



THE UNIVERSITY  
OF QUEENSLAND  
AUSTRALIA

CREATE CHANGE

2021-2025

# Sustainability Strategy





# Acknowledgement of Country

The University of Queensland (UQ) acknowledges the Traditional Owners and their custodianship of the lands on which UQ operates.

We pay our respects to their Ancestors and their descendants, who continue cultural and spiritual connections to Country. We recognise their valuable contributions to Australian and global society.



## A Guidance Through Time

Artists: Casey Coolwell and Kyra Mancktelow

Quandamooka artists Casey Coolwell and Kyra Mancktelow have produced A Guidance Through Time to inspire Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous students, staff and communities to realise commitments made in UQ's Innovate RAP.

The Artwork recognises The University of Queensland's three major campuses and champions creating a strong sense of belonging and truth-telling about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, and ongoing connections with Country, knowledges, culture and kin.

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Sustainable Development Goals



UQ's Warwick Solar Farm builds on our long standing renewable energy achievements to make us the first university in the world to offset 100% of our energy usage from our own renewable generation.

# Foreword

**As a research and teaching institution with a vision of creating “knowledge leadership for a better world”, sustainability is central to everything we do, here, at The University of Queensland (UQ).**

Our diverse range of educational and research programs mean that we're at the forefront of seeking solutions to sustainability issues; whether that be food security, water security, climate change or any number of other societal or environmental challenges.

Our impact is particularly evident in the ground-breaking scientific discoveries that are emerging from our dedicated research institutions, such as the Sustainable Minerals Institute and the Queensland Alliance for Agriculture and Food Innovation.

We also have an important role to play in shaping the future by developing the next generation of

leaders and encouraging them to consider how they can contribute to sustainable development.

As one of the world's top 50 universities, we aspire to have a truly global impact. Indeed, more than one-third of our students come to UQ from overseas, and we have partnership agreements with over 360 universities or organisations outside of Australia.

By encouraging this broad range of international engagement and collaboration, we are committed to — and capable of — creating change at both a local level, and on a global scale.

As a recent signatory to the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), UQ is now joining with other government bodies, businesses and organisations around the world to make a public commitment to addressing the world's most pressing social, economic and environmental challenges.

This Sustainability Strategy outlines the broad range of activities that we are undertaking as part of our commitment to achieving the 17 SDGs. This includes measures to promote: good health and wellbeing (SDG 3); quality education (SDG 4); decent work and economic growth (SDG 8); industry, innovation and infrastructure (SDG 9); sustainable cities and communities (SDG 11); and, of course, climate action (SDG 13).

At UQ, we also aspire to be a sustainable development leader in the higher education sector globally. As such, we are a signatory to both the Talloires Declaration and the Universitas 21 Statement on Sustainability.

Aligned to the overarching UQ Strategic Plan 2022-25, this Sustainability Strategy outlines our commitments for a sustainable future — and how we will contribute to placing the world on a more sustainable path to 2025.

*Our diverse range of educational and research programs mean that we're at the forefront of seeking solutions to sustainability issues*



**Professor Deborah Terry AO**  
Vice-Chancellor and President



# Introduction

**UQ’s Sustainability Vision is our commitment to outstanding environmental outcomes through knowledge leadership, game-changing research and exceptional environmental performance.**

UQ positively influences society by engaging in the pursuit of excellence through the creation, preservation, transfer and application of knowledge for exceptional environmental performance.

Our commitment to sustainability is evident in all aspects of university life including the four pillars encompassed by this Sustainability Strategy: Academics, Operations, Engagement and Planning.

We continue to build on our achievements and rank in the top 35 universities worldwide for studies in Environmental Sciences, rank within the top 4 for Environment/Ecology

Scientific Papers and from 2020-2021 are the first university in the world to offset 100% of our electricity needs from our own renewable energy generation.

As a vibrant community, we are engaged locally and globally and value our relationship with indigenous peoples.

UQ helps shape the future by bringing together and developing leaders in their fields to inspire the next generation and to advance ideas that benefit the world.

Our approach to sustainability is designed to address environmental, social and economic challenges and create change for a brighter future, on campus and beyond.

