THE UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY

Create real impact.

Collaborate with our students on real-world projects.

We acknowledge the tradition of custodianship and law of the Country on which the University of Sydney campuses stand. We pay our respect to those who have cared and continue to care for Country.

Create real impact.

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Contents

The world of work is being radically transformed and the skills and experience that our graduates require to innovate and lead across a variety of industries is changing. The University of Sydney supports this ongoing evolution by working closely with industry, government and community employers so our students are prepared for the ever-shifting contemporary workforce. Our reimagined undergraduate curriculum ensures that students have opportunities to work across fields of knowledge and on authentic projects.

We're looking to partner with organisations to ensure we're preparing the next generation of leaders with the skills and experiences needed to thrive in the most diverse future work environments.

Get in touch with our Engagement Team and let's start a conversation.

You can contact them via email
dvc-education.engagement@sydney.edu.au

Industry and Community Project Units

To prepare students for their future careers, the University of Sydney delivers the Industry and Community Project Units (ICPUs).

Taking place either within Australia or internationally, this program brings together students from all disciplines, across the university, to work together on authentic industry challenges. throughout the projects, students collaborate and learn from industry experts while researching, analysing and innovating together to find creative solutions to some of the biggest issues facing society today. Our students are working on real solutions that address global threats such as climate change and growing inequalities. Our students have worked on projects such as integrating an intersectional approach within gender equality policies with Elizabeth Broderick and Co and decarbonising the transport network with Jacobs.

Partner with us

To deliver on this unique learning experience, we are looking to partner with industry, community, and government organisations in both Australia and internationally to source genuine problems that allow our students to tackle pressing challenges in a real-world context.

We are looking to partner with a diverse range of organisations (large and small) who are passionate about education and see the value in providing support to our future graduates.

Partnering on an ICPU is a great way for your organisation to have an impact on a large group of future graduates with no-cost to your organisation and low time commitment.

Our dedicated engagement team take care of all logistics for the project, will provide guidance throughout the process and are always available to answer any questions you might have.

About the ICPUs

In each project there is up to 50 students, coming from different faculties across the university. These students are provided with a complex problem by your organisation to solve.

Students are divided into small interdisciplinary groups to research, analyse and produce solutions to your complex problem.

Throughout the project you will have the opportunity to engage and provide expert advice and feedback to students. Students are led by an academic supervisor and taught key skills such as problem solving, critical thinking, impactful communication and teamwork and are assessed throughout the unit with group based and individual assignments.

At the end of the project students will present to your organisation their innovative final solutions and recommendations.

Students receive 6 or 12 credit points towards their degree for the completion of an ICPU.

The ICPUs are run at two different levels for students, one with 3rd year students (3000 level) and one with 4th year Advanced Studies students (4000 level).

3000 level projects	4000 level projects
Students	
– Science, Business, Arts, Architecture, Design and Planning, Law, Engineering, Music, Medicine and Health – Students in at least their 3rd year of study	– Science, Business, Arts, Architecture, Design and Planning, Medicine and Health – Students in their 4th year completing a Advanced Studies degree
Credit points	
6 credit points	12 credit points
2024 Sessions	
– February intensive – 22 January – 9 February – Semester 1 – 19 February – 24 May – July intensive – 24 June – 12 July – Semester 2 – 29 July – 1 November – October intensive – 16 September – 27 October	– Session 1 – 22 January – 24 May – Session 2 - 24 June – 1 November
Time commitment across all sessions	
There is an estimated 10 – 12-hour time commitment across all sessions	
Projects	
At the 3000 level potential projects are envisaged as broad in form and will focus on authentic problems your organisation or industry is currently facing.	At the 4000 level we require problems that are more research-intensive and are an industry wide problem. Teaching in this unit will have more of a focus on innovation, with students encouraged to create solutions that could result in the creation of a start-up.

About the projects

Potential projects are envisaged as broad in form and will focus on genuine business problems. Projects must be multidisciplinary in nature.

Some of the project topics our students have explored in the past include:

– How can we reimagine social housing in NSW?

– How can we predict the next health crisis?

– How can we break the mold of traditional retail?

– What is the impact of generative AI in the education sector?

– How can we create a renewable energy future?

Examples of student projects outcomes

University of Sydney and EY – Reframe our Future (3000 level semester project)
In collaboration with EY, we ran the project 'Reframe our Future' wherein our students identified untapped human needs because of the pandemic and were tasked with designing and developing a proposed solution that creates long-term value for all stakeholders. One student group identified the idea of using virtual reality technology to improve the well-being of aged care residents. The virtual reality technology was proposed to be used by residents to partake in immersive experiences of exploring cherished travel destinations and rekindling nostalgic memories.

