked the world's number one university in the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings for the fourth consecutive year, measuring universities' contributions to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We are also proud to be ranked among the global top 10 universities across several individual SDGs, reflecting the breadth and depth of our impact and reinforcing our position as a global leader in sustainable development.

As a key priority within Western 2030, Securing Sustainability guides our efforts to embed sustainable practices across the university. Through our Environmental Sustainability Action Plan and the Sustainability and Resilience 2030 Decadal Strategy, we are progressing towards our ambitious goal of becoming Climate and Nature Positive by 2029.

This report highlights our progress during 2025, including continued action to reduce emissions, advance sustainable procurement, strengthen climate resilience, and expand nature positive initiatives across our campuses. It showcases how we are integrating climate action with nature-based solutions through initiatives such as biodiversity stewardship, carbon farming, habitat restoration and collaborative rewilding, while embedding sustainability across our curriculum, research operations and community engagement activities.

Our achievements are the result of the collective efforts of staff, students, partners and community members who continue to drive innovation, collaboration and positive change. Together, we are building a more sustainable, resilient and inclusive future for Western Sydney and the communities we serve around the world.



K4
STUDENT
CENTRAL

J9
CAMPUS
SAFETY &
SECURITY



Buildings
R1

SECURING SUSTAINABILITY 2025

Western's Strategic Plan 2025 – 2030 'Western 2030' incorporates 'Securing Sustainability' as a contributing priority towards our mission of 'transforming communities in Western Sydney and the world through student success and impactful research'. Western is committed to demonstrating agility in thought leadership and ethical practice, strongly aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals.

Our international commitments include the UN-led 'Race to Zero for Universities and Colleges' and the 'Nature Positive Universities Network', supporting our goal of becoming Climate and Nature Positive by 2029. Our challenge is to integrate strategies for climate action with nature-based solutions, underpinned by ethical investment and procurement.

The first section of this report outlines our climate action: carbon transitions, climate risk across our campuses, and working through partnerships to enhance regenerative nature-based solutions. The second section highlights a broad range of initiatives addressing the Sustainable Development Goals across our curriculum, operations, research and engagement activities.



CARBON TRANSITIONS

Since 2023, we have assessed our organisational carbon footprint in line with international Greenhouse Gas protocols, and offset it to achieve Climate Active certification as a carbon neutral organisation. Our portfolio of carbon credits has included Australian carbon credits from Indigenous savannah burning in northern Australia, along with a mix of international carbon credits from renewable energy and nature-based projects in Vietnam, Indonesia and India, complimenting our transnational educational partnerships.

EMISSION SCOPES

Our organisational carbon footprint is made up of three emission scopes: Scope 1, direct on-site emissions from fuels, natural gas and refrigerants; Scope 2, indirect emissions from electricity supplied through the grid; and Scope 3, indirect emissions from the supply chains of goods and services used to provide our tertiary education services. From 2021 to 2025, our total carbon footprint reduced by 11%. Scope 1 emissions reduced by 25%, and Scope 2 emissions reduced by 100% as our electricity supply contracts transitioned to 100% renewably sourced electricity. Our Scope 3 supply chain emissions increased by 25%, reflecting increased activity on campus after the COVID-19 pandemic, although there was some reduction from 2024 to 2025. Our target for 2025 to 2029 is a 70% reduction in overall emissions.

EMISSION REDUCTION STRATEGIES

The key strategy for Scope 1 emissions is our Electrification Roadmap, which focuses on transitioning away from natural gas, starting with early wins in smaller heating units moving to more complex changes in the central energy plant. It also includes increasing local solar PV generation to help offset growing electricity demand, and trialling emerging technologies and design options. The established Scope 2 strategy of 100% renewable electricity will continue. The key strategy for reducing the largest sources of supply chain emissions is the recently developed Sustainable Procurement Framework. It seeks to embed emissions reduction alongside a focus on modern slavery, Indigenous and local social enterprises, and circular economy principles.



CLIMATE RISK ASSESSMENT

Western first began investigating climate risk in 2018, drawing on the Rockefeller Foundation's '100 Resilient Cities' model as adapted for Resilient Sydney. A key principle of this approach is avoiding cascading failures across seemingly unrelated systems, and our Preliminary Resilience Assessment included an initial evaluation of climate impacts on the University's critical infrastructure. In the following years, Western Sydney communities experienced a series of cascading impacts: the catastrophic bushfires across eastern Australia in 2019-2020, the COVID-19 pandemic in 2019-2021, a record temperature of 48.9°C in Penrith on 4 January 2020, and a series of floods across Western Sydney and broader eastern NSW in 2021-2022. In 2024, we took early steps in climate risk assessment in line with the

NSW Climate Ready program, and in 2025 the National Climate Risk Assessment reinforced the cascading, cumulative and compounding nature of climate risks and impacts.

During 2025, we took formal steps towards a more comprehensive climate risk assessment, in line with NSW Treasury's guidelines for climate risk disclosure and broader emerging expectations for organisational climate risk. A working group was established with representatives from the University's Finance, Risk and Environmental Sustainability teams. We engaged a consultant who had previously worked with the NSW Sustainability Advantage program to prepare and facilitate internal stakeholder workshops and consolidate the key outcomes.

CLIMATE RISK FRAMEWORK

Key scenarios consistent with the NARCLIM 2.0 modelling were selected: a less optimistic shared socioeconomic pathway (SSP 3-7.0) for physical risks, and a more optimistic scenario (SSP 1-2.6) for transition risks and opportunities, across three time frames: current, 2050 and 2090. While this was primarily a climate risk assessment, it also considered impacts and opportunities associated with nature-based assets and solutions. Key themes for the scope of potential impacts included teaching, research, operations, staff, students, and our broader sector role.

The first workshop focused on physical risks, including extreme heat, bushfire, drought, flooding and storm damage. The second



workshop focused on transition risks and opportunities across political, economic, social, technological and environmental aspects.

Stakeholder feedback was compiled into risk statements, grouped by impact category and by risk or opportunity. These risk statements were then mapped against a comprehensive risk matrix consistent with the University's enterprise risk framework. While the first disclosure requirement was a qualitative assessment, a critical principle for prioritisation is materiality: the influence on policy, investment and risk exposure, and the impact on key stakeholders, with the student experience as our first priority. For this initial materiality assessment, we used residual risk as an indicator, assessing from current conditions to those expected around 2050 and 2090.

PRELIMINARY CLIMATE RISK OUTCOMES

The highest priority physical risks related to the impacts of extreme heat on the student experience. Bushfire, drought, flooding and storm damage were all assessed as having significant impacts on teaching, research and operations across our campus network. Key transition risks included the impacts of broader international student policy, along with reputational and technology-related impacts. Key transition opportunities related to climate and nature integration, carbon transitions, emerging technologies, and social and Indigenous dimensions. Building on earlier resilience planning, we have identified draft adaptation measures.

These include hard (technology and engineering) measures, such as shaded solar carparks; green (nature-based) measures such as water recycling and regenerative practices; and soft (operational and management) measures such as the establishment of highly accessible CBD campuses near public transport hubs.



NATURE POSITIVE INITIATIVES

Our Securing Sustainability Action Plan also includes our commitment to the Nature Positive Universities network. In response, we have established a baseline methodology using ecological and landscape mapping across our campus network and engaged students in a Bioblitz using the iNaturalist app. In 2025, initiatives included the ongoing management of our biodiversity stewardship site, the trading of biodiversity credits, progress towards expanding the site by an additional 200 hectares, continued Landcare planting of shelterbelts, preliminary planning for a carbon farming living lab, and design development for a collaborative rewilding initiative.

MANAGEMENT OF BIODIVERSITY STEWARDSHIP

We have continued to manage the established 117 hectares under a biodiversity stewardship agreement through the NSW Biodiversity Conservation Trust. Bush regeneration remains a core focus, targeting weed species such as African lovegrass and replanting areas with appropriate endemic species.

EXPANSION OF BIODIVERSITY STEWARDSHIP AREA

Technical assessments of ecological communities have been completed for an additional 200 hectares for biodiversity stewardship. The necessary planning consultation commenced in 2025 and is ongoing.



LANDCARE PLANTING OF NATIVE SHELTERBELTS

Since 2023, Western has collaborated with Greater Sydney Landcare to plant 30,000 tubestock of native tree and shrub species as shelterbelts across the Hawkesbury farm and adjacent riparian stormwater channels. This has included the work of professional bush regeneration teams, including the Indigenous social enterprise Muru Mittigar, as well as community Landcare planting events. In 2025, 2,500 tubestock were planted with the support of students from Richmond Agricultural College and Hills Grammar School, with North West Disability Services' 'Secret Garden' hosting the community event.