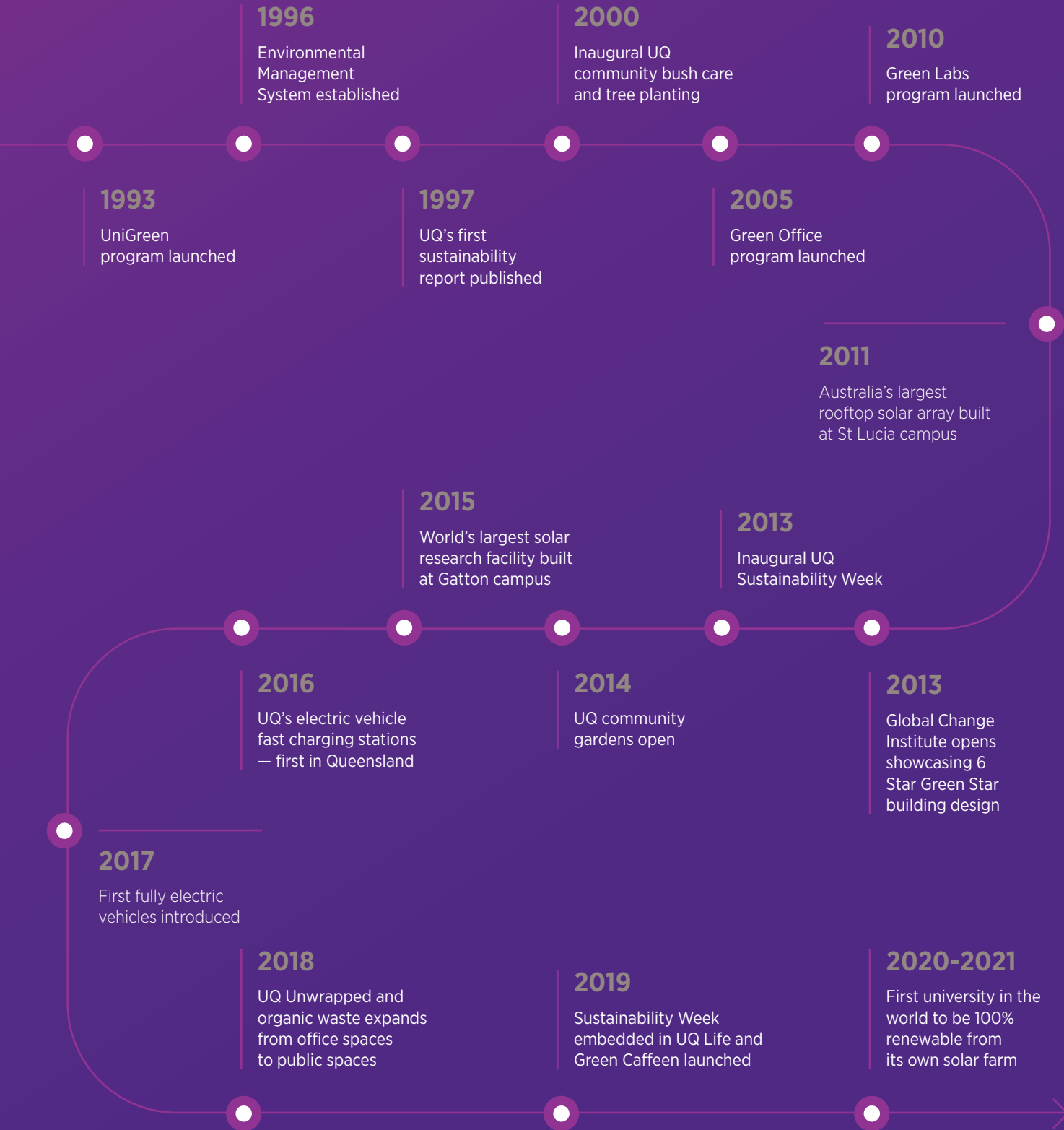
UQ’s Sustainability Strategy is intimately linked to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and details our plan for building a better world for people and our planet by 2025.

**Andrew Flannery**  
Chief Operating Officer

St Lucia Community Garden



# Sustainability milestones





PROCESS FOR STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

# Stakeholder engagement

**This Sustainability Strategy has benefited from the contribution of the many students, staff and broader community who were a part of its development.**

Our 60,000 strong cohort of students and staff were invited to contribute and participate in workshops that allowed individual input. The majority of these workshops were led by a student facilitator.

Due to the geographical spread of our campuses and sites, including island locations, the community also had the opportunity to contribute remotely via online surveying.

UQ is proud that this Strategy has had such broad engagement with more than 1,900 responses from new and senior students, researchers, professional and academic staff and senior executives. All Faculties, Research Institutes and Administration Centres have been represented in contributing.

These contributions feed into detailed planning and are available for further learning and research purposes.

The development of this Strategy recognises that every member of our community impacts our sustainability performance and that each individual has a role to play in building a better world for people and our planet.

“*Ideas and the visions from the community, collected as part of the engagement process to develop the Strategy, will feed into these Action Plans.*”

# Implementation

**Sustainability that is embedded in day to day business requires ongoing monitoring of achievements and benchmarking against national and international peers, as a part of normal business processes.**

As a signatory to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, this Strategy is UQ’s blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all.

This Sustainability Strategy has a timeline to 2025 to work towards achieving the commitments. Some commitments contain specific targets to be achieved where data is plentiful, while others outline the need to develop baselines or improvements in business processes. All commitments align with the 2030 call to action, United Nations, Sustainable Development Goals. This Sustainability Strategy will be reviewed prior to 2025 to chart the remaining course of action to align with the 2030 SDGs.

Our sustainability successes and challenges will be measured in detail using The Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (STARS), an industry-endorsed measurement and assessment tool for the tertiary sector. We regularly participate in ranking schemes to assess and demonstrate our performance, as well as to benchmark within the local and international tertiary sector.

Detailed Operational Action Plans will underpin this Strategy in each area of specialisation. These plans will be comprehensive road maps to the many individual tasks and projects that support our commitments. Ideas and the visions from the community, collected as part of the engagement process to develop the Strategy, will feed into these detailed plans.

The Strategy’s commitments and measures of success will be reported annually to track progress. This annual check is also an opportunity to review against changing global needs and emerging opportunities.



