



THE UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY

One Sydney, Many People 2025–2032

The University of Sydney
Indigenous Strategy

Part of the Sydney in
2032
Strategy



Acknowledgement of Country

The University of Sydney's campuses and facilities are located on the ancestral lands of Indigenous peoples who have sustained them for millennia.

While our Camperdown/Darlington Campus is located on the lands of the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation, our presence extends across many other Nations through our teaching, research, clinical work, fieldwork and partnerships.

For more than 65,000 years these lands have been cared for and enriched by Indigenous custodians, who have for thousands of generations exchanged knowledge for the benefit of all – a legacy that continues today through the contributions of our many Indigenous staff, students and alumni.

Respectfully acknowledging these ancient and ongoing learning cultures and traditions, the University of Sydney declares its commitment to the continuation of this sharing through our work.

There is no part of Australia where we work that has not been loved, nourished and cared for since the beginning of time.

We also recognise that our University community today is global, and we encourage all who work, study and visit with us to reflect on the experiences of the First Peoples and cultures of the lands on which they engage, wherever they are in the world. Just as we honour the knowledges and histories of the Indigenous peoples of Australia and their ongoing custodianship of this land, we invite all members of our community to approach Country and place with respect and cultural sensitivities.

In this document we respectfully use the term 'Indigenous' to refer to the descendants of the original inhabitants of the land now known as Australia, while acknowledging that other terms including 'Aboriginal', 'Torres Strait Islander' and 'First Nations' are also used in the Australian context.

Our locations and their traditional custodians

New South Wales

- **Bundjalung/Badjelang** (Lismore)
University Centre for Rural Health
- **Cammeraygal** (St Leonards)
Northern Clinical School
- **Darkinjung** (Pearl Beach, Central Coast)
Crommelin Biological Station
- **Deerubbin** (Nepean/Penrith)
Nepean Clinical School
- **Dharawal/Tharawal** (Camden)
Camden Campus
- **Dharug/Dharuk** (Westmead)
Westmead Campus
Westmead Clinical School
Children's Hospital Westmead Clinical School
- **Gadigal (coastal Eora clan)** (Sydney and surrounds)
Camperdown/Darlington Campus
Central Business District (CBD) Campus
Surry Hills Campus
Sydney Conservatorium of Music
- **Kamilaroi/Gamilaroi/Gomeroi** (Narrabri)
Plant Breeding Institute
- **Wangal** (Concord)
Concord Clinical School
- **Wiljali/Wilyakali** (Broken Hill)
Broken Hill University Department of Rural Health
- **Wiradjuri** (Dubbo/Orange)
School of Rural Health

Queensland

- **Bailai, Gooreng Gooreng, Gurang, Taribelang Bunda** (Gladstone region)
One Tree Island Research Station





Image: Widening Participation and Outreach - Lake Mungo, Indigenous Youth Project. The ancestral lands of the Barkandji/Paakantyi, Mutthi Mutthi, and Ngiyampaa peoples, Willandra Lakes region.
Photographer: Cornel Ozies, 2017



