

Here for good

# Sustainability Strategy 2030



Foreword / 1

Transformational change for good / 2

Here for good / 4

Founding principle / 6

Our principles / 7

Our goals / 8

- Learning & teaching / 10
- Research & innovation / 14
- Leading transitions / 20
- Responsible investing / 24
- Reporting and communications / 25
- Governance / 27

Acknowledgments / 29



# Foreword

At the University of Adelaide, our staff, students and partners are engaged in world-class education and research outcomes that are building sustainable pathways to address complex challenges associated with climate change, food and water security, biodiversity, health, and housing.

The University of Adelaide's *Sustainability Strategy 2030 - Here for good*, outlines our commitment to a sustainable future and our ambition to lead and deliver positive and sustainable change for good. Our Strategy is underpinned by [Future Making](#), our Strategic Plan, as well as its Five Pillars of Excellence, through which we seek to achieve transformational change with local and international impact.

Ultimately, the responsibility of University leadership is to create a better, more sustainable future for society and for our many current and future students, placing their success at the heart of what we do.

We envisage the University of Adelaide becoming a University of Choice for sustainability education and breakthrough research translated for environmental benefit whilst also leading sustainability transitions on campus that inspire our students and staff.

Our Strategy has been guided by advice and feedback from staff, students, the Sustainability Strategy Steering Committee, and our broader community. It will serve as a signal to our university community and to wider society that we wish to partner and turn our ambitions into reality.

As a signatory to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and throughout our Strategy, we respond to the SDGs across our research, teaching, community outreach, and campus operations. We are not only here to do good in the world now, but into the future as the interdependence of climate, ecosystems, biodiversity, and human societies becomes more critical.

Every fraction of a degree of global warming we avoid lessens the impact on future generations. In 2017, the world had already warmed by one degree from pre-industrial levels. We must act with speed and scale. The University of Adelaide is up for the challenge, and in a position to help our communities and partners with their aspirational sustainability transitions.

We have set a target to accelerate decarbonisation efforts within our campus footprint by achieving net zero emissions from directly controlled operations by 2025 and carbon neutral as per the Australian Government's [Climate Active](#) Carbon Neutral Standard for Organisations by 2030. These targets build on work already undertaken by the University to cut the energy intensity of our campuses by 18% since 2014 (GJ/GFAM<sup>2</sup>). We derive renewable energy from our rooftops and solar farm at our Roseworthy campus to augment the world-leading supply of renewable energy from South Australia's impressive and increasingly decarbonised grid.



*Professor Peter Høj AC, Vice Chancellor*

Our cumulatively greatest contribution to society accrues through our educational activities and the lifetime contributions alumni make to society. We have a critical role to play in supporting the learning and development of the next generation of world leaders. Moving forward, all graduates will be exposed to sustainability considerations in their degree and we will embed sustainability in our graduate attributes and in relevant education programs across the University.

Our internationally recognised researchers are making history with new implementable discoveries – accelerating human progress and making the world a more sustainable place.

We invite you to join us on this transformational journey for a more sustainable future.



# Transformational change for good



## A net zero world

We will accelerate decarbonisation efforts within our campus footprint by reducing emissions sources and updating policies, procedures and practices.

**Target:** Net zero emissions from directly controlled operations by 2025 and carbon neutral as per the Australian Government's Climate Active Carbon Neutral Standard for Organisations by 2030.



## Research with impact

As South Australia's leading research-intensive institution, we will continue and accelerate sustainable transitions with investment in research that has measurable sustainability impact.

**Target:** Year-on-year increase in the number of sustainability research Programs, projects and publications.



## Sustainability education for all

Every graduate of the University of Adelaide will be sustainability literate and able to influence sustainable change in their chosen professions.

**Target:** Embed sustainability in the graduate attributes and teaching in Programs across the University by 2028.



## Value-led performance and leadership

A sustainable culture will be achieved through recognition and performance processes at all levels, including rewarding team-based work and transdisciplinary sustainability research.

**Target:** Inclusion of a sustainability value to the Staff Values & Behaviour Framework by 2024.



## A social-good consulting experience

Collaborate with partners to provide students with opportunities to experience consulting for clients on projects that support sustainable transitions.

**Target:** Establish a new sustainability and social-good student consulting experience by 2025.



## The Sustainability Challenge initiative

Students will have the opportunity to participate in a university-wide online Sustainability Challenge simulation to solve real-world sustainability problems.

**Target:** Provide an online Sustainability Challenge simulation tool from 2025 onwards.



## Responsible investment

We commit to responsible investment by applying strong environmental, social and governance principles across investments.

**Target:** Divest from direct ownership and any commingled funds that include public equities and corporate bonds of companies whose primary business is the ownership and exploitation of fossil fuel reserves by the end of 2024. For this purpose, “primary business” refers to a 10% revenue threshold.



## Broadcast sustainability

Our journey will be brought to life on campus through living laboratories and immersive learning experiences.

**Target:** Develop, promote and maintain an online portal to map academic projects and partnerships to the UN Sustainable Development Goals by 2024.



# Here for good

Solving known and emerging problems of today, and preparing future leaders for tomorrow is our strength. We will align our efforts in research and education to accelerate sustainable transitions and contribute to global solutions for the health, peace and prosperity of the planet.

Through our *Sustainability Strategy 2030 - Here for good*, we will respond to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals across our research, teaching, community outreach, and campus operations to further our planet's health and prosperity. The University will engage in the biggest challenges of our time, including climate change, poverty, inequality, environmental degradation, peace and justice. Our courses, programs and research talent serve as a testament of our sustainability leadership.

We're not only here to do good in the world now, but are committed into the future. Preparing graduates for careers in fields they love, to make a difference, and undertake translatable research that contributes to a better world is our passion.

The University of Adelaide unites and serves people who want to change themselves and the world for the better.