Rooftop solar near Forgan Smith tower





# Strategy snapshot



## Teaching and learning

Sustainable Development Goals and principles are incorporated in relevant curricula



## Research and innovation

Sustainability research and innovation is encouraged and supported with Global Change Research Networks working to address global grand challenges across multiple research impact themes



## Energy

Remain energy neutral with 100% generated from renewable sources while supporting the University's growth. First university in the world to be 100% renewable from our own solar farm



## Food and dining

Provide sustainable food options for the UQ community that have a low carbon footprint, are healthy, locally produced, minimally processed as well as being sustainably farmed and harvested



## Purchasing

Reduced consumption accompanied by sustainable purchasing choices driven through business processes



## UQ community

All staff and students have the opportunity to undertake sustainability service hours by being involved in activities such as an ambassadors program, or a sustainability project, initiative or event



## Water

Best practice in efficient water management



## Transport

Provide sustainable transport options for the UQ community to travel to, from and within the University



## Waste

To work towards being a Zero Waste university (or as close as possible) with zero waste sent to landfill



## Public engagement

Nurture regional, national and international collaborative partnerships to advance sustainable development



## Planning

Supporting our many leaders in various capacities in sustainability work, collaboration and activities for shaping a more sustainable future



## Wellbeing

Supporting healthy living and wellbeing through our health-related degrees and research programs, wellness initiatives, healthcare programs, our sports facilities and campus safety programs



## Climate

Be a beyond carbon neutral university



## Buildings

All new buildings and refurbishments delivered to UQ's Sustainable Guidelines



## Grounds and biodiversity

Maintain greenspace. Supporting conservation of natural ecosystems



## Equity

Addressing areas of under-representation among students and staff and aim to provide a respectful and healthy study, research and work environment for all



## Investment and finance

Committed to investment that supports sustainability in the local and global community



Campus as a Living Laboratory for Environmental Management students

## Academic

**At the heart of UQ's sustainability agenda is our commitment to seek solutions to sustainability challenges and prepare our future leaders to inspire and change the world around them.**

UQ researchers focus on sustainability across five impact themes: leading healthy lives, building better bioeconomies, achieving resilient environments and livelihoods, designing technology for tomorrow, and transforming societies.

Cross-discipline collaboration, and partnerships with industry, government and community leaders, are integral to both UQ's Global Change Scholars program and the UQ Global Change Institute. The institute has led climate change solutions in Australia and south-east Asia for almost a decade, while the scholars program assists PhD candidates to contribute to the latest thinking on global change.

### Solving diverse challenges

Our sustainability research delves deep and wide, and the output is diverse. Product developments underway with UQ researchers include a non-toxic, world-first plant extract biopesticide; quantum dots that have the potential to revolutionise solar energy; and new land mapping tools that can address some of Australia's key natural resource challenges.

UQ's Energy and Poverty Research Group is leading an international initiative to extend modern, clean and efficient energy services to developing countries. The group's work has the potential to drive changes that will improve the lives of millions of people around the world, while also delivering environmental benefits.

Closer to home, a UQ-led pilot study aims to discover the best ways to structure family businesses in Queensland's drought-affected regions. With a focus on taxation, policy and cashflow optimisation, the research is seeking to address the reality of the financial struggles visited upon primary producers by the state's relentless climatic conditions.

### Teaching the next generation

UQ excels in environmental courses, consistently ranking within the top 20 universities in several of the world's most respected league tables for areas including environmental sciences and geography.

Sustainability studies at UQ are not confined to environmental students, however; core concepts are embedded within the curriculum across multiple schools and faculties.

Across disciplines, students also have opportunities for immersive experiences and field trips. Focusing on practical skill development, these trips typically cover the management and sustainable development of natural and rural systems in tropical marine, coastal and semi-arid environments.

UQ also delivers continuing sustainability education to learners of all backgrounds, with free community courses available online including sustainable energy, climate science and policy, and a low carbon economy.

UQ's teaching and learning delivers content across all 17 Sustainable Development Goals and the vision is mapped, consistent with tertiary sector standards, to SDG 4 Quality Education and SDG 13 Climate Action.

## ACADEMIC

# Teaching and learning

UQ offers dedicated programs and courses in sustainability as well as many more programs and courses with embedded sustainability content and learning outcomes. Educating future leaders, scholars and professionals enables UQ to prepare students and equip staff for understanding, addressing and solving sustainability challenges. Embedding the Sustainable Development Goals in our programs and courses will equip students to lead society to a more sustainable future.

### 2025 Vision

**To create positive global impact by inspiring a new generation of sustainability leaders through curricula, experiences and professional development opportunities. UQ is recognised as a world leader in sustainability education and a preferred destination for students seeking specialised or multidisciplinary sustainability skills and understanding.**

UQ ranks in the **top 35 universities globally for studies in Environmental Sciences** and UQ students learn from globally acknowledged experts as indicated by the fact UQ ranks within the top 4 for Environment/Ecology Scientific Papers. UQ's free UQx online courses, including The Science and Practice of Sustainable Development, are making quality education readily available to end poverty and tackle climate change.