PLANNING FOR CARBON FARMING LIVING LAB

Building on our carbon offsetting arrangements, in 2025 we began developing a 70-hectare carbon farming living lab at Hawkesbury campus as a step towards a broader carbon insetting strategy. In collaboration with Landcare Australia, we commenced the preliminary planning required to establish a formal carbon project generating Australian Carbon Credit Units (ACCUs) under a recognised carbon farming method. As native species will be established in flood-prone swamp areas of the campus, the project will also serve as a nature-based carbon initiative and contribute to nature positive outcomes.

PRELIMINARY REWILDING DESIGN

During 2025, we progressed preliminary designs for our first riparian rewilding project in collaboration with Sydney Water Corporation. This builds on a long history of collaboration with Sydney Water through our Hawkesbury Water Recycling Scheme, including the supply of recycled water as a valuable resource and the establishment of stormwater harvesting infrastructure more than 20 years ago. In 2025, a three-year collaborative research project with the School of Science was completed, investigating nutrient and carbon dynamics in the 4-hectare constructed wetlands that form part of the treatment train for harvested stormwater. Under a broader Hawkesbury-Nepean nutrient offset scheme established by the NSW EPA, Sydney Water has now incorporated this research site into a broader riparian design and a future demonstration of 'rewilding' to reduce nutrient loss through soft engineering and the re-establishment of natural ecological processes.



WESTERN AT A GLANCE

Our commitment to securing sustainability, and the strategic framework that drives it

Western Sydney University has been named number one in the world for its social, economic and environmental impact in the Times Higher Education University Impact Rankings for an unprecedented four consecutive years, reflecting how deeply the UN Sustainable Development Goals are embedded across the University's teaching, research, operations and engagement.

OUR STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

WESTERN 2030 – SECURING SUSTAINABILITY

WESTERN 2030 is the University's five-year strategic plan, setting out a bold and inclusive vision built on student success, impactful research and stronger communities. Securing Sustainability is a key priority of the plan, supported and delivered through the Environmental Sustainability Action Plan, the operational roadmap links strategy to action across energy, water, waste, nature, climate resilience and responsible procurement.

SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCE 2030 – OUR DECADAL STRATEGY

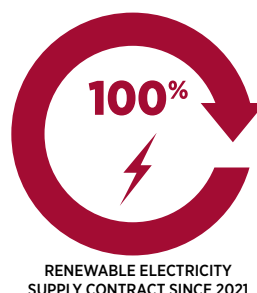
The Decadal Strategy, Sustainability and Resilience 2030, sets out the University's collective aspiration across nine interconnected priority statements, encouraging the University community to recognise and reimagine the interdependence of life, starting in Greater Western Sydney and extending to our

wider global contribution. The strategy is explicitly aligned to the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals and is embedded through the University's CORE model of a sustainable university: Curriculum, Operations, Research and Engagement, linked through the Environmental Sustainability Policy.

GLOBAL COMMITMENTS – RACE TO ZERO AND CLIMATE AND NATURE POSITIVE BY 2029

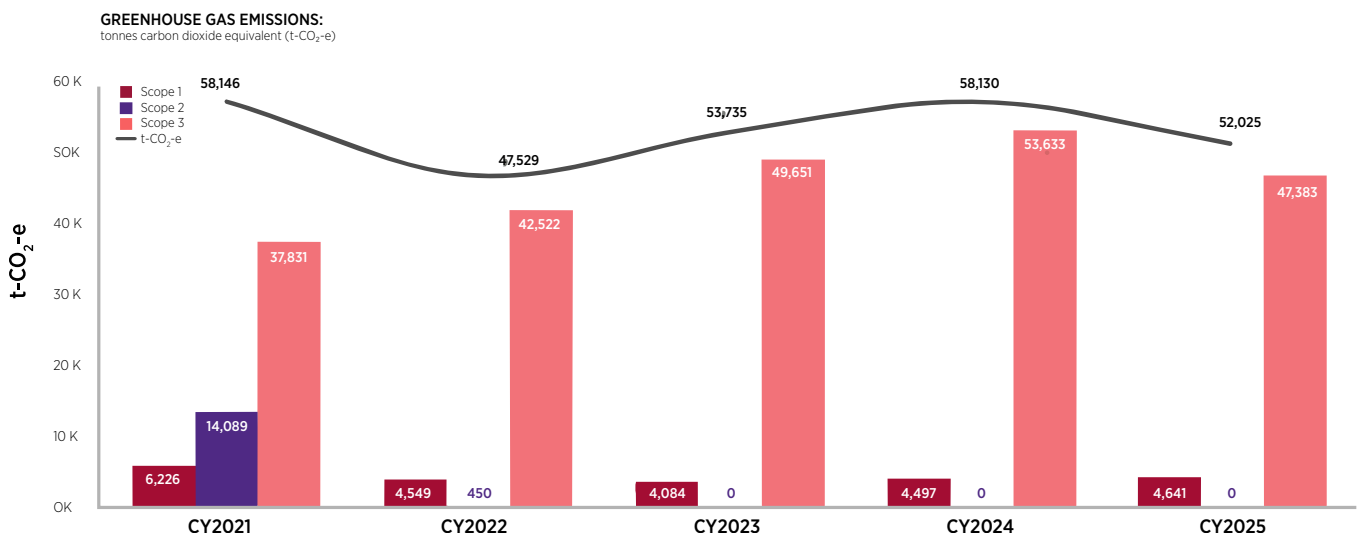
The University participates in the UN-led Race to Zero for Universities and Colleges and is a formal educational signatory to the SDG University Commitment. It achieved Climate Active certification as a carbon neutral organisation in 2023 and has committed by going further – becoming climate and nature positive by 2029, removing more carbon from the atmosphere than it emits while reversing biodiversity loss across its campuses.

AT A GLANCE



OUR EMISSIONS: SCOPE 1, 2 AND 3

The University reports greenhouse gas emissions annually: to the Clean Energy Regulator under the National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting (NGER) Scheme each financial year (Scopes 1 and 2, location-based, base year FY2013), and to the Australian Government-backed Climate Active program each calendar year (Scopes 1, 2 and 3, with Scope 2 calculated using the market-based method, base year CY2021). The figures below are based on Climate Active calendar-year reporting.



OVERALL TREND 2021-2025

↓
25%
SCOPE 1
Direct emissions including natural gas, petrol, diesel

↓
100%
SCOPE 2
Indirect emissions electricity purchased from the grid

↑
25%
SCOPE 3
Indirect emissions other than Scope 2 including supply chain

↓
11%
t-CO₂-e
Total GHG tonnes carbon dioxide equivalent

Notes: emissions are reported under the Climate Active Carbon Neutral Standard for Organisations. Scope 2 is zero under the market-based method, reflecting the University's 100% renewable electricity supply contract. CY2025 figures are as published at the time of writing. Percentages are as reported and may not sum to 100 due to rounding. Wider environmental performance data (energy, water, waste) is published at westernsydney.edu.au/environmental-sustainability/performance.

CY2025 CARBON FOOTPRINT

52,025



tonnes CO₂e total emissions in CY2025 – down 10.5% on CY2024

4,641



tonnes CO₂e Scope 1 direct emissions (9%)

0



tonnes CO₂e Scope 2 (market-based) – 100% renewable electricity

47,383



tonnes CO₂e Scope 3 value chain emissions (91%)

PROGRESS AGAINST SECURING SUSTAINABILITY

SUSTAINABILITY IN NUMBERS

Securing Sustainability is a key priority of WESTERN 2030, building upon the previously established Environmental Sustainability Action Plan. The table below sets out progress against the University's operational commitments.