**Here for good.**

Sustainability is a value and an ethos the University of Adelaide embeds into our daily actions and choices on campus. Sustainability guides the decisions we make, the way we interact, and what we stand for.

## Executive summary

Our *Sustainability Strategy 2030 - Here for good*, builds upon the University's Strategic Plan, [Future Making](#) to enable the institution to respond to the accelerating environmental, social, economic and technological change across the globe. The objective of the Strategy is to embed sustainability across the institution in all decision-making and arm our graduates, communities and government leaders with the knowledge and innovations to adapt well and prosper across generations.

As a signatory of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) since 2016, the University is well placed to help businesses, industries, governments and future generations in progressing sustainable transitions locally and globally.

Our world-class researchers and teachers are already building sustainable pathways to address the issues of climate change, food security, water security, biodiversity, health and housing. *Here for good* builds on this to ensure we respond to the Sustainable Development Goals through our research, teaching, community outreach and campus operations. Central themes throughout the Strategy are how the University will achieve global impact, lead by example, encourage transdisciplinary research and teaching, and unite to achieve not only our own community but broader societal sustainability goals.

Carbon reduction target summary below, further detail is provided on page 20.



## Our definitions

### Sustainability

To live, work and develop in ways that respect and fairly balance the needs of our ecosystems and intergenerational communities.

### Here for good

The University of Adelaide is committed to doing good in the world now and into the future. Specifically, preparing graduates for careers they love and undertaking research that contributes to peace, prosperity and a better world for future generations.

### Net zero

The University's scope 1 and 2 and operational scope 3 emissions are balanced via removal of equal greenhouse gas emissions from the atmosphere. Material emission sources include natural gas, refrigerants, transport and stationary fuels, purchased electricity, waste, water and transmission and distribution losses from purchased utilities. Emission sources excluded from the net zero target are detailed on page 20.

### Carbon neutral

The University's scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions are balanced via removal of equal greenhouse gas emissions from the atmosphere as per the Australian Government's [Climate Active](#) Carbon Neutral Standard for Organisations. The University's material scope 1, 2 and 3 emission sources include natural gas, refrigerants, transport and stationary fuels, purchased electricity, waste, water, transmission and distribution losses from purchased utilities, business flights and accommodation, staff commute, cylindrical gases, IT equipment, cleaning services, food and catering services, taxi and ride share services, postage, couriers and freight, construction and livestock emissions. Emission sources excluded from the carbon neutral target are detailed on page 20.

### Directly controlled operations

The University has operational control at North Terrace, Waite and Roseworthy campuses, leased spaces, parks and grounds, field stations, rural health locations, sports grounds, student accommodation and the National Wine Centre.

# Founding principle

## Care for Country, and Country will care for you.

**Ngadlurlu Kurna miyurna tampinhi.  
Parna yarta mathanya Wama Tarntanyaku.  
University of Adelaide Kurna yartangka  
yuwanthi - Tarntanyangga, Waitengga,  
Roseworthyngga kuma.**

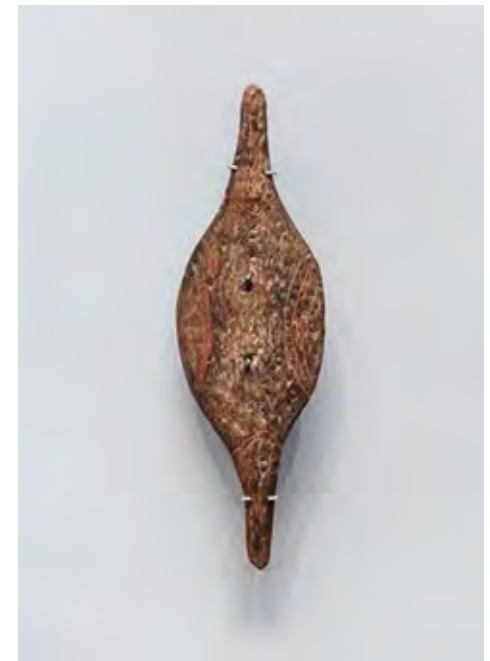
*We acknowledge the Kurna people, they are the traditional owners and custodians of the Adelaide Plains. The University of Adelaide stands on Kurna land in Adelaide, and at Waite and Roseworthy.*

The University of Adelaide respectfully acknowledges and pays respect to the Kurna people, custodians of the Adelaide Plains and the land on which the University's campuses are built. This is, and always will be Kurna Country.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have lived on this Country for over 60,000 years and in Caring for Country, are experts in sustainability. The University of Adelaide commits to learning from this cultural knowledge and Caring for Country as our founding principle. As cultural advisor and Kurna Elder, Uncle Rodney O'Brien says "Care for Country, and Country will care for you". Across every element of our Sustainability Strategy, we seek to make positive change with an ethos of Caring for Country and culture in our heads and our hearts.

## Kurna shield

Shields (murlapaka) were commonly used by Kurna people up to the time of colonisation of South Australia. Shields are either cut from the outer bark of mature River Red Gum trees, or carved from their dense timber to create a hard shield. Shields are significant personal items in Kurna culture, powerful symbols of identity and protection. The shape and markings on the murlapaka identifies it as belonging to Kurna people and culture.



*This shield is displayed at the Art Gallery of South Australia. Photo: Saul Steed*



Our Sustainability Strategy not only presents our commitments on campus, but also represents our contribution to living within our planetary boundaries.