Educating future leaders with embedded sustainability learning outcomes

## Commitments



Sustainable Development Goals and principles are incorporated in relevant curricula



Sustainability course offerings are available to students to study as electives



All assessment in paper-free format where viable

## Measuring success

- Number of programs offering sustainability courses
- Number of courses with embedded sustainability content
- Number of students taking courses with sustainability content

**UQ's eAssessment project is creating electronic assessment options** to facilitate improved pedagogical practices and more timely and personalised feedback for students through digital paper-free platforms.

Sustainable Development Goals





ACADEMIC

# Research and Innovation

Research and innovation has the ability to create change and contribute to a more sustainable world. UQ research and innovation continues to seek solutions to sustainability challenges by asking the right questions, finding information and solutions and by exchanging knowledge, understanding and resources to address these challenges. The Sustainable Development Goals are reflected in UQ’s research impact themes: Leading healthy lives; Building better bioeconomies; Achieving resilient environments and livelihoods; Designing technology for tomorrow; and Transforming societies.

## Commitments



Sustainability research and innovation is encouraged and supported, with Global Change Collaborative Research Initiatives working to address global grand challenges across multiple research impact themes



The UQ research community is made aware of the Sustainable Development Goals through the work of the Global Change Institute and research impact focused initiatives



All UQ researchers have institutional routes to ‘Open Access’ for their research outputs made available, where relevant

## 2025 Vision

To undertake world leading research and innovation that contributes to a sustainable world. To pilot and deploy new and innovative sustainability solutions for global challenges. UQ operations, informed by leading edge research, are synonymous with excellence in sustainability for global solutions.

UQ researchers are working hard to ensure Australia meets its obligations to the world, with many projects closely aligning with the Sustainable Development Goals. **Our researchers are driving social change** and informing policy agendas that support future generations, including leading a submission to an Australian Government inquiry into the SDGs.

## Measuring success

- Number of sustainability related research projects
- Number of sustainability related research publications

Research and innovation seeking solutions for a more sustainable world



Sustainable Development Goals



UQ’s Property and Facilities team working with a zero emissions fleet

# Operations

From energy and water usage, to building and procurement guidelines, emissions reduction strategies and more, UQ’s Operations present diverse opportunities to create real change.

Energy use is a major contributor to UQ’s greenhouse gases. In 2020-2021, UQ became the first university in the world to generate enough renewable power through its own assets to offset more than 100% of its electricity needs. The Warwick Solar Farm is built, owned and operated by the University, and demonstrates that a transition to renewables can be done at scale.

UQ is also transitioning to a fleet of electric and hybrid cars and maintenance support vans, cutting fuel consumption and reducing scope one emissions as the University ramps up its adoption of solar powered and zero emissions vehicles.

## Working together

Waste is one of the most important environmental issues identified by the UQ community, and the University operates several innovative programs focused on recycling and re-purposing to support reduction. In 2019, office recycling rates nearly tripled from 10% to 27% in buildings where under-desk bins were replaced with central waste and recycling stations and desk-top mini bins.

Eighty-four per cent of students already commute sustainably as their primary mode of transport to and from the University. Access to our campuses is supported by bus routes with train connections, regular ferries, and dedicated cycle and pedestrian infrastructure.

All of UQ’s bathroom products are certified by the Forest Stewardship Council, which means our hand towels, toilet paper and tissues are guaranteed to come from responsibly managed sources.

UQ has also produced a suite of purchasing guidelines that explain how to sustainably buy items including apparel, electronic products, furniture and more.

## Enjoying the environment

The University owns and manages several sites of conservation importance throughout south-east Queensland, on land and at sea. Many of these locations house endangered and vulnerable species. They include vital fish, bird and koala habitats, as well as unique wetlands and other vegetation. The UQ Sustainability Walk at St Lucia campus, Gatton Environmental Park, Heron Island Research Station and Moreton Bay Research Station are some locations where native flora and fauna can be observed.



OPERATIONS




Energy

Energy efficiency has always been a priority and our deployment of renewables over the past decade has positioned us as a world leader in this space. Energy auditing, sub-metering, efficiency projects and demand management are key to reducing energy consumption while the future is about solar, battery technology, thermal storage, green hydrogen, bioenergy and actively participating in the real time energy market.