COMMITMENT	MEASURE	CY2025 POSITION	STATUS
1. CARBON NEUTRAL			
Carbon neutral certification	Climate Active certification for organisation operations	Certified since 2023 and maintained	✓
2. CARBON TRANSITION			
Scope 1: transition from natural gas	Electrification roadmap established	Roadmap implementation began 2025	🔄
Scope 2: 100% renewable electricity	Share of electricity supply from renewable sources	100%, achieved 2021	✓
Scope 3: supply chain	Sustainable Procurement Framework	Framework developed; implementation under way	🔄
3. CLIMATE AND NATURE POSITIVE			
Climate Positive by 2029	Total emissions, all scopes	52,025 t-CO2e, down 10.5% on CY2024	📈
Nature Positive by 2029	Protected habitat and biodiversity baseline	413 ha protected; 19,208 trees mapped	📈

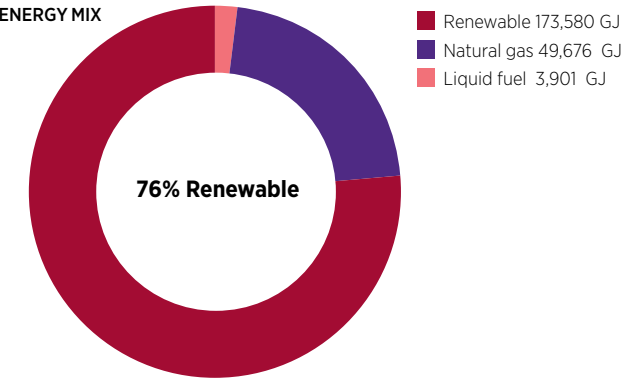
STATUS DEFINITIONS: ✓ ACHIEVED, target met and being maintained; 📈 ON TRACK, progressing toward the target date; 🔄 IN PROGRESS, underway, with further work required to meet the target. All positions reflect calendar year 2025 (CY2025) published performance data.

ENERGY AND WATER MIX

ENERGY MIX – CY2025

A total of 227,157 GJ of energy was consumed across all campuses under Scopes 1 and 2, of which 173,580 GJ (76%) came from renewable sources – 169,429 GJ from grid renewables and

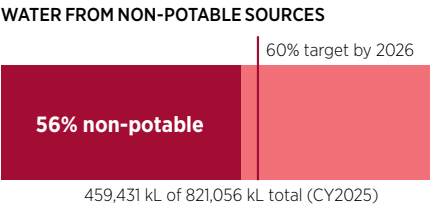
4,151 GJ generated on site from solar. Natural gas remains the largest non-renewable source at 49,676 GJ, the focus of the University's fuel-switching roadmap.



WATER FROM NON-POTABLE SOURCES – PROGRESS TOWARD THE 2026 TARGET

Of 821,056 kL of water consumed in CY2025, 459,431 kL came from non-potable sources – 179,431 kL recycled water from Sydney Water, 200,000 kL estimated harvested stormwater and rainwater, and 80,000 kL river water. Recycled water use for irrigation increased on CY2024, when extensive flooding significantly reduced irrigation demand.

Note: the non-potable water share is calculated from published CY2025 consumption figures (river, recycled and harvested volumes as a proportion of total consumption).





2025 AT A GLANCE

OUR TIMES HIGHER EDUCATION
IMPACT RANKINGS PERFORMANCE



for the fourth consecutive year, ahead of
more than 2,300 universities

WORLD TOP 10 – INDIVIDUAL SDG RANKINGS



OUR RANKING HISTORY

Western Sydney University has been ranked #1 in the world overall in the THE Impact Rankings every year since 2022 – four consecutive years at the top. The University has also led individual SDG tables in earlier cycles:



#1
2023, 2024



#1
2023



#1
2022, 2023, 2024, 2025



IMPACT STORIES

Thank you to all the staff, students, partners and communities who advanced sustainability at Western and progressed the UN 2030 Agenda. We hope the work featured in the following pages inspires continued collaboration for a brighter future.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS







END POVERTY IN ALL ITS FORMS
EVERYWHERE

Western Sydney University enrolls more students from low socioeconomic backgrounds than any other university in Australia. Scholarships, free food and hardship support help these students stay in study and finish their degree.

SUPPORTING OUR STUDENTS SCHOLARSHIPS

The University offers \$20 million in scholarships every year, across merit, equity and program-specific awards funded by the University and donors. Equity scholarships use indicators of low socioeconomic status to identify the students in greatest need. The University has admission and completion targets for students from the lowest-income households.

WESTERN PANTRY

Rising rent, insecure housing and low income support make it hard for many students to afford food. Western Pantry gives students free pantry staples, fresh produce and hygiene products. Since it opened in 2024 it has had more than 11,000 visits. The program is funded through the Student Services and Amenities Fee and involves nine student casual employees, three student clubs and eight community partners.

Students in documented financial hardship can also get vouchers for food, petrol and medical items. The Badanami Futures Fund gives targeted support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in financial hardship.

WIDENING ACCESS

REFUGEE AND HUMANITARIAN SCHOLARSHIPS

The University has supported students from refugee and asylum seeker backgrounds for many years through its Humanitarian Scholarship program. The WSU Refugee Scholarship gives ongoing support to students from these backgrounds and is funded by donations from staff, students, alumni and friends of the University.

COMMUNITY AND ENTERPRISE LAUNCH PAD

Launch Pad started in 2015. It gives startups and entrepreneurs access to mentoring, networking, incubation, co-working space and industry partners. Its Women and Multicultural Program trains founders from diverse backgrounds, who can apply for grants of up to \$10,000 for their business.

RESEARCH AND POLICY AFFORDABLE HOUSING RESEARCH

In March 2024 the University published research showing housing co-operatives could help ease Australia's housing and rental crisis. The University now co-leads the NSW Affordable Housing Network, which brings together researchers, government, community housing providers and industry through briefings, roundtables and short evidence notes.

The Urban Transformations Research Centre also works with the Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (WSROC) on regional housing, through joint research, policy briefings and government submissions.

AT A GLANCE

322



students received financial aid due to poverty - up 258% year on year

12,000+



free community dinners served in 2025

\$20m



in scholarships offered every year

11,000+



visits to Western Pantry since 2024





END HUNGER, ACHIEVE FOOD SECURITY AND IMPROVED NUTRITION AND PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

The University helps students who are struggling with the cost of food, and shares its agricultural research with farmers and growers across the region.

**SUPPORTING OUR STUDENTS
FREE FOOD EVERY WEEK**

Western Pantry is a free service that gives students pantry staples and fresh produce. Pantries open weekly at Kingswood and Parramatta South campuses. Students in documented financial hardship can also get essential item vouchers, and the Chaplaincy team runs weekly community dinners during semester. The program is used heavily by international students and students juggling study with living costs.

Every campus food outlet must offer vegetarian and vegan options. The Coop at Hawkesbury campus focuses on healthy, affordable food with a lower environmental impact.

**OPERATIONS
MEASURING FOOD WASTE**

The University measures food waste from food served on campus. A food waste separation pilot started in 2023 and recorded an estimated 39 tonnes of food waste across 21 sites in CY2023, based on data from the participating sites. At Hawkesbury campus the University is trialling composting of green waste and food waste through worm farms, to produce soil conditioner for the farm.

**COMMUNITY AND INDUSTRY
SOIL BIOLOGY MASTERCLASS**

The Hawkesbury Institute for the Environment, through its Global Centre for Land-Based Innovation, runs a two-day Soil Biology Masterclass for growers, consultants and agronomists. It covers the latest research on soil health and management to help farmers increase yields sustainably. The Soil Biology and Health Certificate Program, run with Soil Science Australia, goes further. Both are run on a not-for-profit basis and include tours of research facilities.

NATIONAL VEGETABLE PROTECTED CROPPING CENTRE

The National Vegetable Protected Cropping Centre (NVPCC) works with industry, local farmers and research partners, who can use its advanced glasshouse facilities. Since it opened in 2017, the NVPCC glasshouse has produced more than 58 tonnes of fresh produce from production and research trials.

AT A GLANCE







**ENSURE HEALTHY LIVES AND
PROMOTE WELL-BEING FOR ALL
AT ALL AGES**

Our students speak 61 languages between them. Health and wellbeing support is free, available around the clock and offered in many languages, backed by a partnership with NSW Health that began in 2012.

SUPPORTING OUR STUDENTS COUNSELLING AND PEER SUPPORT

The Counselling Service is staffed by qualified social workers and psychologists. It offers free, confidential counselling in person, by phone or online, with the aim of helping students before their studies are affected. Students can also use TalkCampus, a free peer-support platform available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, in 25 languages.

Students have free access to sexual and reproductive health services and information. This includes sexual health training run with NSW Health and an International Student Health Hub covering contraception, pregnancy, healthcare rights and how to use the Australian health system.

PARTNERSHIPS FOR HEALTH PARTNERSHIP WITH NSW HEALTH

The University has worked with NSW Health under a series of formal agreements since 2012, across its campuses and the Nepean Blue Mountains, South Western Sydney and Western Sydney Local Health Districts. The partnership led to WSU becoming the first smoke-free university in NSW in 2014, and has delivered health promotion programs such as sexual health training and community recovery networks.

A partnership with three NSW Population Health services covers all campuses and coordinates support for students' mental health and wellbeing. The Wellbeing and Belonging Team works with student groups, community partners in Greater Western Sydney, national networks and cultural wellbeing organisations.