University of Sydney and Singapore Airlines' KrisShop – Excelling in an Australian Market (3000 level global July intensive project)
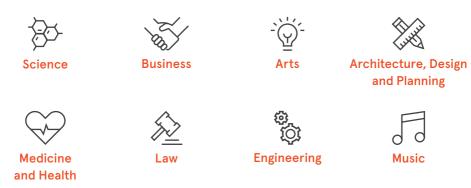In June 2023 18 University of Sydney students travelled to Singapore to collaborate with Singapore Airlines' KrisShop on a project all around excelling in the Australian' Market. KrisShop was interested in understanding the Australian retail market and how they could better position themselves in the market. One student group came up with the idea to allow the use of KrisFlyer points to access popular Australian subscription based streaming services and recreational activities. This included streaming of sports and movies, along with gym memberships.

About the students

We believe that creative solutions to complex problems can't be solved in silos, which is why we bring together students from across fields of knowledge to tackle your business problem from different angles.

Due to its project-based nature and accessibility for undergraduate students from all faculties, we can have up to 50 students in each project collaborating and engaging with your organisation's complex problem. Students will be in thier penultimate or final year of study.

Science

Business

Arts

Architecture, Design and Planning

Medicine and Health

Law

Engineering

Music

"The ICPU helped me to get my current role in every way that I can think of. The deliverables produced, the work performed and the processes that I undertook is exactly what I do as a management consultant now at IBM. I was able to leverage my experiences from the ICPU in my interview when going for my role at IBM."

Vincent Giannini
Bachelor of Commerce

Education outcomes

Throughout the project, students are led by an academic supervisor and taught key skills that help prepare them for their future careers. At the completion of the project, students should be able to:

– Demonstrate critical awareness of and apply disciplinary knowledge skills and personal attributes to address complex real-world problems

– Assess and integrate diverse stakeholder perspectives to generate innovative insights into complex problems

– Purposefully select and apply complex problem-solving approaches and methods

– Communicate novel ideas effectively and persuasively in professional settings

– Demonstrate professionalism (proficiency, adaptivity and proactivity) in collaborative project work.

Assessments

As part of the unit, students complete a range of individual and group assessments. Students receive 6 or 12 credit points towards their degree for the completion of an ICPU.

Individual statement
Students reflect on their contributions to the group project and to identify lessons for future collaborations.

Group Plan
Students develop an achievable plan for their group work across the project.

Group presentation
The presentation serves as a showcase of student recommendations to the project partner.

Group Project Report
The final report presents student research findings to demonstrate the feasibility, viability, and desirability of their recommendations.

About the process

We estimate a total time investment of 10 – 12 hours over the course of the project. For our domestic projects students will be based at our Camperdown/Darlington campus. For international projects, students will be based at a local university in-country.

Pre-project

– We work with you to determine a complex project problem for our students.

– We advertise this project to our students and keep you updated on student numbers.

– We assign an academic supervisor to the project, and they will collaborate with you to further develop a project brief for the students.

– We agree on the engagement dates for the project.

– We ask that you provide any resources/information that you believe might be relevant to the students learning.

Engagement sessions with students

Briefing session → Pitching session → Progess Pitches Q & A → Final Presentations

During the project

For engagement sessions with the students we prefer in-person engagement. However, we understand that this isn't always possible and can facilitate virtual engagement with the students as needed.

If possible, it is a great experience for the students if you are able to host any of these sessions at your offices. We are also open to exploring any excursions or field trips that might add value to the students learning experience, if you have any suggestions.

3000 level project engagement

– **Briefing session (1.5 hours)**
For this session with the students, we ask that you brief the students on your organisation and speak to the project problem. The briefing should cover both the key challenges and opportunities in the current conditions.

– **Student pitches (2 hours)**
In this session student groups will have around 5 minutes to pitch to you their initial thinking and ideas on the topic. We ask you to provide feedback and guidance to ensure they are heading in the right direction.

– **Progress pitches and Q&A: (2 hours)**
This will be a feedback session where students can test the relevance and feasibility of their ideas and ask any questions, they may have about their project direction. This will be the students' final chance to ask any last questions before they present.

– **Final presentations (2.5 hours)**
In this session, each student group will present to you their final solutions and you'll have the opportunity to ask questions about the student's research and recommendations.

4000 level project engagement

- **Briefing session (1.5 hours)**
  For this session with the students, we ask that you brief the students on your organisation and speak to the project problem. The briefing should cover both the key problems and opportunities in the current conditions.

- **Initial student pitches (2 hours)**
  In this session student groups will have around 5 minutes to pitch to you their initial thinking and ideas on the topic. We ask you to provide feedback and guidance to ensure they are heading in the right direction.

- **Proposal pitches (4000 level only) (2.5 hours)**
  In this session student groups will present their proposals of where they will focus their research efforts over the next 3 months

- **Progress pitches and Q&A: (2 hours)**
  This will be a feedback session where students can test the relevance and feasibility of their ideas and ask any questions, they may have about their project direction. This will be the students' final chance to ask any last questions before they present.

- **Final presentations (2.5 hours)**
  In this session, each student group will present to you their final solutions and you'll have the opportunity to ask questions about the student's research and recommendations.