2025 Vision

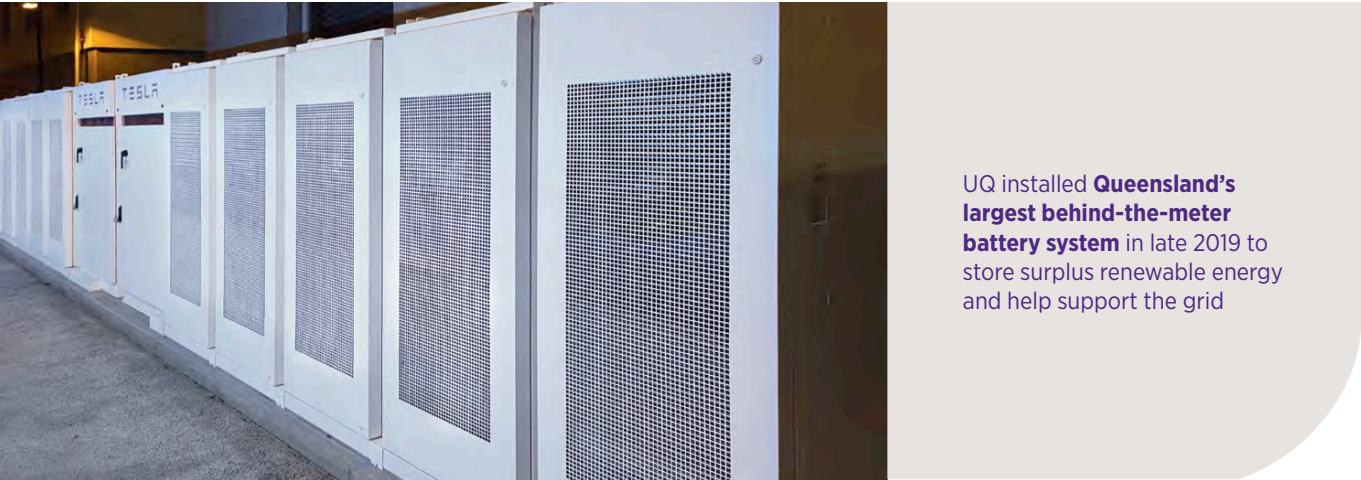
To remain energy neutral with 100% generated from renewable sources while supporting the University's growth. Continue to be a world leader in clean energy with a multifaceted portfolio in generation, storage and energy management.

Commitments

-  Energy consumption is matched 24x7 with renewables via UQ's own generation and partnerships with others
-  Increase the quantity of energy storage to make UQ's energy demand more flexible and improve matching with renewable generation
-  Gross annual energy consumption maintained below a 2019 baseline

Measuring success

- Clean energy generation
- Energy consumption
- Energy storage
- Renewable energy fraction



Sustainable Development Goals










OPERATIONS

Water

UQ's water efficiency projects, water efficient plumbing retrofits, rainwater collection and chiller precinct upgrades equipped us well in previous drought cycles. This period was followed by the breaking of the millennium drought in 2011 with flood waters surrounding Gatton Campus and inundating all low-lying areas of St Lucia Campus. Current forecasts indicate south east Queensland is entering another drought cycle as UQ focuses on reducing our reliance on potable water with more efficient use of recycled water and greater levels of stormwater capture.

Commitments

-  Annual water consumption maintained below a 2019 baseline
-  Potable water consumption maintained below a 2019 baseline
-  Expanded harvesting and use of stormwater and recycled water
-  All new buildings harvest rainwater
-  Masterplan for alternate and secure water sources
-  All UQ lakes are designed for purpose and functioning ecosystems
-  Assets have visible data on water monitoring and reporting

Sustainable Development Goals

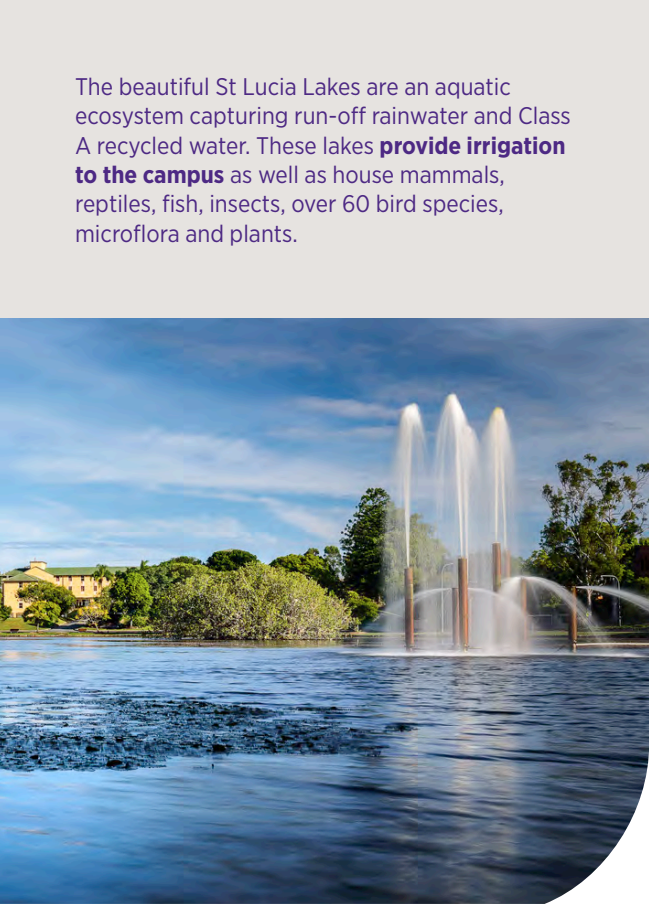


2025 Vision

To achieve best practice in efficient water management and pilot new technologies demonstrating UQ's leadership in sustainable and responsible use of resources.

Measuring success

- Water consumption by type: overall, rainwater, recycled, potable
- Water use percentage by type: rainwater, recycled, potable, irrigation
- Lakes water quality achieving guideline values





OPERATIONS

Transport

UQ promotes active transport options such as cycling and walking to mitigate the impact of transport modes that are a major source of greenhouse gas emissions, road congestion and pollution. Active transport systems are sustainable and healthy and when partnered with micromobility and public transport, these are key to supporting people travelling to, from and within our campuses. Bike boxes, end of trip showering facilities, bike repair stations, bike racks, safe walking paths, wayfinding, electrifying the campus fleet and free electric vehicle charging stations have underpinned the past decade and will continue alongside new opportunities such as the need to reduce air travel emissions.