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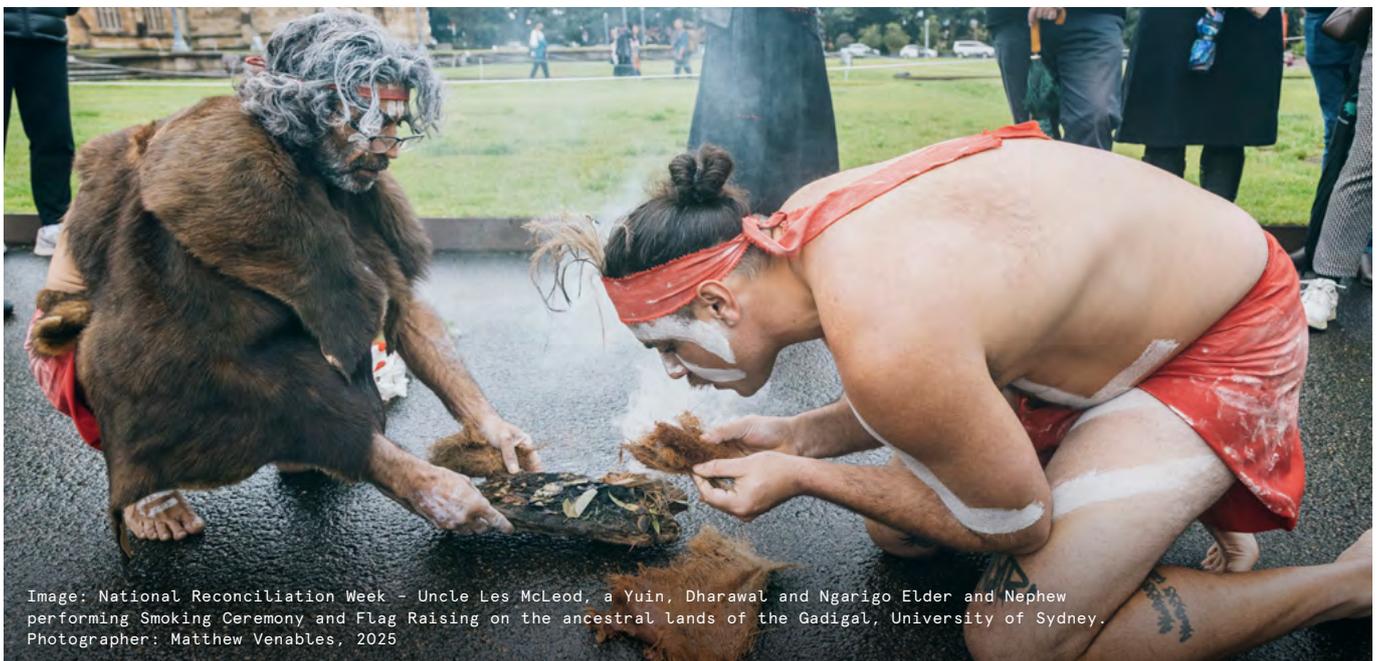


Image: National Reconciliation Week - Uncle Les McLeod, a Yuin, Dharawal and Ngarigo Elder and Nephew performing Smoking Ceremony and Flag Raising on the ancestral lands of the Gadigal, University of Sydney.
Photographer: Matthew Venables, 2025

One Sydney, Many People 2025–2032

The University of Sydney Indigenous Strategy

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Foreword

Vice-Chancellor and President



We are proud to welcome more Indigenous students and staff as part of our community than ever before. They bring with them knowledges, expertise and leadership across a rich diversity of disciplines and professions. This continued growth is not only a strength of our University today, it is essential to achieving the ambitions of our Sydney in 2032 strategy.

Achieving these ambitions is a shared responsibility. Every member of our University community has a role in advancing these goals in their daily practice. By elevating Indigenous knowledges, expertise and leadership across our teaching, research and professional domains, and by fostering a culturally safe place to learn and to work, we create a stronger University that benefits everyone.

We acknowledge our deep obligation to learn from and with more than 65,000 years of Indigenous knowledge, traditions of education, and connection to Country. We are committed to strengthening our relationships with Indigenous peoples and communities, and to supporting their aspirations through our shared work.

The One Sydney, Many People strategy 2025–2032 is a whole-of-University strategy, aligned and in partnership with the ambitions of our Sydney in 2032 strategy. It is designed to be implemented, incorporated and governed across the University. Through this strategy, we affirm our commitment to Indigenous peoples – their knowledges, cultures and communities – and to ensuring that these are valued and embedded across our education, research and ways of working. Central to this commitment is supporting the self-determination of Indigenous peoples in shaping the University’s future.

Strong governance and leadership are essential to this work. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous Strategy and Services) will coordinate the implementation of this strategy, with each member of the University Executive accountable to the University Senate for driving its priorities. Regular review and renewal will ensure that our efforts continue to reflect our shared purpose and responsibility.

Together, we commit to building a University where Indigenous knowledges, leadership and cultures are elevated – and where our future is stronger because of it.

Professor Mark Scott AO
Vice-Chancellor and President

Foreword

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous Strategy and Services)



As the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous Strategy and Services) of the University of Sydney, I am very pleased to lead this second iteration of the University's One Sydney, Many People strategy. This 2025–2032 strategy builds on the important work of my predecessors, and acknowledges the significant contributions they have made to the University, and to the Indigenous community more broadly.