After project

- We debrief with you after the project to understand how you found the experience. We can discuss if you would like to proceed again, or we connect you to other areas of the University for further your engagement with the University of Sydney depending on your business needs.

- We share with you the students' final reports once they have been graded.

Why partner with us?

Access to the best talent

These projects provide a great opportunity to engage with motivated senior undergraduate students from a diverse range of disciplines.

These projects provide exposure and insights into your organisation and the range of careers that might be available to our students.

Innovative problem solving

Our students provide our partners with genuinely creative, innovative and effective insights to a range of different issues.

No cost

There is no cost to your organisation. Your investment is centred on time – an estimated commitment of a minimum of 10–12 hours.

"The cross disciplinary nature of the unit provides students with an opportunity to collaborate and solve problems, similar to the agile ways of working that Westpac teams use on a daily basis which brings together stakeholders across a range of business and technology areas. It is an excellent way to demonstrate the knowledge and practical skills that employers like Westpac look for in graduates."

Nick Munro
Head of Automation, Westpac

"EY has been a proud partner of the ICPU program since 2019 and came on board as a sponsor with the shared goal of improving learning outcomes, employability and supporting a better overall student experience. The University has provided an exceptional platform for EY to bring our industry lens to help support an enriching learning experience by providing the opportunity for students to work on real world industry problems. The ICPU program is exemplary in its openness to collaboration and strong focus on the student to deliver an enriching learning experience. This program has provided students a tremendous launchpad to link their coursework to their future career and has unlocked connection with industry."

Alison Cairns
Partner, Oceania Education Lead, EY

Our projects and partners

We have partnered groups of interdisciplinary students with more than 85 leading organisations in Australia and internationally, including China, Hong Kong, Italy, India, Singapore and the UK.

Previous partner organisations include Adobe, Youth Justice NSW, Bridge Housing, Are Media, Business Western Sydney, Cartier, City of Sydney, Gilbert and Tobin, HSBC, TATA, JLL, ANSTO, NSW Department of Education, Powerhouse Museum, The Smith Family, Ventia, Westpac, EY and more.

Business Western Sydney – Reimagining Western Sydney as an International Tourist Destination (3000 level)

Western Sydney has long been one of the State's most colourful regions of food, arts, culture and people, increasingly luring visitors from around metropolitan Sydney for work, play and stay.

Parramatta as an example, is a Western Sydney suburb which has quickly become Sydney's second CBD, however it remains to have low recognition as a bucket list destination for international visitors and tourism. What is currently attractive about Western Sydney's suburbs as a tourist's destination? What must be reimagined for Western Sydney's suburbs, such as Blacktown, Parramatta, and Bankstown, to experience the same elevated marketing and social benefits, and considered as trendy as the suburbs around Sydney CBD akin to Newtown, Paddington, and Surry Hills? How do you improve the city's attractiveness to all demographics? In this project, you should highlight the existing successes and roadblocks attributed to Western Sydney's suburbs from being an attractive international tourist destination, provide ideas and recommendations on further actions for government, and you are encouraged to compare with promising global case studies as to successful implementation of such recommendations.

TATA India – The Future of Automotive and Mobility (3000 level)

Tata Autocomp Systems is a leading supplier of automobile components and engineering services. Tata AutoComp has a presence in 7 countries with, 51 manufacturing facilities spread India and 8 facilities spread across North America, Latin America, Europe, and China. Some of its leading clients include Jaguar Land Rover, Tata Motors, Mercedes Benz, Ford, Audi and Volkswagen. Tata AutoComp Systems business requires it to be always future ready to meet the ever-changing technology landscape & demands of the growing automotive industry. While the organisation has ventured into Electric Vehicles, as well as Automotive Power Electronic components, it is imperative for us to constantly innovate, learn and adopt new technology and products to stay ahead of the curve in the future of automotive and mobility. In this project, students will evaluate and research the latest technology and product requirements in the automotive industry and provide recommendations on new technology and products TATA AutoComp can adopt, as well as potential expansion into new geographic markets.

NSW Department of Education – Educational Assessment in the Age of Generative AI (4000 level)

Generative AI, and ChatGPT in particular, is being described by some as a watershed moment in human history – a cognitive revolution with the potential for transformative impact on the scale of the agrarian or industrial revolutions. While we cannot know the future, even the current state of generative AI raises critical questions for educational assessment. Especially in the case of high-stakes assessment (which confers academic status and determines entry to valued pathways such as further education or employment), the primary issue is how to ensure that assessment retains integrity, and remains accurate (valid, reliable) and fair. In addition to the initial concern, this project will ask the students to explore how assessment could evolve in the world of generative AI, in ways that leverage its potential and increase educational equity, while remaining true to assessment's core function of enabling students to demonstrate what they know and can do.

Project fast facts
since 2018

85+

Organisations have partnered with the University to offer real world projects for students.

10,000+

Students have done an industry project.

300+

Completed projects.

Get in touch:
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sydney.edu.au/engage/
industry-business-partnerships/
work-with-our-students/
real-world-projects