STAFF AND CAMPUS SUPPORT FOR STAFF AND FAMILIES

All staff can use the Employee Assistance Program, a free and confidential coaching and counselling service run by AccessEAP. It is available 24/7 and extends to staff members' immediate families, including crisis counselling.

All University premises have been smoke-free since 2014, including the area within 100 metres of any campus entrance. Sports facilities and outdoor spaces are open to the local community after hours, on weekends and outside teaching periods, with free access for community and school events.

AT A GLANCE







ENSURE INCLUSIVE AND EQUITABLE
QUALITY EDUCATION AND PROMOTE
LIFELONG LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR
ALL

More than 60% of students starting a degree at Western Sydney University are the first in their family to go to university. The University runs school outreach, free public lectures and vocational courses that are open to everyone.

WIDENING PARTICIPATION FAST FORWARD

Fast Forward works with students from Year 9 to Year 12. It builds their confidence and study skills and shows them what post-school study options exist, through campus days, family information sessions, a Year 12 conference and HSC preparation sessions. Nearly 20,000 high school students have taken part. Research shows about two thirds of participants receive an offer from at least one of more than 30 higher education institutions, and on average half of those offered a place at WSU go on to enrol.

Pathways to Dreaming supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, and the PATHE program provides mentoring and family engagement for Pasifika communities.

LIFELONG LEARNING FREE PUBLIC EDUCATION

The Academy U program gives high-achieving secondary school students a four-year pathway of leadership, community and critical thinking challenges, with full access to the University's online learning modules and resources. The Library's Thought Leadership series gives the public free access to research talks and recordings, in person and on Zoom. The University also hosts Thinking Out Loud: The Sydney Lectures in Philosophy and Society, which brings a leading international thinker to Australia each year, with recordings broadcast on ABC Radio National.

THE COLLEGE

The College is the University's registered training organisation, accredited by ASQA. It offers vocational qualifications, licences, diplomas, English language programs and online short courses to people who are not enrolled in a university degree. It also runs short industry training courses taught by practising professionals.

INCLUSION BY DESIGN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

The Equal Opportunity and Diversity Policy was introduced in 2008 and last reviewed in 2024. It makes all University activities and programs open to everyone, regardless of ethnicity, religion, disability, immigration status or gender.

AT A GLANCE

5,860



first-generation students
commenced a degree – 61%
of all new starters, up 16%

~20,000



high school students
engaged by Fast Forward
since inception

480



graduates gained a
primary teaching
qualification – up 15%
year on year

50%



of Fast Forward participants
who receive a WSU offer go
on to enrol





ACHIEVE GENDER EQUALITY AND
EMPOWER ALL WOMEN AND
GIRLS

Western Sydney University was ranked first in the world for Gender Equality in the **THE Impact Rankings 2024**. Its work is guided by the **Gender Equity Strategy and Action Plan 2021–2026**.

LEADERSHIP AND RECOGNITION

GENDER EQUITY FOR STUDENTS AND STAFF

The Gender Equity Policy commits the University to equal access to education for students of all genders. Women make up 59% of the student cohort. Of 5,628 women who started a degree, 3,554 were the first in their family to go to university, which is 63% of female commencing students and up 13% on the year before. The University reports every year to the Workplace Gender Equality Agency and has been named an Employer of Choice for Gender Equality for 22 consecutive years.

SUPPORTING WOMEN'S SUCCESS

ATHENA SWAN AND SAGE

The University took part in Cohort 2 of the SAGE Pilot and received an Athena SWAN Bronze Award in 2019, with a four-year Action Plan for women, trans and gender diverse staff in STEMM. It has since received two SAGE Cygnet Awards, including one for gender equity in academic promotions. Women in STEMM had been applying for promotion at much lower rates than men. After targeted changes, women now apply at the same rate as men.

The Women of Wisdom program brings together female students, academics, alumni and external partners for mentoring, networking and professional development.

FAMILY-FRIENDLY BY DESIGN CHILDCARE AND PARENTAL LEAVE

WSU Early Learning runs five long day care and early learning centres on five campuses. Staff get reduced rates and salary sacrifice options, and students have free and paid options, including occasional care so recent mothers can attend classes. The enterprise agreement provides paid parental leave with a phased return to work, breastfeeding facilities on request, and the Engaged Parent Network for staff with young children.

Gender Equality Procedures provide up to 20 weeks of paid parental leave, with gender-neutral provisions so non-birth parents can share childcare. The gender pay gap was 8.3% in 2025.

POLICY FOUNDATIONS LONG-STANDING POLICIES

The Gender Equity Policy has been in place since 1997 and was last reviewed in 2023. Protections for LGBTIQ students and staff have been in place since 2003 (reviewed 2024), supported by the Ally Network, the Rainbow Western staff collective and the Queer Collective student network. The Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Policy, in place since 2006 and reviewed in 2023, protects people who report discrimination from any disadvantage. The University also tracks graduation rates for women and men and reports this data publicly each year.

AT A GLANCE

#7



in the world for Gender
Equality – THE Impact
Rankings 2025

52%



of senior academic staff are
women (371 of 714) – up 8%

66%



of all graduates are
women (7,118 of 10,779)

22 years



consecutively recognised as
a WGEA Employer of Choice
for Gender Equality





ENSURE AVAILABILITY AND
SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF
WATER AND SANITATION FOR
ALL

More than half of the water used on our campuses comes from recycled, harvested and river sources. The Hawkesbury Water Recycling Scheme is the core of this work, and the Hawkesbury-Nepean Waterkeeper Alliance takes it into the community.

OPERATIONS

HAWKESBURY WATER RECYCLING SCHEME

The University measures all water used across its campuses. In CY2025 this was 821,056 kilolitres: 361,625 kL of potable water, 200,000 kL of harvested stormwater and rainwater, 179,431 kL of recycled water from Sydney Water and 80,000 kL of river water. Recycled water use for irrigation rose compared with CY2024, when heavy flooding reduced the need to irrigate.

At Hawkesbury, recycled water supplies low-throw pivot irrigators on the campus farm for fodder crops, and is treated further before it irrigates the main oval. Stormwater from the campus and the neighbouring suburb of Hobartville passes through constructed wetlands before it irrigates the historic precinct and student residences. Both systems treat a range of urban pollutants, have incident response procedures, and use automated water movement to prevent waste. The wetlands improve water quality before any overflow reaches local waterways.

WATER EFFICIENCY IN BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS

All building and refurbishment work uses WELS-rated fittings and appliances, following the University's Architectural, Hydraulic and Fitting Standards. Water Sensitive Urban Design is part of every new precinct. Grounds are planted with drought-tolerant species from an approved list, and gardens and sports fields are irrigated with stormwater where possible. Free drinking water is available on every campus, with fountains and refill stations shown on campus maps.

The Environmental Sustainability Policy (Section 19C, reviewed 2025) commits the University to maximising water reuse, including rainwater harvesting for toilet flushing and irrigation at Penrith, Parramatta and Campbelltown campuses. The Environmental Sustainability Action Plan sets a target of 60% of water from non-potable sources by 2026.

COMMUNITY AND GOVERNMENT

HAWKESBURY-NEPEAN WATERKEEPER ALLIANCE

The University leads the Hawkesbury-Nepean Waterkeeper Alliance, which offers free citizen science training for teachers, community leaders and volunteers. Activities include microplastics training days, riparian health workshops, macroinvertebrate water quality monitoring, the River Snap camera project, and forums that bring together academics, councils, First Nations educators and government.

The Alliance's first community forum drew more than 55 stakeholders from 23 industry bodies and seven community groups. Its River Report Card combines scientific, social and cultural data collected by citizen scientists into a public snapshot of river health. The University's water work has received federal support through a \$200 million national program for community-led urban river restoration.

AT A GLANCE







ENSURE ACCESS TO
AFFORDABLE, RELIABLE,
SUSTAINABLE AND MODERN
ENERGY FOR ALL

All of the University's electricity is bought from renewable sources. On-site solar, a pilot micro-grid and a plan to move off natural gas are the next steps.

OPERATIONS

RENEWABLE ELECTRICITY AND ON-SITE SOLAR

Under the Sustainable Energy action plan, the University buys 100% of its electricity from renewable sources, is adding rooftop and carpark solar, and is moving away from fossil fuels. Key projects include the Kingswood pilot micro-grid, with 200kW of rooftop solar, 100kW of carpark solar and 60kW of battery storage, and LED lighting across all campuses. An electrification roadmap to replace natural gas with solar and electric heat pump systems has been commissioned, and work began in 2025.

All new buildings and refurbishments must meet energy efficiency standards, including Green Star certification. Thirteen Green Star certified buildings have been delivered. Energy use is reported publicly every year.