I am extremely proud to work within an institution that has achieved a number of 'firsts'. The University of Sydney was the first university established in Australia (in 1850), the first university to award a degree to an Indigenous graduate (in 1966), and the first university to establish an Indigenous-identified Deputy Vice-Chancellor role (in 2012). I am even more proud to be personally associated with another 'first' at this institution – I was the first Indigenous person to be awarded a PhD through the University's Faculty of Health Sciences (in 2010). And now, in 2025, as we celebrate 175 years since the

University first opened its doors, we embark on the second iteration of our One Sydney, Many People strategy, which ensures we continue the critical work that transforms people's lives and produces positive outcomes in the Indigenous communities we serve.

The current historical context has in many ways informed a sense of uncertainty. We have recently seen a failed referendum bid to enshrine within the Australian Constitution a Voice to Parliament for Indigenous people to inform the legal and policy decisions that affect them, and geopolitical events around the world continue to influence international discourse and raise the threat of war. But at the same time we are experiencing a paradigm shift in the way in which Western science is viewing, positioning and indeed valuing Indigenous knowledges. And while we are almost certainly still in for some challenging times, we each have power that we can exercise for good within our own spheres of influence. This is where we can make a difference.

This strategy is the blueprint for our work to come. It is deliberate in its intention to improve outcomes in Indigenous communities, and focuses our attention on four key strategic pillars, each with associated strategic goals across Education, Research, Partnerships, and Governance and Leadership. With these goals as our guide, the University will elevate Indigenous knowledge systems in everything we do, ensuring measurable progress that honours

Country and advances our institution and our community. Each goal has identified high-level priorities and key performance indicators (KPIs) to facilitate monitoring and tracking of our progress. Working with all areas across the University, we will develop detailed plans that align with these priorities and are underpinned by the University's values of trust, excellence and accountability – trust in honouring Indigenous voices; excellence in setting new standards of achievement; and accountability through transparent, measurable progress that strengthens our University and enriches our society.

The success of this strategy is predicated on the premise that a whole-of-University effort is required – one that is genuine, Indigenous-led, and driven by the support of allies well into the next chapter of this longest-established university in Australia. I am grateful to all who walk with us on this journey, and I look forward with trust and respect to what we can achieve together.

Professor Reuben Bolt
Deputy Vice-Chancellor
(Indigenous Strategy and Services)



Our values

The values of the One Sydney Many People strategy 2025–2032 directly align with those articulated in our Sydney in 2032 strategy.

To articulate this alignment, we draw on the University of Sydney's Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property and Indigenous Data Sovereignty Protocol. This Protocol guides us to respect and protect Indigenous knowledge systems, cultural expression and data generation. Ensuring this alignment places cultural integrity, obligation and sensitivities at the forefront of everything we do.

Trust

We build trust through genuine relationships, integrity and consistency.

Excellence

We set new standards in Indigenous research, education and community engagement.

Accountability

Leadership, accountability and transparency are embedded at every level.



Image: *Spine 3 (Radiance)* Carslaw Building, Gadigal Campus. "I begin with a line of inheritance in rock art, but I am not bound to the rock art of my ancestors. Instead, my work is aligned to contemporary practice with different histories and new materials."
Artist: Dale Harding, 2018
Photographer: Iman Irannejad, 2020



Our vision

We will elevate and privilege Indigenous knowledge systems that have been generated over the course of 65,000 years of extended experience with the natural environment. This wisdom from which we draw will be harnessed and channelled into knowledge creation, exchange and excellence in education and research.

The One Sydney, Many People strategy 2025–2032 builds on the University’s achievements to date and sets a bold vision for the future with Indigenous students at its heart. We commit to shaping their experiences and preparing them for leadership roles for the duration of their lives and across all sectors. Their success is the driving energy for this strategy, with the University uniquely positioned on the global stage to nurture the next generation of Indigenous leaders who will help to shape the world with cultural integrity, and with the ability to navigate the full range of systems and contexts they will encounter in their professional lives.