# Our principles

- 1** We **change** ourselves to change the world in a powerful demonstration of global citizenship, equity, fairness and inclusion.
- 2** We seek to **balance** and contribute to the current and future needs of all communities within ecological systems and limits.
- 3** We strive for **excellence** and the **discovery** of new knowledge to attain and implement new levels of sustainability and implementation.
- 4** We **embed** sustainability across all our teaching that readies our graduates to make positive change in the world.
- 5** We **respect** that sustainability will take many forms in practice across professions and disciplines.
- 6** We have **integrity** – we live and work sustainably; we are the change we seek.
- 7** We **innovate** and collaborate with partners and across our Faculties to achieve our sustainability goals.
- 8** We **lead** in the implementation of our goals and share our expertise globally with our partners to support their sustainability journey.
- 9** We are **transparent** and reflective, openly sharing our sustainability ventures.
- 10** Our sustainability efforts aim to have a positive **transformational impact** for society, humanity and nature.

# Our goals



**Learning and teaching**



**Research and innovation**



**Leading transitions**



**Responsible investing**



**Reporting and communications**



**Governance**









# Learning and teaching

Leading practice in sustainability education.

South Australia is recognised as a leader in sustainability and low carbon technology. As such, every University of Adelaide graduate will have the opportunity to receive an education including the principles of sustainability. Every graduate will be prepared to influence positive change and make history in their future professions here in South Australia and across the world.

Our transdisciplinary approach to learning and teaching will reflect globally-recognised principles of sustainable development. Building on our existing world-class academic expertise, our students will have the opportunity to immerse themselves in emerging trends and global developments related to planetary boundaries, human capital and wellbeing.

As the private and public sectors continue to place increasing emphasis on sustainability credentials and the creation of social value, our commitment to life-long learning will play a key role in professional and further education for those wanting to hone their knowledge and skills.

Importantly, we can support socio-economically disadvantaged students in Australia and overseas to help them lead sustainable change in their communities.

Our staff, students, alumni, partners and communities will be supported to deepen their knowledge, pursue their passion and strengthen their skills to deliver sustainable transitions for future generations.

## Relevant UN Sustainable Development goals







The University of Adelaide supports sustainable transitions through generating new ideas, researching solutions and preparing graduates with capabilities to solve complex problems.





## 1 Sustainability education for all

All graduates are exposed to sustainability concepts at various points in their degree and provided with opportunities to engage in immersive, skills-focused and transdisciplinary learning experiences including online simulations. Building on our strengths and making our courses more immersive with real-world applications is key to student engagement and learning.

Our alumni engage in lifelong learning through our community outreach events and continued professional development offerings.

Sustainability learning and teaching draws from Caring for Country principles, and acknowledges the relationship between environment and culture, and the interconnectedness of all knowledge systems.

### Objectives

- Explore transdisciplinary sustainability courses and modules to support future needs of industry, business and government.
- Sustainability learning is embedded into all relevant programs.
- Sustainability postgraduate courses and modules to hone skills and knowledge for leadership roles.
- Enhanced access and opportunity for staff to engage with professional development for sustainability.
- Build on existing sustainability micro-credentials to support market demand in transdisciplinary professional development.

### Targets

- Embed sustainability in the Graduate Attributes and teaching in programs across the University by 2028.
- Sustainability is embedded into all relevant programs with opportunities for foundational sustainability education to all undergraduate degree students by 2030.
- Sustainable Development Goals and principles are incorporated in relevant criteria for learning outcomes by 2030.
- Respond to market opportunities and develop transdisciplinary sustainability courses and modules for postgraduates by 2028.
- Develop and launch Education For Sustainability modules through the Adelaide Development Program for Educators and Professionals who Teach (ADEPT) by 2026.
- Embed sustainability within the University's Employability and Career Skills tool by 2028.
- Include a sustainability digital badge (via My e-Quels) for students by 2028.
- Provide students with the opportunity to participate in an online Sustainability Challenge simulation tool from 2025 onwards.



## 2 Real-world learning

Immersive learning experiences will enable students to translate their course learnings into real-world skills and experience. We will provide students with the opportunity to experience working with clients to build networks and work on projects that support sustainable transitions in Australia and around the world.

### Objectives

- Enhance opportunities for students to undertake work-integrated learning and enhance their employability in collaboration with our partners for sustainability outcomes and public good.

### Targets

- Establish a new sustainability and social-good student consulting experience by 2025.
- Launch a Green Economy Internship Program with Green Industries SA from 2025 onwards or earlier for a select number of students each year.
- Graduates' Australian Higher Education Graduate Statement can record achievements and qualifications in sustainability education by 2028.



The University of Adelaide will become the university of choice for sustainability education.

## Case study

### Community outreach dental program

Driven by the Adelaide Dental School, the Community Outreach Dental Program provides dental and other health services for people who have suffered homelessness, or otherwise have difficulty accessing care.

The program attends to hundreds of patients each year, and provides our dental and oral health students the opportunity for additional clinical training hours. Many University of Adelaide staff, students, private dentists and allied health professionals volunteer their time to provide this valuable service to our community.





# Research and innovation

Application of leading innovation and research to solve local sustainability challenges with global impact for good.

The pursuit of sustainability is central to the University's research agenda. Our current research is already contributing substantial new knowledge and impact. All Faculties will continue to accelerate research that solves pressing sustainability challenges.

The application and communication of our fundamental and partnered research is key to ensure local and global impact is achieved. Our Institute of Sustainability, Energy and Resources, alongside other research institutes will provide a coordination role through the implementation of the *Foci And Magnets for Excellence (FAME) Strategy: Sustainability*.

'Living Labs' on our campuses will enable us to demonstrate in-situ sustainability practices and low carbon technologies. These laboratories will form places for hands-on demonstration, discussion and exchange of ideas between staff, students and the community.

We acknowledge the need for a trans-disciplinary approach to solving sustainability problems. This may involve recruiting new talent and forming new collaborations. In addition, we consider the effects of our research from ethical perspectives and understand possible impacts on the wellbeing of humanity and nature.

## Relevant UN Sustainable Development goals







Our internationally recognised researchers make history with each new discovery, accelerating human progress and making our world a better place. And with every question answered, another is asked: So, what's next?