RESPONSIBLE INVESTMENT

The Investment Policy (reviewed 2025) requires fund managers to show how they have considered the risks and opportunities of a global shift to a low-carbon economy, in line with the UN Sustainable Development Goals. The Finance and Investment Committee reviews fund managers on their responsible investment practices.

COMMUNITY AND GOVERNMENT

ENERGISE YOUR SAVINGS, LITHGOW

Through its Lithgow Transformation Hub, the University ran the Energise Your Savings project. Lithgow households received free energy monitors, tracked their power use for four weeks and shared what they learned. The project was funded by the Disaster Risk Reduction Fund, jointly funded by the Australian and NSW governments.

NSW DECARBONISATION INNOVATION HUB

The University is a core partner in the \$15 million NSW Decarbonisation Innovation Hub, which supports the NSW Government's goal of net zero emissions by 2050. The Hawkesbury Institute for the Environment leads the Hub's Land and Primary Industries Network, working with government, industry and community on research to cut emissions. The University also takes part in the UN-led Race to Zero for Universities and Colleges, and its Launch Pad incubator supports early-stage businesses in sustainability and advanced manufacturing.

AT A GLANCE

100%



renewable electricity supply contract, achieved in 2021

76%



of total energy from renewable sources (173,580 of 227,157 GJ) in CY2025

13



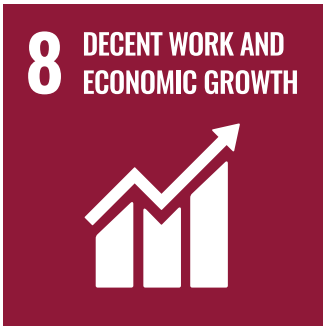
Green Star certified buildings delivered to date

2029



target year for the University to become Climate Positive





PROMOTE SUSTAINED, INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH, FULL AND PRODUCTIVE EMPLOYMENT AND DECENT WORK FOR ALL

Staff pay and conditions are set out in enterprise agreements that more than 95% of voting staff supported. The University is also turning casual academic roles into ongoing positions and reporting its gender pay gap every year.

FAIR AND SECURE EMPLOYMENT

ENTERPRISE AGREEMENTS

All staff are paid at least the living wage as defined under Australian law. The Professional Staff Agreement 2022–2025 and Academic Staff Agreement 2022–2025, both approved by the Fair Work Commission, set pay and conditions for all staff. They were supported by 97.45% of professional staff and 95.1% of academic staff who voted. The NTEU and CPSU are named parties to enterprise bargaining, and a formal dispute procedure lets staff raise issues about pay or employment rights.

The University’s academic decasualisation program committed to creating 150 new full-time positions for eligible casual staff. 79% of staff are now on contracts of more than 24 months, up 13% on the year before.

**EQUITY AT WORK
GENDER PAY GAP**

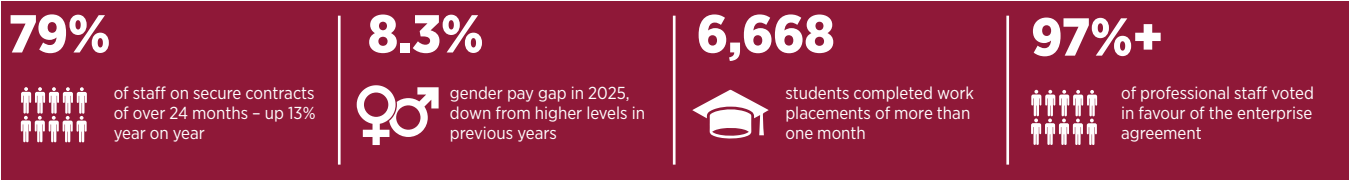
The University tracks and reports gender pay equity. The gender pay gap fell to 8.3% in 2025. Women hold 59% of Executive and Senior Manager roles and, on average, are paid more than men at these levels. Results are reported each year to the Workplace Gender Equality Agency and published in the WGEA Employer Data Explorer.

RESPONSIBLE SUPPLY CHAINS

PROTECTING WORKERS IN THE SUPPLY CHAIN

The Modern Slavery Prevention Policy, made under the Modern Slavery Act 2018 (Cth), sets out how the University prevents modern slavery in its operations and supply chains. The Procurement Policy requires all suppliers, including outsourced services, to comply with the Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012 and the Modern Slavery Act 2018. The Equal Opportunity and Diversity Policy prohibits unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and vilification, with external complaint options through the Australian Human Rights Commission, NSW Anti-Discrimination Board or Fair Work Ombudsman.

AT A GLANCE







**BUILD RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURE,
PROMOTE INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE
INDUSTRIALIZATION
AND FOSTER INNOVATION**

Research income from industry and commerce grew 60% in a year. The University backs new ventures through its own early-stage fund, the Uniseed venture fund and the Launch Pad incubator.

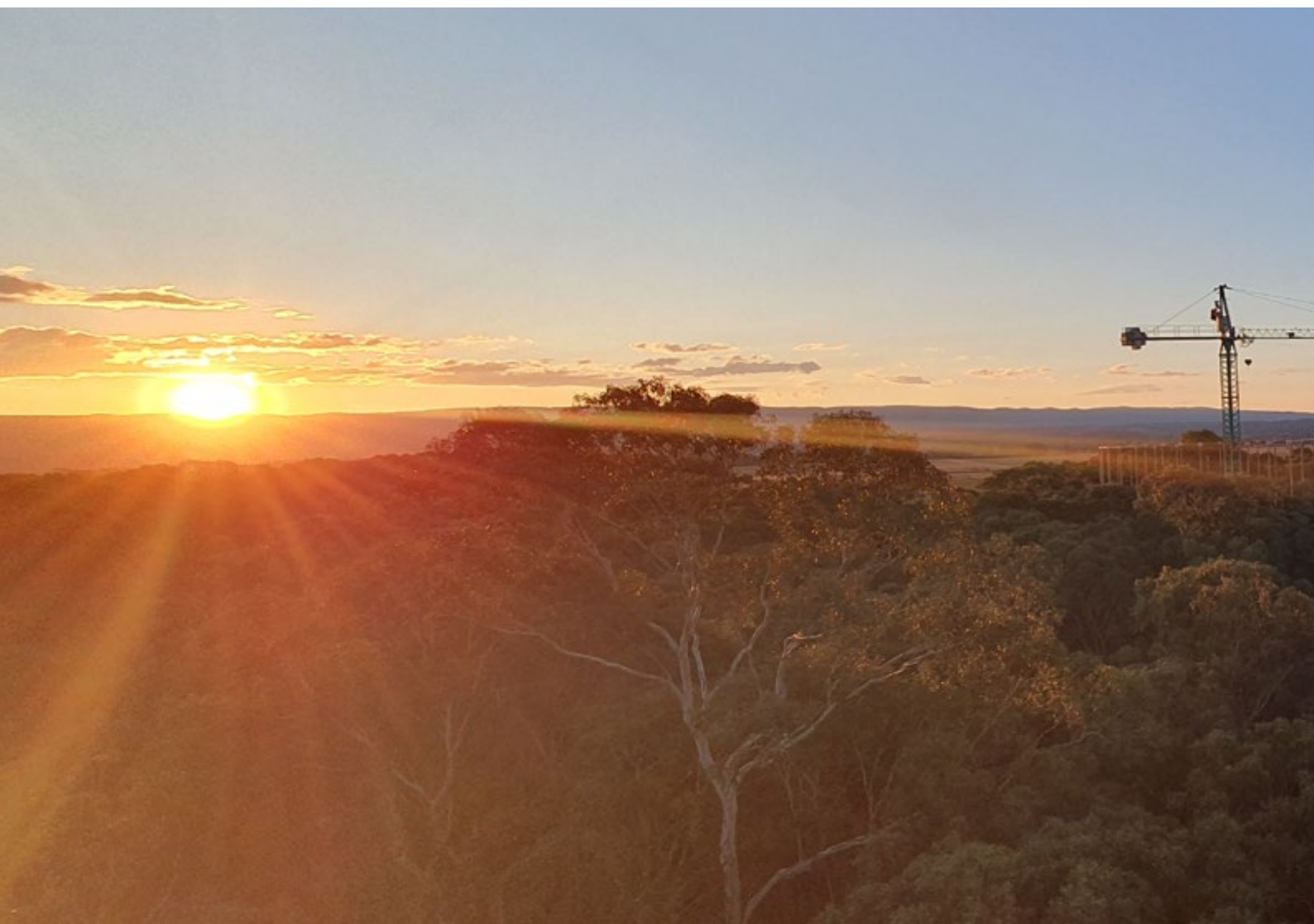
RESEARCH COMMERCIALISATION

WESTERN VENTURES AND UNISEED

Western Ventures is the University's main way of creating spin-off companies. Its Early-Stage Innovation Fund invests up to \$50,000 for proof of concept, up to \$100,000 for product development and up to \$250,000 to set up a new venture or spin-out. In November 2023 the University joined Uniseed, Australia's longest-running university venture fund. Uniseed has helped fund 66 start-ups from

Australian research since 2000, and 17 of them have made commercial deals with international companies.