Aligned with national commitments to elevating Indigenous knowledge systems, the University is committed to embedding Indigenous knowledges across education, research and governance. At the core of this strategy lie the principles of community engagement, accountability and truth, ensuring that our work is guided by, and responsive to, Indigenous peoples and communities.

Through the strategic priorities outlined within this document, Indigenous knowledge systems are woven throughout all disciplines and across all campuses, fostering deep connections that create enduring, measurable and transformative impact. Guided by shared leadership, robust governance and collaboration across teaching, research and services, this strategy is designed to be all-encompassing and transformative.

This strategy reflects the University’s responsibility to its students, staff and communities to recognise and achieve excellence, to foster trust and inclusion, and to ensure that our campuses and practices embody the values of respect, knowledge and accountability.

Collaboration across the University is essential to our success. Looking towards 2032 and beyond, our aspiration is to be a truly Australian university, a place for all, defined by Indigenous leadership, deep partnership and shared purpose.

How we will achieve it

To ensure we achieve our vision, we have identified four key strategic pillars, each with associated strategic goals. Under each strategic goal, the University commits to a suite of key priorities designed to facilitate the achievement of that goal. Thus, this strategy is not a collection of isolated priorities but a unified framework that reflects our shared accountability and our collective responsibility for meaningful and sustainable change towards the achievement of our vision.

For each priority, lead – and, where appropriate, shared – responsibility has been assigned to develop action plans that detail how enablers such as resources, partnerships, and communities of practice will be leveraged to drive impact, address barriers to succeed and, critically, manage potential risks.

Each priority lead will report regularly to the University Executive Indigenous Committee, the University Executive and the University Senate against the key milestones identified in their action plans. Portfolios, faculties and schools will also report to the University Executive through their governance process where relevant.

This strategy will support a broad range of existing and emerging University strategies and plans. The priorities, KPIs and targets outlined in this strategy align with those of these other key strategies and plans, as well as with those of the overarching Sydney in 2032 strategy, ensuring a cohesive approach to achieving long-term University goals.

The One Sydney, Many People strategy 2025–2032 will be reviewed in 2028 and again in 2031, to ensure that it continues to respond to the rapidly changing operating environment, the evolving landscape of education, and community feedback. This will ensure that the strategy remains dynamic, responsive, and aligned with the University’s broader vision.



Images: Traditional Shelter - Bulmba build with Uncle Bumi Hyde (Yidinji) and Steven Kynuna (Yidinji, Wunumara) at the School of Architecture, Design and Planning. Photographer: Billy Rokos, 2023