Cycling to St Lucia campus has increased by 35% over the seven years to 2018, supported by **2,500 bike parking spaces** and 12 bicycle maintenance and repair stations.



2025 Vision

To provide sustainable transport options for the UQ community to travel to, from and within the university. To work towards achieving zero emissions travel for university business including airline travel.

Commitments

-  20% increase of commuters using active transport against a 2019 baseline
-  10% reduction of single occupancy vehicle commuters against a 2019 baseline
-  Transition intercampus buses towards zero emissions technology
-  25% of UQ owned passenger road vehicle fleet are zero emissions
-  80% of all small engine landscape management equipment is powered by zero emissions technology
-  An emissions inventory is established and reported for Scope 3 airline travel. A framework is developed to offset airline travel emissions and implemented in stages

Measuring success

- Modal transportation percentage for staff and students
- Net transport emissions
- Small engine landscape management equipment powered by zero emissions technology

UQ’s electric vehicle charging stations were the first solar-powered, fast-charging infrastructure to be built in Queensland and are available for free use by the public as well as students and staff.

Sustainable Development Goals



OPERATIONS





Waste

Waste is one of the most important environmental issues identified by UQ’s students and staff. Avoiding unnecessary purchases and supporting a circular economy by opting for reuse, recycling and composting mitigates the need to consume raw materials while protecting land, groundwater and clean air. Priorities for the next five years include becoming a single-use plastic free university with the UQ Unwrapped program, Warpit furniture reuse, source reduction, recycling and separation of organics.

2025 Vision

To work towards being a Zero Waste university (or as close as possible) with zero waste sent to landfill. Pilot new waste technologies demonstrating UQ’s leadership in sustainable and responsible use of resources.

Commitments

-  80% diversion of general waste from landfill
-  100% organic waste diversion
-  Established resource recovery infrastructure to increase separation at source and reduce recycling contamination
-  Eliminate single-use plastics and replace with reusable or compostable alternatives where available

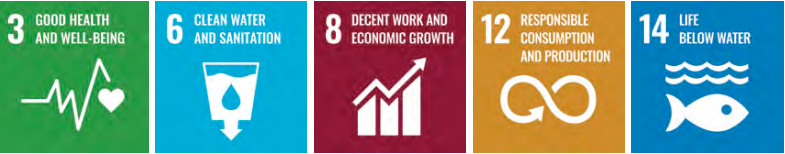
Measuring Success

- Waste to landfill
- Waste to reuse or resource recovery, by waste stream
- Waste to recycling, by waste stream
- Contamination rates by waste stream
- Reusable serving ware, compostable serving ware and single use disposable plastics at events and food outlets



The UQ Unwrapped initiative promotes a **plastic-free lifestyle** targeting the elimination of single-use disposable plastics including coffee cups, takeaway containers, cutlery, plates, cups, straws, plastic bags, single use water bottles and balloons

Sustainable Development Goals





OPERATIONS





# Climate

Global climate change is impacting weather, water availability, sea levels, species viability and agriculture at an unprecedented rate. Mitigating UQ’s climate impact to positively impact the health of our campuses, community and region is a priority underpinning all our environmental programs. Energy is a major contributor to UQ’s greenhouse gas emissions and is being addressed by our clean energy programs. Our flagship solar farm at Gatton has halted and reversed our emissions trajectory. UQ’s Warwick Solar Farm will set us well on our way to becoming carbon positive and we will continue to count, report and reduce scope 1, 2, and 3 emissions.

## 2025 Vision

To be a beyond carbon neutral university. University grounds and buildings are planned and designed to be resilient to the effects of climate change.

## Commitments

-  Beyond carbon neutral footprint including agricultural and scope 3 emissions
-  A 2021 Baseline Climate Forecast scenario established
-  Climate change impacts and adaptation strategies are included in all strategic and operational plans
-  Outdoor air quality metrics and monitor emissions to improve air quality are established

## Measuring success

- Carbon emissions and mitigation by scope
- Outdoor air quality

Heron Island Research Station in the World Heritage Listed Great Barrier Reef Marine Park



Energy accounts for 90% of our UQ’s greenhouse gas emissions and we are proud of our comprehensive renewable energy and energy efficiency programs. As a result of these, **UQ reduced emissions by 21% over the 7 years to 2018** even while growing in student numbers and infrastructure.

Sustainable Development Goals



UQ’s 2021 Baseline Climate Forecast scenario established

OPERATIONS





# Buildings

The built environment is a major source of environmental impact and UQ has taken advantage of campus development to improve the sustainability performance of our buildings and infrastructure. We are expanding our existing standards to include minimum standard Sustainability Guidelines for new buildings and refurbishments to deliver sustainable design and purpose built spaces to reduce greenhouse gas emission and reduce energy and water consumption.

## 2025 Vision

University buildings and infrastructure are a showcase of green building materials and design, which are responsive to their environment, climate, surrounding landscapes and occupants. Operation and maintenance practices ensure buildings continue to operate at optimal performance.