The Innovation Futures program, approved by the Board of Trustees, is the framework for industry links, research translation and commercialisation. Four Industry Innovation Leads cover MedTech, sustainability, advanced manufacturing and digital technology.



INCUBATION AND INDUSTRY ENGAGEMENT

LAUNCH PAD

Launch Pad, the University's technology business incubator, was set up in 2015. It helps start-ups and growing companies with incubation, mentoring, co-working space and industry partners, with a focus on AI, machine learning, virtual and augmented reality, data analytics, additive manufacturing and Industry 4.0. Research income from industry and commerce reached \$31.8 million, up 60% on the year before, with growth in STEM (up 28%), Medicine (up 94%) and Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (up 77%).

AT A GLANCE

\$31.8m



research income from industry and commerce – up 60% year on year

\$250k



maximum Western Ventures investment for new venture and spin-out establishment

66

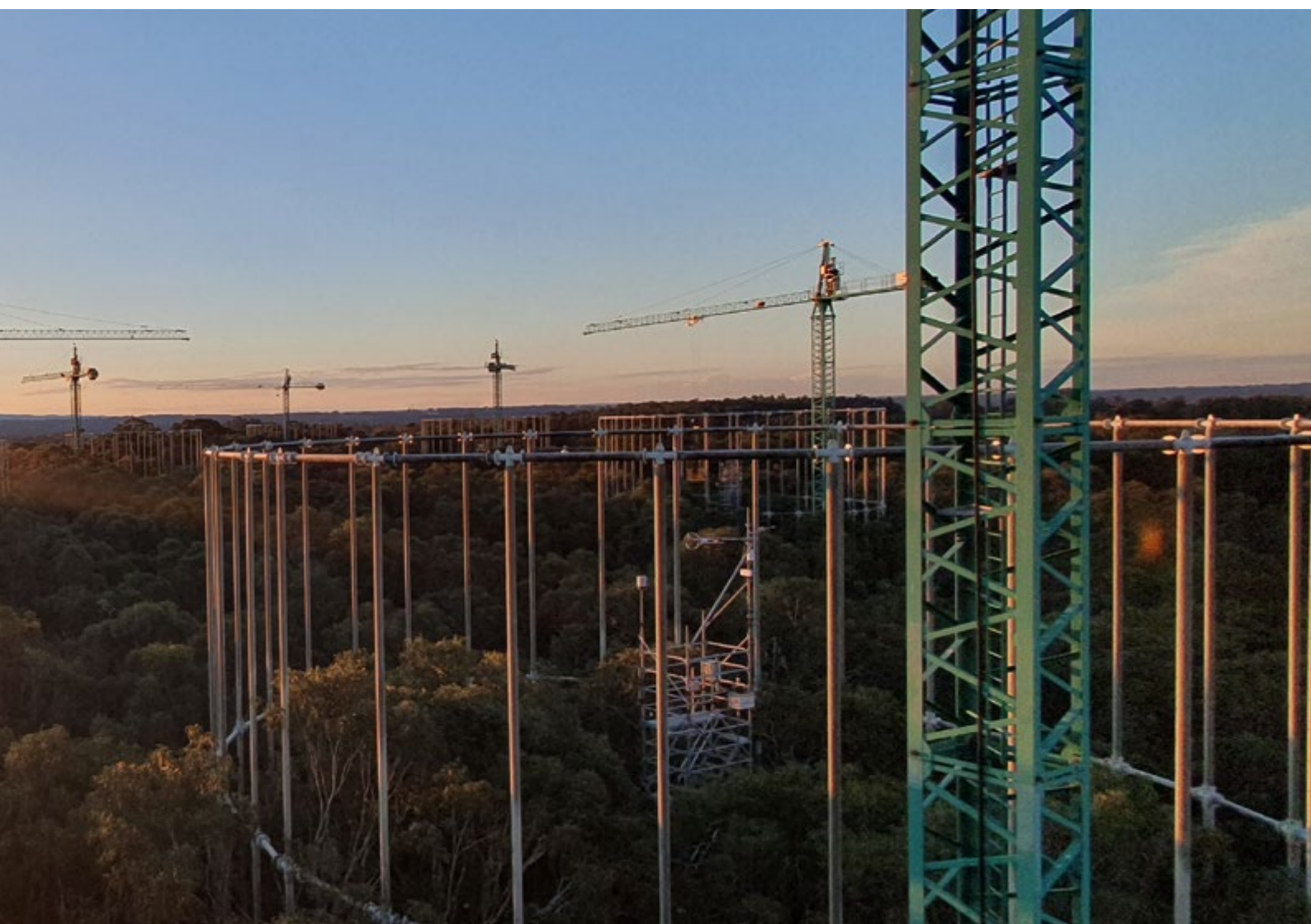


start-ups funded by the Uniseed network since 2000, which WSU joined in 2023

2015



the year Launch Pad, the University's technology business incubator, was established





**REDUCE INEQUALITY WITHIN
AND AMONG COUNTRIES**

Western Sydney University enrolls more students from low socioeconomic backgrounds than any other university in Australia. Equity entry pathways, disability support and student networks on every campus help students from under-represented groups get in and succeed.

**ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION
EQUITY PATHWAYS INTO
UNIVERSITY**

The Admissions Policy (reviewed 2024) admits students on academic merit or capacity for university study, through fair and transparent procedures. Approved equity pathways include the Badanami Alternative Entry Program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants, STAT entry, TAFE and VET pathways, and tertiary preparation courses. Applications and admissions are tracked for low SES, first-in-family, Indigenous, disability, women in STEM and LGBTIQ students, and the data informs the equity strategy.

The Fast Forward program runs on-campus university experience days for students from disadvantaged schools across Western Sydney.

**INCLUSION INFRASTRUCTURE
SUPPORT NETWORKS ON EVERY
CAMPUS**

The Equity, Inclusion and Belonging division runs working parties and advisory groups, including the Vice-Chancellor's Gender Equity Committee, the Indigenous Advisory Committee, and groups on disability, LGBTIQ inclusion and cultural diversity. Peer support includes the Ally Network of more than 200 trained staff and student volunteers, the Queer Collective on every campus, the Disability Collective, the Student Parent Union, and Badanami Centres for Indigenous students on all campuses. The University is a member of Pride in Diversity and offers staff LGBTIQ inclusion training online.

**DISABILITY INCLUSION
ACCESS ROOMS AND WORKPLACE
ADJUSTMENTS**

Every campus has an Access Room with assistive technology, screen reading and text-to-speech software and adjustable furniture. Accessible routes, parking and facilities are shown on campus maps, and all new buildings meet the Disability (Access to Premises, Buildings) Standards 2010. The Disability Service gives free, confidential support to current and prospective students with disability, chronic or mental health conditions, or temporary injuries, including Academic Reasonable Adjustment Plans.

For staff, the Disability Policy commits to reasonable adjustments, paid for through the central Staff Workplace Adjustment Fund. The Accessibility Action Plan 2025–2027 sets out how the University will keep removing barriers. Disability disclosure rose 22% among students and 195% among staff in a year.

**POLICY FOUNDATIONS
DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT**

The Discrimination, Harassment, Vilification and Victimisation Prevention Policy (introduced 2011, reviewed 2024) commits the University to a working and learning environment free from unlawful discrimination, including on the grounds of race, gender, sexuality, religion, disability, age and national origin. It applies to staff, students, contractors and visitors, with a complaints process and external options through the Australian Human Rights Commission, NSW Anti-Discrimination Board and Fair Work Ombudsman.

AT A GLANCE







MAKE CITIES AND HUMAN SETTLEMENTS INCLUSIVE, SAFE, RESILIENT AND SUSTAINABLE

The University looks after some of Australia's most important heritage buildings, builds to high Green Star standards, and spends more than \$30 million a year on arts and heritage across Greater Western Sydney.

ARTS, HERITAGE AND PUBLIC ACCESS

WHITLAM INSTITUTE AND THE FEMALE ORPHAN SCHOOL

The Whitlam Institute is housed in the heritage-listed Female Orphan School (1813) on Parramatta South campus, Australia's oldest three-storey building. It is open to the public with free guided tours, the permanent exhibition A Changing Australia: The Time of Gough Whitlam, and the Margaret Whitlam Galleries. The Whitlam Prime Ministerial Collection is on permanent display at no cost. Hawkesbury campus keeps buildings dating back to the 1890s Hawkesbury Agricultural College.

