

Industry and Community Project Units 2026

Collaborate with our
students to tackle real-world
complex problems



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Since 2018

325 + industry projects completed

16,000 + senior undergraduate students have participated

130 + organisations have partnered with us to tackle real-world, complex problems

Partner with us

We are seeking partnerships with organisations of all sizes - corporate, community, government and international, to co -design meaningful learning experiences that give our third and fourth year students the chance to tackle genuine, real-world challenges.

Partnering on an ICPU offers your organisation the opportunity to seek ideas and insights from the next generation of the workforce and influence our future graduates with work-integrated learning.

Access to the Best Talent

ICPU projects connect organisations with motivated senior undergraduates from diverse academic backgrounds. With projects incorporating of up to 50 students, partners gain:

Fresh insights from interdisciplinary thinkers

Meaningful engagement with emerging talent

Visibility and exposure to students exploring future careers

Innovative problem solving to complex challenges

Our students deliver creative, effective and original recommendations that help solve a wide range of challenges.

Whether addressing specific organisational needs or tackling broader industry-wide issues, their insights and ideas drive meaningful impact.

Sessions

January - February intensives:

4 weeks: January - February

Semester 1:

13 weeks: February - May

June - July intensives:

4 weeks: June - July

Semester 2:

13 weeks: August - November



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"The ICPU Program allowed me to translate the skills I developed during my degree into a project with real professional impact and it helped me refine my ability to work collaboratively in a professional setting, which has been invaluable in my graduate role at Insurance Council of Australia. The project with Are Media on generative artificial intelligence challenged me to approach complex problems from multiple perspectives in a diverse team"

Larissa Venhorst - Bachelor of Economics

Project Preparations

We work with you to define a complex project, that aligns with your organisation's needs. Once confirmed, we advertise the project to our students, and provide updates on student numbers.

An academic supervisor is assigned to collaborate with you, refine the project brief and confirm engagement dates.

To support student learning, we request any relevant background materials or resources.

A low risk, no cost agreement is then signed between the University and your organisation to formalise the partnership.

During the project

In person partner touchpoints guide student groups through the project, from initial information to refining their research, culminating in a final presentation and written group report.

Hosting sessions at partner offices provides valuable experience for students, and we are open to exploring excursions or field trips to enhance their learning.

Only 8- 10 hours of industry partner representation is required across 4-5 in person project touchpoints.

After the project

We conduct a debrief to gather your feedback, explore future collaboration opportunities and where relevant, connect you with other University departments aligned with your organisation's needs.

We also share the students' final group written reports with your organisation.

Successful completion of an ICPU awards our students 6 or 12 credit points towards their degree.

There are some students who have continued to support our partners through internship opportunities.



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"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

Projects

ICPU's are delivered at two different levels to our students. One offering to 3rd year students (3000 level) and one to 4th year Advanced Studies students (4000 level).

At the 3000 level, potential projects are envisaged as broad in form and will focus on authentic problems your organisation is currently facing.

At the 4000 level, we require problems that are more research intensive and industry wide problem. Teaching in this unit will have more of a focus on innovation, with students encouraged to design entrepreneurial solutions that could result in the creation of a start-up.

Student Learning Outcomes

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

3000 Level

- Apply advanced knowledge and professional skills in tackling complex real-world problems, integrating diverse perspectives to generate innovative insights.

- Choose effective problem-solving methods, communicate new ideas persuasively, show professionalism and adaptability in collaborative work.

4000 Level

- Analyse complex problems to understand challenges, work across disciplines, co-design solutions, and communicate with clarity.

- Develop deep expertise in their field, applying rigorous methods to generate insights and create innovative, value-adding outcomes.

- Evaluate implementation strategies with strong awareness of risks, while communicating persuasively and collaborating effectively with peers and stakeholders.

Contact us to learn more

Get in touch with our Engagement team to discuss ICPU partnership opportunities further:

dvc-education.engagement@sydney.edu.au