## Commitments

-  Minimum Standard Guidelines established for sustainable design and construction of new buildings and refurbishments
-  All new buildings and refurbishments are delivered to UQ’s Sustainable Guidelines
-  Strategic asset management principles applied on all major assets
-  Whole-of-life-cycle cost assessment and budgeting for all new buildings



UQ’s Global Change Institute building and Advanced Engineering building are **award winning showcases of sustainable design** and incorporate sustainability principles.

## Measuring success

- Building projects (new and refurbished) meet or exceed minimum standards
- Major assets with strategic asset management in place
- New builds with whole of life cycle budget approved
- Construction & demolition waste recycled

Sustainable Development Goals





OPERATIONS

# Grounds and biodiversity

UQ acknowledges that its campuses and sites are located on traditional lands and that indigenous society has cared for country as custodians for at least 60,000 years. UQ recognises the responsibilities to care for the land on which we operate, creating a welcoming space for students, staff, the local community and native wildlife. Our vegetation corridors, bird boxes, environmental park, Land for Wildlife areas, revegetation projects, native plantings, sustainable pest management and wildlife habitats conserve natural resources and protect wildlife. We will continue to protect and sustainably care for our landscape as our community grows.

## 2025 Vision

To support conservation of natural ecosystems to enhance biodiversity in coexistence with the community. Create sustainable landscapes and land use whilst having a net positive or neutral effect of building development on the surrounding environment.

## Commitments

-  All new plantings are native, low maintenance or drought-tolerant species
-  Maintain greenspace against 2019 baseline
-  Expand sustainable weed management practices
-  100% landscaping green waste composted onsite for reuse in landscaping

## Measuring success

- Plant species by type, endemic, non-endemic
- Wildlife species by type, native, introduced
- Greenspace
- Sustainable weed management practices



UQ's ducks have a healthy social media following

The Gatton Environmental Park transformed a former golf course and Lake Galletly into a 10-hectare bushland park with over **600 metres of walkways and more than 1,000 trees**. The park includes animal shelters, bird-watching hides and re-vegetated native forest.

Sustainable Development Goals



OPERATIONS

# Food and dining

Food choices have a significant impact on our personal carbon footprint and on the lives of those who contribute to the farming, production and distribution of food. UQ's bush tucker and community gardens provide an opportunity to connect with the food we eat and experience the full life cycle of food production, consumption and waste to repurpose or compost. We are committed to providing sustainable food and dining choices and will measure the availability of these options on campus.

## 2025 Vision

To provide sustainable food options for the UQ community that have a low carbon footprint, are healthy, locally produced and minimally processed as well as being sustainably farmed and harvested.

## Measuring success




- Food offerings by type: organic, vegan, vegetarian, unprocessed, locally sourced

**Students and staff grow their own fresh food**, socialise, relax and enjoy the harvest of UQ's St Lucia, Gatton and Long Pocket community gardens. The gardens cultivate food knowledge and connect the UQ community with agriculture, food preparation, nutrition and community dining.



Gatton Dining Hall

## Commitments

-  Develop a baseline of available food options offered on campus
-  Increase availability of cost-effective sustainable food options per type: organic, vegan, vegetarian, unprocessed and locally sourced
-  Increase opportunities for edible food waste to be made available to charities for reuse

Sustainable Development Goals





# Purchasing



Large institutions can support a sustainable economy by using purchasing power to choose and foster demand for environmentally and socially responsible products and services. UQ's procurement framework requires sustainability to be considered in all procurement processes. The challenge in a global economy which includes long supply chains is to ensure sustainable procurement processes are transparent and robust. This will be a key focus for UQ in supporting a circular economy.

## 2025 Vision

To embed environmental and socially responsible business practices which have a positive impact on the supply chain.

## Commitments



Reduced consumption accompanied by sustainable purchasing choices driven through business processes



## Sustainable products preferred



Accountable supply chain

## Measuring success

- Purchases by source: repurposed, reused, recycled, end-of-life stewardship, local, socially responsible, Indigenous, slave free and ethical
- Paper usage

UQ WARPiT is an online resource-sharing tool to help staff **avoid unnecessary purchases** while reusing items for work purposes or donation.



Students from UQ's Green Ambassadors Program at UQ Sustainability Week

# Engagement

UQ's engagement activities draw on over 25 years of experience in the global development space with more than 60 countries already benefitting from UQ's global development programs. As one of the leading university development groups in the Indo-Pacific region, UQ International Development provides development expertise and is working to build the capacity of people and organisations around the world to achieve their development goals.

UQ also runs numerous educational and practical programs to help its students, staff and visitors achieve meaningful outcomes.

## Going green

A suite of 'green' programs demonstrate the UQ community's enthusiasm for environmental initiatives.

Our Green Office program invites interested staff members to become official representatives, leading good practices such as minimising recyclables to landfill, reducing energy consumption and directing purchase preferences to environmentally friendly options. Green Labs focuses on building a network of champions who raise awareness of waste, water and energy use in UQ laboratories.

Meanwhile, Green Residents and Green the Team work with students living in UQ's 11 colleges to promote sustainable living principles in residential life.

UQ's Green Caffein is part of Australia's first swap-and-go reusable coffee cup program, making it easy to avoid takeaway coffee cups across the St Lucia campus.

## Bringing ideas to life

The green impact doesn't end there. In 2014, UQ launched the Green Fund program, which provides small grants for student- and staff-led sustainability projects.