The Library's Community Membership gives members of the public, senior school students and industry partners borrowing rights at all campus libraries. Campus grounds are open to the public, including the riverfront at Parramatta South, the First Peoples Walk at Penrith, the First Peoples Garden at Campbelltown developed with Dharawal Traditional Descendants, and the Secret Garden, a 15-acre not-for-profit community space at Hawkesbury.

WESTERN SYDNEY CREATIVE

Western Sydney Creative is the University's arts and culture strategy, launched in 2019. In 2024 it delivered more than 30 public events, including exhibitions, artist talks, music, literary events, symposia and community art commissions, and started a new performing arts program with Actors Centre Australia. The University's cultural work also includes research on Indigenous language ancestry, First Nations exhibitions, and community arts with Western Sydney's migrant and diaspora communities.

HOUSING, PLANNING AND SUSTAINABLE BUILDING

GREEN STAR BUILDINGS AND BROWNFIELD CAMPUSES

Thirteen University buildings are Green Star certified by the Green Building Council of Australia. Bankstown City campus has a 6 Star Green Star As Built rating, the highest available, for water efficiency, energy management, indoor air quality and waste reduction. Under the Western Growth strategy, the University builds on brownfield and previously developed land, with vertical CBD campuses in Bankstown, Parramatta and Liverpool.

The University offers affordable accommodation and financial help for students and staff. The Centre for Western Sydney's Parramatta 2035 publication makes recommendations to government on planning, housing affordability and urban development.

SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT AND FLEXIBLE WORK

SHUTTLES, EV CHARGING AND REMOTE WORK

The University runs free inter-campus shuttle buses, tracked live in the Western app. EV charging is installed at Hawkesbury, Kingswood, Campbelltown and Parramatta South, with solar carparks. An electric shuttle bus has been trialled at two campuses, and the fleet is planned to be fully electric by 2030. A formal policy supports remote working. Green Star precincts must include pedestrian paths, active transport and links to public transport.

AT A GLANCE







ENSURE SUSTAINABLE
CONSUMPTION AND
PRODUCTION PATTERNS

About six in every ten tonnes of waste from our campuses is diverted from landfill. The Procurement Policy asks every supplier to meet social, ethical and environmental standards.

**RESPONSIBLE
PROCUREMENT**

PROCUREMENT STANDARDS

The Procurement Policy (reviewed 2025) requires all purchasing to use best endeavours to buy goods and services that are socially, ethically and environmentally sustainable, taking into account the full supply chain and disposal. All suppliers must comply with the Modern Slavery Act 2018 and the Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012. Supplier selection favours social, ethical and environmental benefits, including opportunities for Indigenous businesses, people with disability and disadvantaged groups. A Social Procurement Charter is being developed.

**WASTE AND THE CIRCULAR
ECONOMY**

WASTE AND RECYCLING

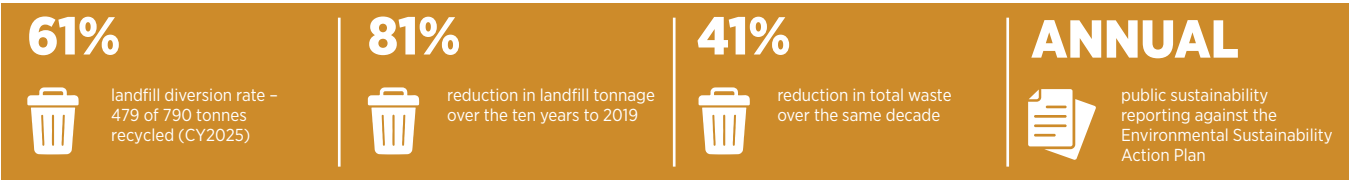
The University measures and reports total waste, recycling and landfill every year. Waste is separated at source and processed through Materials Recovery Facilities. In CY2025, the most recent year with full published figures, 790 tonnes of waste were generated, 479 tonnes were recycled and 312 tonnes went to landfill, a diversion rate of about 61%.

The Environmental Sustainability Policy (Section 19E, reviewed 2025) commits to reducing plastic and disposable items across all operations, in line with the NSW Plastics Reduction and Circular Economy Act 2021. The University works with food outlets on sustainable packaging and reusable options. Hazardous materials are managed under the Environmental Management Procedures in line with NSW EPA and Work Health and Safety requirements, and clinical waste is handled by specialist providers.

**TRANSPARENCY
ANNUAL REPORTING**

The University publishes an annual sustainability report on its performance in energy, water, waste, carbon, biodiversity and procurement. The 2024 report was published in June 2025 and is available on the University website.

AT A GLANCE







**TAKE URGENT ACTION TO
COMBAT CLIMATE CHANGE AND
ITS IMPACTS**

The University has been certified carbon neutral under Climate Active since 2023 and has committed to becoming Climate Positive by 2029. It also leads applied research in NSW on bushfires, floods and urban heat.

CARBON LEADERSHIP **CARBON NEUTRAL AND CLIMATE POSITIVE BY 2029**

The University was certified carbon neutral for its business operations under Climate Active in 2023, covering Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions. Certification requires the University to report its full carbon footprint every year, reduce emissions and buy offsets for what remains. In CY2025, total emissions were 52,025 tonnes CO₂e, down 10.5% on CY2024. Of 227,157 GJ of energy used, 173,580 GJ (about 76%) came from renewable sources.

These commitments sit within the Sustainability and Resilience Decadal Strategy 2030 and the University's participation in the UN-led Race to Zero for Universities and Colleges.

RESEARCH AND GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIP **NSW BUSHFIRE AND NATURAL HAZARDS RESEARCH CENTRE**

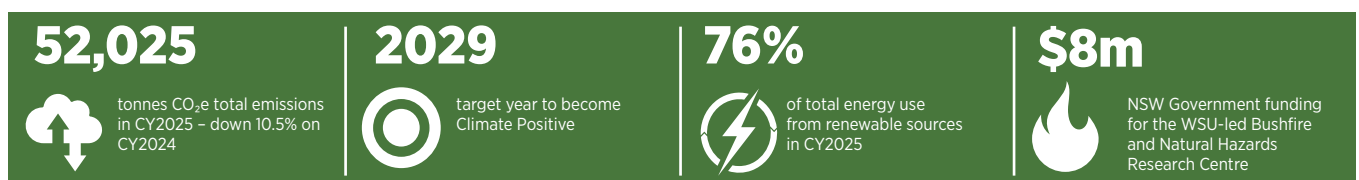
The University leads the NSW Bushfire and Natural Hazards Research Centre, set up in January 2023 after the 2019–20 Bushfire Inquiry. It brings together researchers from the Hawkesbury Institute for the Environment, five partner universities, NSW Government agencies, emergency services, Aboriginal knowledge holders and community groups. The NSW Government committed \$8 million over five years for research on bushfire, flood and other natural hazards, responding to the 2020 Bushfire Inquiry and 2022 Flood Inquiry. Partner agencies include the NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water, the NSW Rural Fire Service, Fire and Rescue NSW, the NSW State Emergency Service and the NSW Reconstruction Authority.

University researchers have also developed soil moisture tools to predict how severely bushfires will burn, working with local and regional government on early warning and preparedness.

COMMUNITY ADAPTATION **LIVING WITH URBAN HEAT IN SOCIAL HOUSING**

The Institute for Culture and Society leads Living with Urban Heat: Becoming Climate-Ready in Social Housing, working with Bridge Housing, Link Wentworth, St George Community Housing, Faith Housing Alliance and UCA Parramatta Nepean Presbytery. Using participatory research, the project finds practical ways for social housing residents in Greater Western Sydney to cope with extreme heat at home.

AT A GLANCE







CONSERVE AND SUSTAINABLY USE THE OCEANS, SEAS AND MARINE RESOURCES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The Hawkesbury-Nepean River is central to the University's work. Through HaRWEST, the Waterkeeper Alliance and the 1 Million Turtles program, researchers and citizen scientists work together to protect the river and its wildlife.

RIVER EDUCATION AND CITIZEN SCIENCE

HARWEST

HaRWEST (Hawkesbury-Nepean River Watch Education and Sustainability Tools) shares water quality data, river information and water stories with catchment communities through the Hawkesbury-Nepean Waterkeeper Alliance, a member of the International Waterkeeper Alliance. Free community education covers river health, water quality monitoring, citizen science and river care, with a focus on First Nations cultural values and knowledge of the river.