## Case study

### Heavy Industry Low-carbon Transition CRC

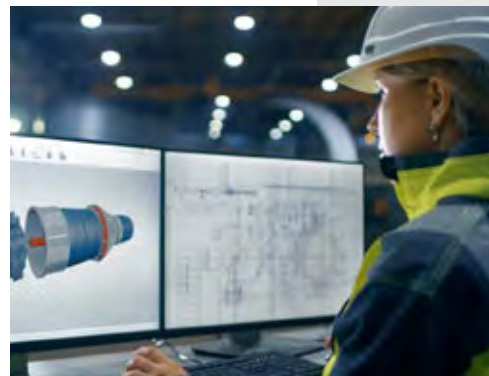
Australia's leading companies in the heavy industrial sector have embarked on a program that will enable a step change in the rate at which they transition toward net zero carbon emissions.

The \$39 million Heavy Industries Low-carbon Transition (HILT) CRC will enable Australia's heavy industry sector to compete in the low-carbon global economy for carbon neutral materials such as 'green' steel, iron, alumina, cement and other processed minerals.

HILT CRC will focus on developing technologies and methods that overcome barriers to the low-carbon transition.

While heavy industry in Australia has begun to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions, these emissions are particularly hard to abate. New, carbon-neutral technologies are needed to convert Australian ores to high-value, low-carbon products at globally competitive prices.

The global transition to a low-carbon transition represents both opportunities and challenges. Industry is responsible for 32% of global carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions, three-quarters of which comes from generating heat from fossil fuels. Low-carbon technologies are a way to help meet the Australian Government's obligations to the United Nations Paris Agreement and Australia's National Hydrogen Strategy. This transition could unlock new revenue and investments by pivoting to produce 'green' materials using technologies unlocked by HILT CRC.



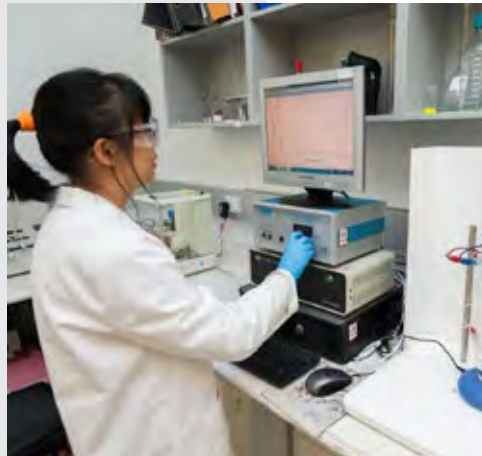
### Energy storage innovation attracting global interest

Our researchers deliver innovative solutions for the development of the circular economy of batteries and provide an ideal environment for industry-focused research and development.

Three of our most highly cited researchers and two Laureate Fellows are leading international battery development with our metal-sulphur batteries now a leading candidate for a next generation energy storage device with low cost and high energy density.

These cutting edge batteries can be charged and discharged at least 10,000 times providing good cycling durability. This work opens the path to a new generation of metal-sulphur batteries that could potentially store at least twice as much energy by weight than the current generation of lithium-ion batteries.

The application of this battery technology will have a transformative impact on our global journey towards a more sustainable future by lowering emissions and providing reliable power to millions.



### 1 Research with impact

South Australia is a world leader in the renewable energy transition; our grid is now one of the greenest in the world. South Australia is also leading as a model for the circular economy with 83% of material diverted from landfill and \$270m in recovered, recycled and reused items in 2019-20.

The University will continue to collaborate and partner with business, industry and governments to maximise the opportunities presented by the State's green economy transition to deliver solutions for our most pressing challenges, outlined in the *FAME Strategy: Sustainability*.

Sustainability research at the University of Adelaide recognises the diversity and relevance of multiple knowledge systems. We will monitor rankings and other benchmarking mechanisms to understand strengths and impact.

#### Objectives

- Deliver research programs with measurable local and global sustainability impacts.
- Accelerate sustainable research to support National and State priorities fostered through the *FAME Strategy: Sustainability*.
- Focus on measurement methods and communicate the impact of our research in relation to sustainability outcomes.
- Recruit top talent, highly cited and emerging leaders in sustainability and social-good research fields to complement our existing talent on campus.
- Share sustainability transitions and climate adaptation knowledge with our communities through events, publications, short videos and social media.

#### Targets

- Year-on-year increase in the number of sustainability research programs, projects and publications.
- Year-on-year increase in the number of sustainability research projects translated into policy and tangible societal outcomes.
- Additional top-talent recruited in sustainability by 2025.

#### FAME strategy: Sustainability research missions (RM)

**RM1:** Resilient, healthy and equitable communities

**RM2:** Responsible resource production and consumption

**RM3:** Planetary health and biodiversity restoration

**RM4:** Accelerated access to clean and green technologies

**RM5:** Effective sustainability governance and decision making



### 2 Integration of sustainability across all disciplines

Global environmental change challenges every aspect of our lives and therefore needs integrating in a multitude of disciplines. The highest quality research contributes to knowledge, action and impact across the disciplinary and interdisciplinary dimensions of sustainability.

Our *Tarrkarri Tirrka (Future Learning) 2019-2024* Indigenous academic strategy commits us to increase the number of First Nations researchers and research students. This is key for inclusive perspectives on sustainability.

#### Objectives

- Recognise and reward team-based transdisciplinary research outcomes.
- Creation of opportunities for the higher degree by research (HDR) community to participate in sustainability professional development opportunities.
- Nurture our local sustainability scholars and support them on the world stage.
- Ensure our research ethics are aligned to the principles of the Strategy.

#### Targets

- Development of Sustainability Ethics Guidelines for Research that ensure the social, ethical and cultural context and implications of research are considered by 2024.
- Establish an Industry Engagement Priority for Sustainability that is transdisciplinary and supports industry relationships to deliver on future needs of the workforce and address societal and technological challenges through research by 2025.
- Establishment of HDR community aligned with the aims of the *FAME Strategy: Sustainability*.
- Establish a Sustainability Hub that leads a community of practice and collaborations on sustainability by 2025.