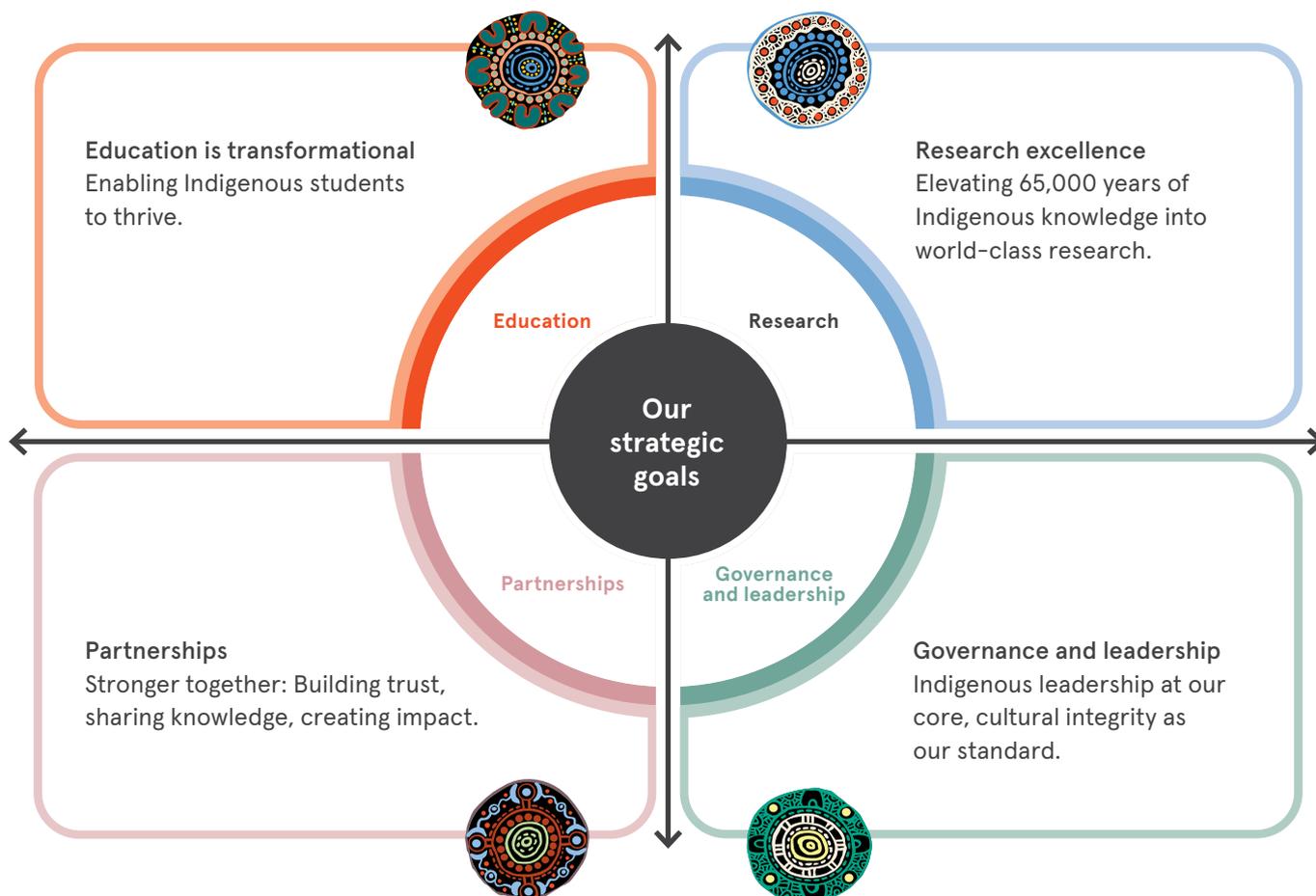
Our strategic pillars

The following four strategic pillars of the One Sydney, Many People strategy 2025–2032 provide our framework for success.

- **Eora (People):** A renewed focus on people, placing Indigenous staff and students at the heart of the University
- **Pemulian (Environment):** Enhanced environments in which we learn and work to embody Indigenous cultural values and ensure seamless exchanges of knowledge
- **Nguragaingun (Culture and community):** Enhanced connections to communities, and respectful engagement with traditional knowledges and cultures in University business
- **Ngara (Education and research):** Elevated Indigenous knowledges that are positioned at the heart of research and education, in our purpose and our practice

Our strategic goals

This strategy directs our ambition in every aspect of the core business of a university – education, research, partnerships, and the governance and leadership that ensures progress.



Education is transformational

Enabling Indigenous students to thrive

Access will be strengthened through tailored entry pathways and transition programs, while success will be nurtured through expansion of our Gadigal Centre as well as through localised support, mentoring, wellbeing services and an Indigenous Alumni Network.

Shared leadership across the University will ensure consistent delivery of recruitment, support, curriculum and community engagement. This will lift enrolment, progression and completion rates, fostering a safe, proud and connected student experience.

Teaching excellence will be advanced by embedding Indigenous perspectives across the curriculum, supported by staff development, dedicated curriculum expertise and on-Country learning. Expanded scholarships, fellowships and industry partnerships will reduce barriers and create pathways to further study and employment.