The program monitors and publicly reports water quality, including dissolved oxygen, nutrients, turbidity and biological indicators, alongside social and cultural data in the Hawkesbury-Nepean River Report Card. Events include the annual Turtle Month, Streamwatch training days, cultural walks and waterway restoration.

CONSERVATION ACTION

1 MILLION TURTLES

The University leads 1 Million Turtles, Australia's largest freshwater turtle conservation program, co-led by Professor Ricky Spencer from the School of Science. Through the TurtleSAT citizen science app, communities, schools and conservation groups across Australia protect nests, restore habitat and manage foxes. The program saved more than 1,000 freshwater turtles and 200 nests in 2022 and won the 2023 Eureka Prize for Innovation in Citizen Science. Partners include Aussie Ark, WIRES, the Foundation for National Parks and Wildlife and Transport for NSW.

RESEARCH FOR WATER INDUSTRY

PREDICTING WATER TREATMENT FAILURES

Researchers in the School of Engineering, Design and Built Environment have developed a tool that predicts runaway nitrification in chloramine-treated drinking water systems. If this goes undetected, water supplies can be left without effective treatment. The work was funded by a \$1.1 million Australian Research Council Linkage grant, with co-funding from five water utilities in Sydney and Queensland.

OPERATIONS AND POLICY

PROTECTING WATERWAYS

The Procurement Policy (Section 9G, reviewed 2025) requires all seafood served at campus outlets and events to be sustainably harvested. Discharges from campus operations must meet water quality standards. The Hawkesbury water recycling living lab treats and monitors wastewater to EPA standards, and the Recycled Water Risk Management Plan limits impacts on nearby waterways. The Water Cycle Management action plan takes a catchment approach suited to the Hawkesbury-Nepean, and the Waste and Circular Economy action plan cuts single-use plastics and diverts about 61% of waste from landfill.

AT A GLANCE

1,000+



freshwater turtles saved by the 1 Million Turtles program in 2022 alone

2023



Eureka Prize for Innovation in Citizen Science awarded to 1 Million Turtles

\$1.1m



ARC Linkage grant for safer drinking water research with five utilities

39+



organisations represented at Waterkeeper Alliance community forums





PROTECT, RESTORE AND PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE USE OF TERRESTRIAL ECOSYSTEMS, SUSTAINABLY MANAGE FORESTS, COMBAT DESERTIFICATION, AND HALT AND REVERSE LAND DEGRADATION AND HALT BIODIVERSITY LOSS

The University looks after some of the last remnant Cumberland Plain bushland in Western Sydney, an endangered ecological community. Its Nature Positive by 2029 commitment is backed by permanent legal protection, large-scale tree planting and ecological research.

PROTECTING ECOSYSTEMS

PROTECTING THE CUMBERLAND PLAIN

The University has a Biodiversity Stewardship Agreement with the NSW Biodiversity Conservation Trust covering 117 hectares of remnant Cumberland Plain bushland at Hawkesbury campus. It permanently protects several endangered and critically endangered plant community types, with a trust fund for ongoing management. The University is a named stakeholder in the Cumberland Plain Recovery Plan and manages threatened species habitat under the NSW Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 and the Commonwealth EPBC Act.

Under its Nature Positive Pledge and the GISU Alliance Net Nature Positive in Cities project, the University has protected 413 hectares of habitat, mapped 19,208 trees on its campuses and put 1,899 hours into invasive species management, mainly through bush regeneration. Ecological research continues through the Hawkesbury Institute for the Environment, including the EucFACE experiment.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

CREATING CANOPIES

Creating Canopies is a partnership with Greater Sydney Landcare to plant 30,000 native trees on Hawkesbury campus over three years. Students, staff and volunteers planted 10,000 trees in the first season in October 2023. The plantings create wildlife corridors, add to campus biodiversity and help cool the landscape. Greater Sydney Landcare provides ecological advice, plants and ongoing maintenance.

EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

WOMBAT CARERS, BIOBLITZ AND THE BLUE MOUNTAINS

In 2024 the School of Science started a free course training wombat carers to treat sarcoptic mange in the field. Students, volunteers and community groups take part in ecological monitoring through 1 Million Turtles and campus BioBlitz events. The Hawkesbury Institute for the Environment also leads the Blue Mountains Hub for Ecology and Conservation, next to the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area, which offers free public outreach and is setting up a permanent network of ecological monitoring plots.

OPERATIONS

BIODIVERSITY IN CAMPUS DEVELOPMENT

Green Star certification requires new campus development to consider site ecology, habitat connectivity and landscape design, and green corridors and canopy planting are standard in campus planning. The Recycled Water Risk Management Plan sets discharge standards to protect surrounding land and waterways, particularly the remnant Cumberland Plain bushland.

AT A GLANCE

413 ha



of habitat protected, including endangered ecological communities

117 ha



of remnant Cumberland Plain bushland under permanent Biodiversity Stewardship Agreement

30,000



native trees being planted with Greater Sydney Landcare – 10,000 in the first season

19,208



trees identified and mapped within the campus built environment





PROMOTE PEACEFUL AND INCLUSIVE SOCIETIES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, PROVIDE ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR ALL AND BUILD EFFECTIVE, ACCOUNTABLE AND INCLUSIVE INSTITUTIONS AT ALL LEVELS

Students and staff have elected seats on the Board of Trustees. The University also provides free legal education across Western Sydney and gives evidence-based advice to government.

GOVERNANCE AND TRANSPARENCY

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Under the Western Sydney University Act 1997 and the Board of Trustees Rules, the Board includes elected undergraduate and postgraduate students, academic staff and professional staff. The University recognises an independent student representative body that takes part in governance committees. External stakeholders are involved through formal policies such as the Course External Advisory Committee Policy, and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Strategy commits the University to consulting and including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in decision-making.

The University publishes its annual financial statements and performance data in full. It has public policies on organised crime, corruption and bribery, with formal whistleblowing procedures, and protects academic freedom through the Code of Conduct (Sections 19 and 20) and a Charter of Academic Freedom adopted by the Academic Senate.

JUSTICE IN THE COMMUNITY

THE JUSTICE CLINIC

The Justice Clinic in the School of Law provides free community legal education to schools, youth centres, community groups and multicultural and multifaith organisations across Western Sydney and regional NSW. Topics include consent, employment rights, police powers, cybersafety, road safety and access to justice. The Clinic also does law reform research, including a submission to the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court on sentencing reform.

POLICY ENGAGEMENT

ADVICE TO GOVERNMENT

The Centre for Western Sydney advises local, state and federal government on urban planning, housing affordability, economic development and social policy, including through its Parramatta 2035 publication. The NSW Bushfire and Natural Hazards Research Centre works directly with NSW Government departments and emergency services. The University also supports the Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue's Australian Community Summit, where political, business and community leaders discuss issues facing Greater Western Sydney.

AT A GLANCE

334



graduates in law and civil enforcement – up 14% year on year

Elected



student, academic and professional staff representation on the Board of Trustees

Free



community legal education delivered across Western Sydney and regional NSW

Public



annual financial statements and performance data





STRENGTHEN THE MEANS OF
IMPLEMENTATION AND REVITALIZE THE
GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT

The Sustainability and
Resilience Decadal Strategy
2030 is aligned to all 17 SDGs
and commits the University to
working with partners in every
sector, from the UN-led Race
to Zero to state government
research centres.

PARTNERING FOR THE GOALS COMMITMENT TO THE 2030 AGENDA

The Sustainability and Resilience Decadal Strategy 2030 is a public framework aligned to the 17 SDGs. It commits the University to work with regional, national and international organisations across all sectors. The University is a signatory to the SDG University Commitment.

In practice, this includes leading the NSW Bushfire and Natural Hazards Research Centre with the NSW Government, a core role in the \$15 million NSW Decarbonisation Innovation Hub, and participation in the UN-led Race to Zero for Universities and Colleges.

AT A GLANCE

17  SDGs explicitly embedded in the Decadal Strategy 2030	\$15m  NSW Decarbonisation Innovation Hub, with WSU as a core partner	Signatory  to the SDG University Commitment	Race to Zero  participant in the UN-led initiative for universities and colleges
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This report presents calendar year 2025 (CY2025) as its principal reporting period. Operational environmental figures – greenhouse gas emissions, energy and water – are CY2025 as published in the University's environmental performance data. Institutional figures on students, graduates, staff and research income are drawn from the THE Impact Ranking Submission 2025, with year-on-year changes as reported in that submission. Figures may differ from those published elsewhere for different reporting periods.

USE OF GENERATIVE AI

Generative AI was used to help draft parts of this report. All figures were checked against University sources before publication.

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