### Enhancing livelihoods from improved forest management in Nepal

The EnLiFT project is forestry research to enhance livelihoods and food security from agroforestry and community forestry in Nepal. The collaboration among two international and five national organisations aims to understand the socio-ecological impacts of active and equitable forest management, improve local government planning and strengthen the community forestry systems.

Benefits that the research is uncovering include:

- realise opportunities to reduce gender inequality in community forest decision-making;
- creation of low-labour input activities suitable for time poor people;
- tree-based enterprises that could be deployed on underutilised land;
- a new institutional framework for regulatory and institutional cooperation between the community farmers and local governments;
- introduction of pro-poor forest-based enterprise models;
- alternative regulatory structures for marketing forest products; and,
- response to the disconnection between research and policies for improving livelihoods.





### 3 'Living labs' and partnerships

Our broad range of relationships allows the University to lead and participate in opportunities impacting communities closest to us and abroad. We recognise the impact that our partnerships can have on outreach and helping advance the global development agenda.

In sharing our knowledge, 'living labs' demonstrate the practical application of our world-leading research by creating practical environments to develop, pilot and apply sustainability. By leveraging the knowledge of students, staff, alumni and the wider community, living labs bring together diverse expertise in the physical and digital realms to co-create solutions for our collective future.

#### Objectives

- Identify opportunities for 'living labs' to accelerate, test and demonstrate a diverse range of sustainability research activities.
- Engage partners in sustainable research with campus-based prototypes.
- Integrate living labs into our curriculum to maximise real-world learning.
- Pursue partnerships to help deliver sustainable solutions in our communities locally and globally, making our unique facilities available for visiting academics.

#### Targets

- Establish a framework for the identification, scaling and delivery of 'living lab' projects across our campus footprint by 2024.
- Improve year-on-year the number and impact of living labs on campus.
- Develop, promote and maintain an online portal to map academic talent, projects and partnerships to the Sustainable Development Goals by 2024.



Accelerate, test and demonstrate sustainability research activities.



## Case study

### A strategic approach to market and consumer research

The Centre for Global Food and Resources is working in the Mekong region, northwest Vietnam and southwest China to support smallholder farmers with agribusiness development throughout the region.

Increased production and improved marketing of vegetables and temperate fruits from northwest Vietnam and tropical fruits from southern and central Vietnam, present an opportunity to increase the household income for thousands of poor smallholder farmers.

While domestic and regional demand appears to be rapidly growing, farmers are generally challenged by lack of information about local and regional market opportunities and requirements.

There is considerable potential for developing markets for Vietnamese vegetables, and temperate and tropical fruits in regional Chinese markets, in addition to strong local markets in Vietnam.

The University's research will support the future development of pipeline projects to offer assessments of market potential and viable marketing models for smallholder farmers in Vietnam, China and the Mekong region.





# Leading transitions

Accelerate the sustainability and decarbonisation transition on our campuses and extend our impact beyond campus.

We will accelerate the sustainable transition and decarbonisation efforts within our campus by reducing emissions sources, updating policies, procedures and practices. We will be accountable for our progress with regular reporting on our targets and goals. To compel action, we will drive a culture of accountability through recruitment, recognition and performance.

Our campus will be a place where we seek a balance between our needs and ecological limits. A place where we can demonstrate adaptation to climate change, support and grow the biodiversity of the campus, and challenge ourselves to use resources in a circular fashion.

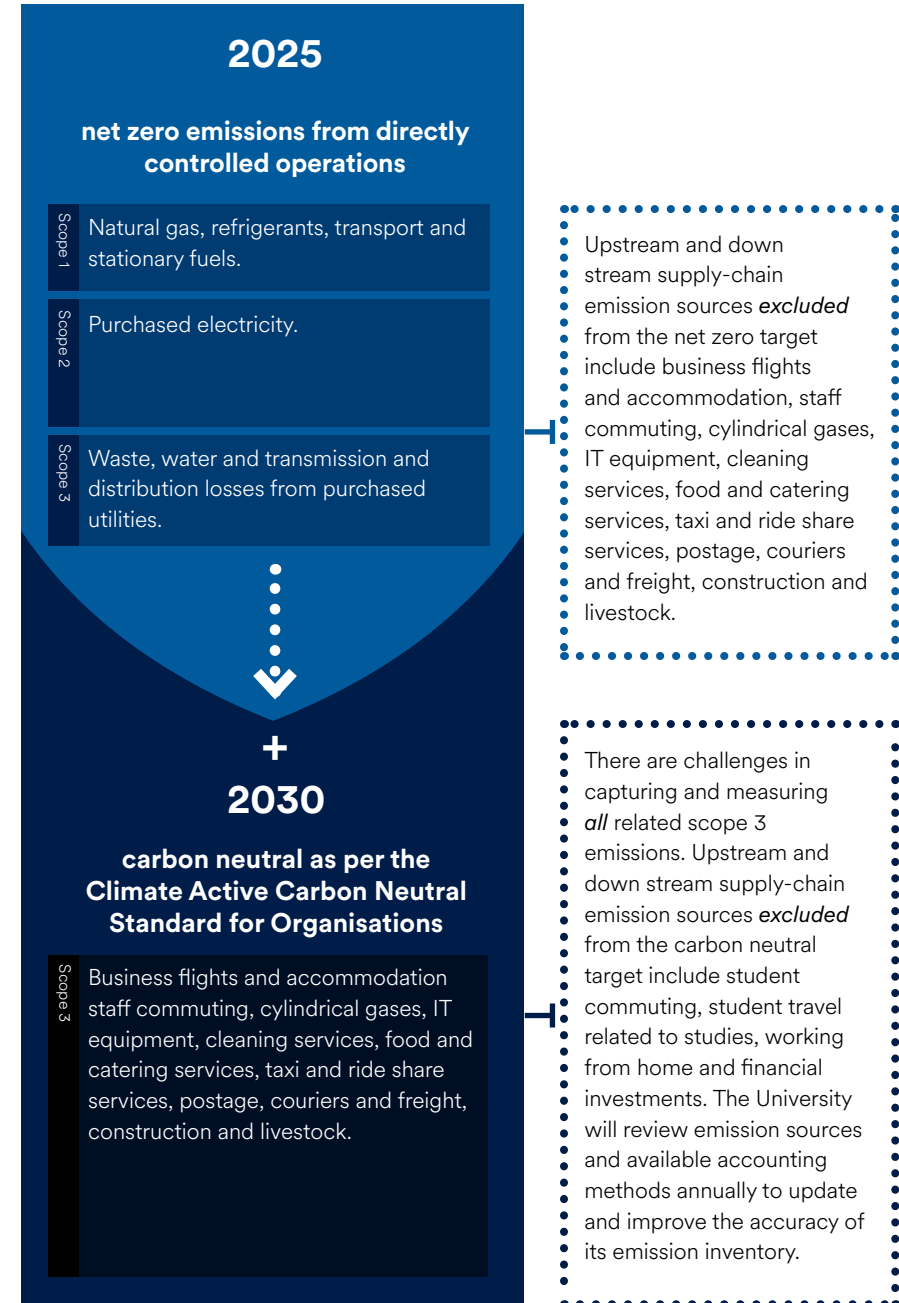
A place where in essence, “we live sustainability” through our daily lives on campus.