Key priorities

Priorities	Lead responsibility	KPI	Baseline 2025	Target 2028	Target 2032
Expand Indigenous student outreach and recruitment programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - DVC (Indigenous Strategy and Services) - Vice-President (External Engagement) 	Total Indigenous enrolments (with target of 8% increase annually)	628	791	1076
Maintain Indigenous student unit success rates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - DVC (Indigenous Strategy and Services) - DVC (Education and Students) 	Indigenous student unit success rate	93.3%	> 85%	> 90%
Embed Indigenous knowledges across curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - DVC (Indigenous Strategy and Services) - DVC (Education and Students) 	Percentage of all students learning and being assessed on Indigenous knowledge as part of their study	Baseline to be determined in 2026	20%	40%
Address financial barriers of Indigenous students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - DVC (Indigenous Strategy and Services) - Vice-President (Advancement) - DVC (Education and Students) 	Percentage of Indigenous students receiving a scholarship	44% (UG students only; baseline for all students to be determined in 2026)	75%	80%



Research excellence

Elevating 65,000 years of Indigenous knowledge into world-class research

Our work towards this goal will be the engine room of excellence, driving Indigenous-led and community-led research that delivers impact locally and globally. It will strengthen Indigenous leadership to ensure that Indigenous perspectives shape discovery, teaching and community engagement, while building the workforce capacity and infrastructure needed to sustain a strong and growing cohort of Indigenous researchers and academics.

Central to this goal will be elevating our Indigenous Research Strategy as an institutional priority, embedding Indigenous knowledge systems across the University and applying the Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property and Indigenous Data Sovereignty Protocol to our ethics, governance and research practice. Strong governance structures will guarantee Indigenous representation, transparent reporting, and accountability for outcomes such as publications, Indigenous-led projects, funding, and community impact.

The University will expand its Indigenous research impact and establish a dedicated Indigenous-led funding scheme focusing on community benefit and innovation. A structured pipeline will support Indigenous academics, from higher degree by research (HDR) students through to senior leaders, reinforced by targeted recruitment, mentoring, retention and promotion.

By elevating Indigenous academic and leadership positions and deepening international research networks alongside the Indigenisation of curriculum, we will connect research, teaching and community, ensuring knowledge translation and global impact.

Key priorities

Priorities	Lead responsibility	KPI	Baseline 2025	Target 2028	Target 2032
Grow our Indigenous academic workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - DVC (Research) - DVC (Indigenous Strategy and Services) - Senior DVC and Provost 	Number of Indigenous academics	63	90	120
Achieve Indigenous research excellence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - DVC (Research) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase in total value of grants awarded to Indigenous researchers - Increase in funding of Indigenous research (to be defined) as reported in HERDC 	Baseline to be determined in 2026	> 5%	> 10%

Partnerships

Stronger together: Building trust, sharing knowledge, creating impact

Our partnerships begin with the relationships we build across the University, with the intention that these values strengthen our wider community locally, nationally and globally. We recognise that truly meaningful impact in research, education and practice is made possible through the engagement and support of Indigenous businesses, communities and organisations.

Guided by the University’s Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property and Indigenous Data Sovereignty Protocol, and building on activities such as our Indigenous Procurement Strategy, we will become the partner of choice by fostering relationships grounded in reciprocity, trust and longevity.

This work will include updating our procurement policy and practices, expanding secondments, traineeships and internships with Indigenous organisations, and exploring global partnerships with Indigenous-led universities and organisations. Our portfolios, faculties and schools will drive knowledge exchanges through guest lectures, workshops and on-Country learning. An expanded events program will create more opportunities for staff and students to engage in conferences, volunteering and community building.

We will also strengthen philanthropy by engaging our alumni and donors in support of Indigenous scholarships and research. Indigenous leadership will be central to shaping and sustaining these partnerships, ensuring lasting and positive outcomes.

Key priorities

Priorities	Lead responsibility	KPI	Baseline 2025	Target 2028	Target 2032
Expand relationships with Indigenous-led businesses, communities and organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - DVC (Indigenous Strategy and Services) - Vice-President (Operations) - Vice-President (External Engagement) 	Total annual spend with Indigenous suppliers	\$8.3 million	\$10.5 million	\$13 million
Grow the program for Indigenous knowledge exchange and engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - DVC (Indigenous Strategy and Services) - Senior DVC and Provost - Deans - University Executive - DVC (Research) - Human Resources 	Annual number of Indigenous knowledge exchanges	10	15	25
Grow philanthropy for Indigenous causes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vice-President (Advancement) 	Total value of major gifts allocated in support of Indigenous causes	\$1 million (approx)	\$5 million	\$10 million

Governance and leadership

Indigenous leadership at our core, cultural integrity as our standard

We will position Indigenous leadership and governance as paramount to the University’s future, and commit to setting Indigenous staff and students up for success by fostering a culturally safe, supportive and accountable University. We will ensure the best working conditions, effective procedures, and a culture that attracts, nurtures and sustains Indigenous talent across all career stages.