We will be genuine and transparent in embedding sustainability throughout our institution. We set high aspirations for our people, acknowledging that this will require ongoing effort, reflection and collaboration.

Our staff work to support and advance the SDGs, with researchers working together across disciplines to solve complex problems, thus supporting a number of transitions.

The University is proud of its role providing sustainable solutions for communities, business and industry and is committed to decreasing its environmental impact on campus.

Carbon reduction target overview:



# 1 A net zero world

The transition to a net zero world is one of the greatest contemporary challenges. It calls for significant change in our global business-as-usual practices. The University of Adelaide is committed to accelerating decarbonisation and the energy transition through the implementation of campus sustainability initiatives.

We have commenced our journey to net zero. The energy intensity of our campuses has reduced by 18% since 2014 (GJ/GFAM2). We have installed 2MW of renewable energy generation capacity on our rooftops and through our solar farm at Roseworthy. The University continues to retrofit buildings with more energy efficient lights, equipment and systems.

The University will only purchase carbon offsets as a last resort.

Where emissions cannot be reduced or abated, offset decisions will be guided by the following principles:

1. Opportunities to self-generate offsets and support research projects and partners will be sought as a first priority.
2. Purchased offsets will need to demonstrate current best-practice carbon removal methodologies.
3. Offsets will only be purchased if they are;
  - South Australian or Australian,
  - certified in line with legislation, regulatory requirements and best practice standards,
  - approved under the Australian Government's Climate Active Carbon Neutral Standards,
  - generated by credible, like-minded organisations and are publicly reported in a transparent manner, *and ideally,*

- provide social and environmental co-benefits such as partnerships with Aboriginal communities, improved climate resiliency, support biodiversity and habitat creation or support new carbon removal technologies.

We will continually review and update these principles to reflect best practice and proven carbon removal outcomes that support the green economy. Investment decisions will consider the value of the investment, relative to the expected contribution made to removal of carbon from the atmosphere.

Approaches to target setting across the globe and within the Higher Education sector specifically continue to evolve and challenge organisations to demonstrate a true commitment to the decarbonisation of their activities.

The University established its emissions reduction targets after reviewing best practice approaches, target benchmarking across the higher education sector, and in consideration of the institution's strategic goals, with the overall objective of transparency and a commitment to deliver.

We will review alignment with the Paris Agreement and/or Science-Based Target Initiative approaches in the future as the University continues to set and report on longer-term targets for operations and supply chain carbon reduction that aligns with our strategic goals and evolving global ambitions.

The University will continue to progress energy and emission reduction activities beyond 2030 and look for opportunities to test new technologies and demonstrate sustainable transitions to our partners and community.

## Objectives

- Explore hydrogen and further deployment of renewable energy and energy storage systems on campus.
- Continuous improvement of the University's upstream and downstream emission inventory.
- Upgrade end of trip facilities with electric chargers and changing amenities to encourage staff to cycle, e-bike or e-scooter to campus.
- To include, adapt and improve food menus on campus include low carbon food options, such as expanded vegetarian, vegan offerings and locally grown produce.

## Targets

- Net zero emissions from directly controlled operations by 2025 and carbon neutral as per the Australian Government's Climate Active Carbon Neutral Standard for Organisations by 2030.
- All new buildings to achieve Net Zero certification as per the World Green Building Council including a whole-of-life life cycle assessment.
- Year-on-year improvement in the energy performance of campus buildings through retrofits, thermal and lighting control policies (GJ/GFAM2 and GJ/FTE).
- Introduce a travel policy, climate literacy education for travellers and an offset scheme for business flights by 2025.
- Low carbon fleet transition to commence by 2023.
- Reduce emissions associated with staff commuting to and from campus by 25%, by 2030 (from a 2023 baseline).

## Relevant UN Sustainable Development goals





## 2 A climate resilient campus

In the face of extreme weather due to climate change, a climate-resilient University of Adelaide is an institution that continues to fulfil its work in the face of these impacts. We ready our staff with the tangible skills and experience for a sustainable future.