We will expand Indigenous representation across our key governance and decision-making committees, and embed accountability through hiring targets, key performance indicators linked to cultural competence, and transparent reporting.

We will strengthen our cultural safety through mandatory cultural competence and anti-racism training, integration of cultural education across programs, and assessment of cultural competence in promotion processes. We will also empower Indigenous students to use their voices as part of a whole-of-University approach to leadership.

Robust governance and financial frameworks will sustain these commitments, supported by formal leadership programs and transparent progress reporting by the University Executive Indigenous Committee, with reviews of this strategy conducted in 2028 and 2031.

Through these actions, the University will increase its attraction, retention and progression of Indigenous staff into leadership roles, while embedding a culture recognised for its integrity, safety, and respect for Indigenous knowledges.

Key priorities

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Strengthen Indigenous representation across University Governance Committees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – University Governance Office – DVC (Indigenous Strategy and Services) – University Executive – University Senate 	Percentage of University Governance Committees that include Indigenous representative(s)	48% (There are currently 25 Governance Committees, of which 12 include at least one Indigenous representative)	75%	90%
Grow Indigenous leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – University Executive 	Percentage of Indigenous staff in senior roles (SPSA and above, academic level C and above)	1.08%	2%	3%
Expand appreciation of Indigenous knowledges across the University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – DVC (Indigenous Strategy and Services) – University Executive – University Senate – Human Resources 	Percentage of the University’s senior leadership team who have completed cultural education and/or cultural exchange programs	Baseline to be determined in 2026	50%	80%

Summary of key priorities

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Expand appreciation of Indigenous knowledges across the University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DVC (Indigenous Strategy and Services) University Executive University Senate Human Resources 	Percentage of the University's senior leadership team who have completed cultural education and/or cultural exchange programs	Baseline to be determined in 2026	50%	80%

About the cover artwork



Far left: Luke Penrith (2020) *Yanhambabirra Burambabirra Yalbailinya* (Come, Share and Learn), © Luke Penrith, reproduced courtesy Luke Penrith. Commissioned for the One Sydney, Many People strategy
Left: Artist, Luke Penrith

About the artwork

Created by artist Luke Penrith, *Yanhambabirra Burambabirra Yalbailinya* (Come, Share and Learn) was originally commissioned to reflect the vision of our One Sydney, Many People strategy 2021–2024. It continues to represent our collective journey and aspirations, supporting the next phase as reflected in our One Sydney, Many People strategy 2025–2032.

Yanhambabirra Burambabirra Yalbailinya depicts a rich interconnected story of knowledge, community and growth, reflecting both the history and the future aspirations of the University. At the centre of the artwork is the *gadi* (Xanthorrea), found on the grounds of the University's Camperdown/Darlington Campus and acknowledging our primary location in the heart of Gadigal country. The central flowering bud reaches out with its ochre heartbeat and travels to the four pillars of this strategy:

- Nguragaingun (Culture and community) – base
- Pemulian (Environment) – left-hand side
- Ngara (Education and research) – right-hand side
- Eora (People) – top.

The heartbeat then continues on to form four fire circles, each signifying a season of the year, and further to create two knowledge corners (top right and bottom left).

The fire and flame motif represents the desire to share knowledge and to prosper along the journey. The four coolamons support this journey through the nurturing, sharing and nourishing that is required along the way.

On two of the coolamons are clapsticks, representing welcoming with song, finding food with digging sticks, grinding grains, and preparing food. The other two coolamons feature progressively growing triangle shapes, reflecting growth.

We know that not everyone's journey is direct. The people in the knowledge corner at top left are on a clear path, and are depicted with considered balance. The people in the knowledge corner at bottom right are on a journey – not lost, but still discovering along the way. Throughout, there is representation of sky, sea, river and sand, all speaking of Country, where the journey began.

The symmetry of the design and the numerical repetition tell the story of creating balance and harmony through perseverance and determination. We may need to complete the same task multiple times before balance is achieved.

About the artist

Luke Penrith is a contemporary Aboriginal artist from Brungle, NSW, with ancestry from the Wiradjuri, Wotjobaluk, Yuin and Gumbaynggirr Nations. His art is inspired by lived experience and deep connection to rivers, mountains, coastlines and plains. Passionate about mentoring and supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, Luke centres lore, culture and heritage in all his work.



Image: Cornel Ozies (Yawuru/Djugan)- holding Koolamon from the Kimberley, Western Australia.
Photographer: Tom Cavdarovski, 2020



Image: For the Gadigal People of the Eora Nation, lawn plaque on ancestral lands of the Gadigal, University of Sydney.
Photographer: Tom Cavdarovski, 2020

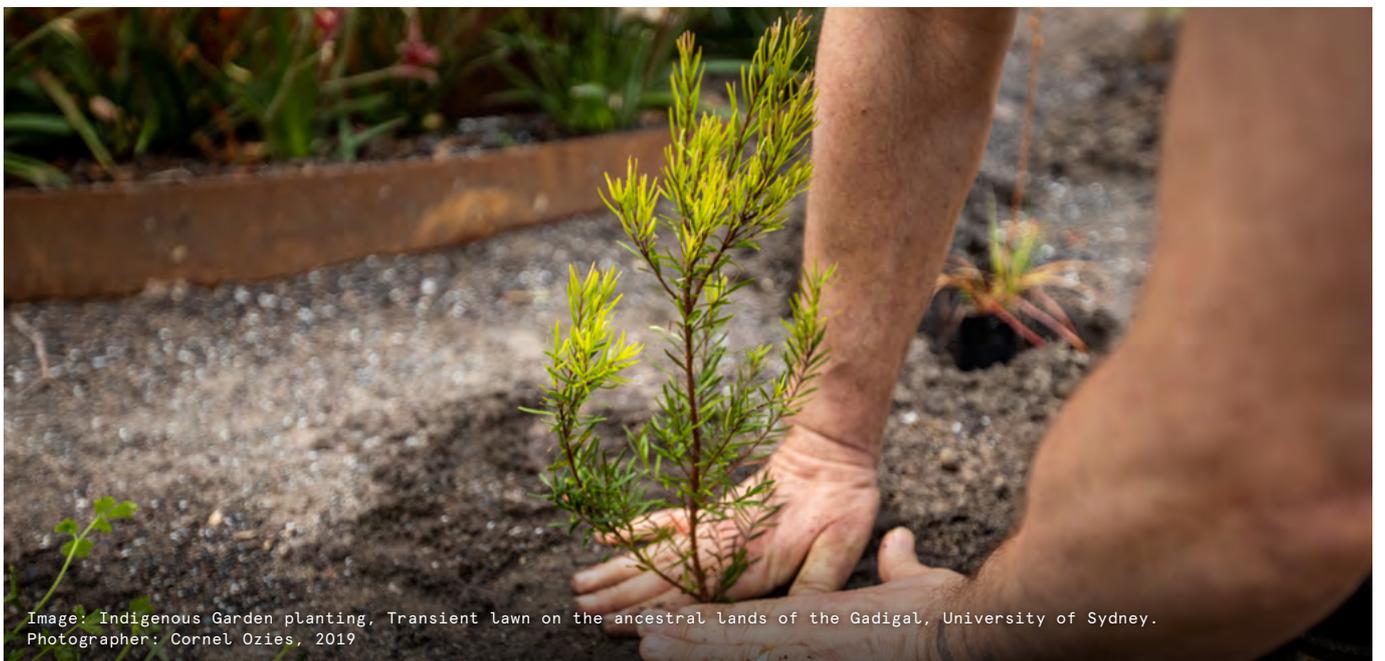


Image: Indigenous Garden planting, Transient Lawn on the ancestral lands of the Gadigal, University of Sydney.
Photographer: Cornel Ozies, 2019

Contact

Indigenous Strategy and Services

dvciss@sydney.edu.au

sydney.edu.au

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