### Objectives

- Ensure sustainability is valued and considered in all decision making across the institution.
- Embed sustainable behaviour as an expectation of staff performance.
- Reward and inspire those who demonstrate sustainability values to recognise outstanding work.
- Implement campus-wide environmental management processes and staff training to ensure the best possible climate resiliency.
- Increase water sensitive urban design features on campus to purify water run off.
- Retrofit buildings with water efficient systems, fixtures and fittings, and develop plans for further rainwater harvesting and reuse, flood risk mitigation and smart irrigation.

- Learn from traditional land management practices for campus grounds and embed Kurna language throughout campus.

### Targets

- Inclusion of a sustainability value to the Staff Values and Behaviour Framework by 2024.
- Implement a University-wide environmental management system to achieve and maintain ISO14001:2015 certification by 2028.
- Develop and endorse Campus Water Systems and Climate Resilience Plans by 2025.
- Annually, identify opportunities to embed language and cultural education into campus through art and place-making elements including dual place names for entrances, key locations and buildings.



## 3 Regenerate and reconnect with nature

Caring for Country encompasses the entirety of Country, past and future, including all people, flora and fauna, natural landscapes and urban ecosystems, its history and culture. Our natural ecosystems provide essential services we rely on every day, ranging from clean water and air, crop pollination and the products we use, through to the potential to help in flood mitigation and alleviating the effects of climate change. The University of Adelaide is committed to protecting and regenerating biodiversity on campus and within the wider community.

### Objectives

- Develop plans to rapidly increase biodiversity and green canopy cover with Kurna plant species, establish cooling corridors and increase permeable surfaces.
- Increase understory planting, soil health and support native bee pollination on campus grounds by developing plans to incorporate ecological connectivity and habitat creation.
- Create more outdoor study spaces and courtyards for meetings and events on campus.

- Elevate nature experiences on campuses for mental and physical wellbeing.

### Targets

- Develop and endorse a Campus Greening Plan and a Campus Biodiversity Plan by 2025 including new plantings on campus with a preference for local Kurna species.
- By 2030 the green canopy on campus will be expanded by at least 30%.

### 4 Advance responsible procurement and reduce waste



Embracing responsible procurement will enable the University of Adelaide to meet its needs for goods, services and works while simultaneously having a positive impact on the environment, the economy and society.

#### Objectives

- Influence our supply chain with sustainable procurement practices, requirements and new processes for suppliers.
- Campus construction projects to minimise waste to landfill at every site and maximise diversion rates.
- Develop guidelines for the procurement of furniture and equipment to support recycled content, reuse, repair and recyclability.
- Work with our suppliers to recover and recycle packaging brought onto campus to minimise waste and maximise reuse opportunities.

#### Targets

- Introduce a First Nations procurement target by 2023.
- Introduce sustainable procurement staff training and updated processes by 2025.
- Establish a Furniture and Spares Reuse Library across campuses to ensure assets are used to the full extent of their lifespan by 2025.
- Source where possible university merchandise from ethical and sustainable manufacturing practices and post-consumer recycled materials by 2024.
- Divert all food waste from landfill and divert at least 50% of waste from landfill by 2025.

## Roseworthy Solar Farm and energy storage

The Roseworthy Solar Farm and battery system is already generating 42% of energy needs on campus, reducing peak electricity demand and increasing the resilience of energy supply.

The 1.2MW farm includes 3,200 solar panels that charge a hybrid battery storage solution – a combination of Tesla lithium-ion batteries and UniEnergy Technologies (UET) Vanadium flow batteries. A digital microgrid controller operates between the solar cells and the batteries, choosing when to best charge and discharge the batteries.







# Responsible investing

University of Adelaide is committed to responsible investment.

## Objectives

- Ensure our values are reflected in the University's investment portfolio.
- Align our investment approach to the principles of the Sustainability Strategy and encourage exclusions of certain investments where there is misalignment.
- Update environmental, social, and governance (ESG) Investment Principles to reflect leading practice, for example support fund managers who are signatories to UN supported Principles for Responsible Investment or a member of the Responsible Investment Association Australasia (RIAA) and communicate annual sustainable investment disclosures.

## Targets

- Develop a sustainability investment policy by the end of Q3 2023 and a transition and divestment plan by the end of 2023.
- Develop a plan by the end of 2023 to communicate responsible investment activities.
- Publish information regarding investment exposure to fossil fuels by the end of 2023.
- Divest from direct ownership and any commingled funds that include public equities and corporate bonds of companies whose primary business is the ownership and exploitation of fossil fuel reserves by the end of 2024. For this purpose, "primary business" refers to a 10% revenue threshold.





# Reporting and communications

Impactful communications will share the University's ambition, track progress and help embed a sustainable culture.

## Transparent reporting

We believe sustainability should be integrated into everything the University does, including our reporting.

Transparent reporting on our sustainability journey enables the University of Adelaide to communicate our practices and performance to build a strong and more diverse sustainability community. This will enable meaningful comparison over time and across campuses using a common set of measures.

### Reporting to the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment and Rating System (STARS)

The University of Adelaide will issue an annual reporting submission to STARS, documenting sustainability across academia, engagement, operations, planning and administration, innovation and leadership. We aim to achieve a Platinum STARS rating by 2030.

### Integrate sustainability reporting into the Annual Report

We will be reporting on our Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) progress in the University of Adelaide Annual Report in lieu of a separate sustainability report in order to fully embed sustainability at the core of all we do. Our best practice, integrated reporting approach will include progress against targets as outlined in our Strategy. We commit to measuring and publicly reporting annually on our carbon emissions to track progress towards carbon targets. This will include an annual emissions inventory publication.

### Additionally, we will undertake various other mandatory and voluntary reporting activities, including but not limited to:

- Creation of a publicly available dashboard to demonstrate University progress against its sustainability goals and targets.
- Corporate Emissions Reduction Transparency Report.
- National Greenhouse and Energy Report.
- Achieve and maintain ISO14001:2015 certification for a university wide Environmental Management System.
- Continue to issue an annual statement on modern slavery.





## Communications

The University will engage with a range of audiences on our sustainability journey. Using the Sustainable Development Goals as an international language, we will communicate our leadership in sustainable solutions and our talent in delivering world-class education for future leaders.

Domestically, we will continue to engage and collaborate with our colleagues across the global higher education sector. We will build and grow our relationships with businesses, industries and governments to foster the strengths of our State in the energy transition, the green economy, climate adaptation and ecosystem regeneration. First Nation perspectives have a strong voice in sustainability communications.

Our partners and alumni will receive regular sustainability updates from campus. We will actively seek out opportunities to work with our extended campus family to learn and support each other's sustainability goals.

For those on campus daily, we will communicate our sustainability journey (both the wins and the challenges) through staff and student news, campus and community events.

Our journey will be brought to life around campus through our living laboratory research projects and pilots, immersive learning experiences and students forming real-world, career-ready skills. Additionally, we will initiate a sustainable behaviour change initiative to enable our University Community to make more sustainable choices.

We will align the Sustainability Strategy with broader University communications plans to ensure that our community is across our commitments, ambitions and progress.





# Governance

Our Sustainability Strategy, Here for good, builds upon the University's Strategic Plan and acknowledges the pace, change and governance to accelerate transitions to a sustainable future.

As a signatory of the UNs Sustainable Development Goals since 2016, the University is well placed to drive sustainable change locally and globally, but must also demonstrate that commitment and leadership at home on campus.

A Sustainability Strategy Committee will be established, comprising academic leaders, subject-matter experts from professional services, student representatives and key external advisors.

This Committee, reporting to the Vice-Chancellor's Executive, will oversee the implementation of the Strategy by monitoring progress against the commitments detailed in this document alongside the Sustainable Development Goals.

The Sustainability Strategy Committee will also review any new opportunities or business cases that emerge to ensure alignment with our sustainability ambitions.





# Acknowledgements

The University would like to acknowledge the staff, students, alumni and partners that have helped shape this document. In particular the University would like to thank members of the Sustainability Strategy Steering Committee that have provided their time and expertise in the creation of this document.

## Sustainability Strategy Steering Committee members

- **Professor Melissa Nursey-Bray** (Chair)  
School of Social Sciences
- **Professor Sarah Wheeler**  
School of Economics and Public Policy
- **Professor Seth Westra**  
School of Civil, Environmental and Mining Engineering
- **Professor Holger Maier**  
School of Civil, Environmental and Mining Engineering
- **Professor Ashok Khurana**  
Research Program Director for Climate Change and Energy Transition in the Stretton Institute
- **Dr Cris Birzer**  
Senior Lecturer in the School of Mechanical Engineering
- **Vikram Kenjle**  
Manager, Asset Planning & Energy, Infrastructure Branch
- **Keryn Lapidge**  
Manager of Corporate Communications, Division of External Engagement
- **Libby Hogarth**  
Sustainable Development Planner, Infrastructure Branch

- **Advisory members:**  
Professor Michael Goodsite (previous Chair)  
Institute for Sustainability, Energy and Resources  
Professor Andrew Lowe  
Environment Institute

## Cultural and strategic advisors

- **Professor Steve Larkin**  
Pro Vice Chancellor, Indigenous Engagement
- **Uncle Rodney O'Brien**  
Cultural Advisor

Thank you to staff and students who participated in the creation of the Strategy at the following events and workshops:

- Student Sustainability Leaders Workshop, October 2021
- Sustainability Values and Vision Workshop, October 2021
- Campus Decarbonisation Workshop, November 2021
- Advancing the Agenda - Sustainability in Learning and Teaching, August 2022
- Advancing the Agenda - Sustainability in Research, August 2022

- Impact Ready - Becoming a Leader in Sustainability, August 2022
- *Draft Sustainability Strategy 2030 - Here for good* Community Consultation, October 2022

Special thanks to Wirtlu Yarlu, Global Engagement, Professional and Continuing Education, Finance and Procurement and Marketing & Recruitment.

Thank you also to the Vice-Chancellor's Executive whose leadership, oversight and support was key to the development of this Strategy.





## Further enquiries

The University of Adelaide SA 5005 Australia

**enquiries** [sustainability@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:sustainability@adelaide.edu.au)

**web** [adelaide.edu.au/sustainability](http://adelaide.edu.au/sustainability)

**facebook** [facebook.com/uniofadelaid](https://facebook.com/uniofadelaid)

**twitter** [twitter.com/uniofadelaid](https://twitter.com/uniofadelaid)

**snapchat** [snapchat.com/add/uniofadelaid](https://snapchat.com/add/uniofadelaid)

**instagram** [instagram.com/uniofadelaid](https://instagram.com/uniofadelaid)

**wechat** [UniversityOfAdelaide](https://UniversityOfAdelaide)

**weibo** [weibo.com/uniadelaide](https://weibo.com/uniadelaide)

**Disclaimer** The information in this publication is current as at the date of printing and is subject to change. You can find updated information on our website at [adelaide.edu.au](http://adelaide.edu.au). The University of Adelaide assumes no responsibility for the accuracy of information provided by third parties.

© The University of Adelaide

January 2023. Job no. 6969

Australian University Provider Number PRV12105

CRICOS 00123M

### **Kaurna acknowledgement**

We acknowledge and pay our respects to the Kaurna people, the original custodians of the Adelaide Plains and the land on which the University of Adelaide's campuses at North Terrace, Waite, and Roseworthy are built. We acknowledge the deep feelings of attachment and relationship of the Kaurna people to country and we respect and value their past, present and ongoing connection to the land and cultural beliefs. The University continues to develop respectful and reciprocal relationships with all Indigenous peoples in Australia, and with other Indigenous peoples throughout the world.