And in 2019, the Green Ambassadors program began, fostering new collaborations between staff and students. Green Ambassadors can also join the Environmental Council, which meets regularly to discuss key sustainability topics and support delivery of the ambassadors program.

Celebrating all of UQ's sustainability programs and projects every year is the annual UQ Sustainability Week, which hosts fun and informative events from clothes swaps to movie screenings, gardening tutorials to bike maintenance workshops, meditation sessions and more.



ENGAGEMENT

# UQ community

UQ’s environmental engagement programs commenced in the early 1990’s with UniGreen and have grown to encompass many initiatives including the Green Ambassador program, U2I RISE SDG challenge, Green Office program, Green Labs program, Green the Team, UQ Life, UQ Volunteers, Student Staff partnerships, Idea Hub, UQ Employability student placements, iLab, UQ Wellness and UQ Ally, as well as annual UQ Sustainability Week and the UQ NAIDOC festival. Offering experiences in a sustainability initiative, event or community service deepens our engagement and outreach within the UQ and broader community.

### Measuring success

- Number of students and staff involved in a sustainability initiative by program type
- Levels of community sustainability literacy and perception of UQ’s sustainability culture



Students and staff planting trees for the St Lucia riverbank restoration

Sustainable Development Goals



UQ Sustainability Week is the biggest event of its kind within the Australian university sector, with a broad outreach. Launched in 2013, **each year sees around 60 free activities and markets** that are open to all students, staff and the local community.

### 2025 Vision

To foster sustainable practices within and beyond UQ so our culture reflects and promotes the University’s leadership and values for sustainability and the Sustainable Development Goals.

### Commitments



All staff and students have the opportunity to undertake sustainability service hours by being involved in activities such as an ambassadors program, or a sustainability project, initiative or event

ENGAGEMENT

# Public engagement

UQ is committed to creating meaningful change for communities globally and is contributing to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals through the real-world application of UQ’s knowledge leadership. Interdisciplinary approaches to effectively address global challenges, utilise global development expertise across program delivery, research, policy and advisory services. UQ’s global development hub is partnering with government and multilateral agencies to support country and regional attainment of SDGs.

UQ’s participation in multiple networks underpins our partnerships with business, government, not-for-profits and the tertiary sector, including Group of Eight Australia, Tertiary Education Facilities Management Association, Australasian Campuses Towards Sustainability, Association of the Pacific Rim Universities, Australia – Africa Universities Network, Partnership for Australia – Indonesia Research, Universities Australia, Universitas 21 Statement on Sustainability and the Talloires Declaration. UQ’s commitment to strengthening engagement provides opportunities for our community to cultivate leadership, build advocacy skills and collaborate with the community on creating solutions to sustainability challenges.



UQ is actively and intimately involved in collaborative partnerships pursuing solutions to global sustainability challenges. Our research, teaching and operations, informed by the Sustainable Development Goals, are significant to shaping policy and investment decision making.

### Measuring success

- Number of students and staff involved in sustainability partnerships, mentoring, outreach or community projects
- Levels of public perception of UQ’s sustainability impact

### 2025 Vision

To nurture regional, national and international collaborative partnerships to advance sustainable development. The UQ community has local and global impact and contributes to addressing sustainability challenges.

### Commitments



Expand reciprocal sustainability mentoring and networking with government, private and tertiary sectors at local, state, national and global levels



Increased outreach to primary and secondary education sectors to facilitate, educate and demonstrate sustainability



Expand promotion of UQ’s sustainability leadership and achievements within the global community

Sustainable Development Goals







## Administration and planning

**What happens behind the scenes is just as important as what happens centre stage, and UQ is working hard to ensure our policies, plans and governance structures support our sustainability goals.**

Solving challenges related to inequality, diversity, and health and wellbeing contributes to a better and more sustainable future for all. Our work in this space aligns with our priorities as a signatory to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

### Promoting inclusion

In 2019, UQ was awarded a Bronze Institutional Award as part of SAGE Athena SWAN – a pilot program to improve gender equity in science, technology, engineering, mathematics, medicine (STEMM) disciplines in higher education and research institutions. UQ is undertaking extensive data collection and assessment to identify barriers and deliver targeted interventions for increasing female participation.

UQ's suite of diversity and inclusion training includes Cultural Competence and Managing Unconscious Bias Programs. These programs equip staff with practical strategies to understand and reduce the impact of biases in their decision making.

UQ also provides a number of services that strive to create an inclusive environment where all students have the same opportunity to succeed. Diversity, disability and inclusion advisers are widely available to assist with accessibility, cultural requirements, illness, injury or mental health conditions.

### Promoting wellness

Support for anxiety, loneliness, and general mental health and wellbeing is a strong focus at UQ, and confidential counselling services are available to all students and staff. UQ publishes a range of wellbeing information, checklists and resources as a first port of call for anyone who may be wondering where to turn for help.

Affordable access to more than 200 pools and fitness facilities across South East Queensland is available to UQ staff and their immediate families via the UQ Fitness Passport, helping our people to take care of both their physical and mental wellbeing.

UQ's campuses, research and sports sites, and vehicles are all smoke-free zones, supporting UQ's commitment to providing a productive, safe and healthy working and learning environment.

### Promoting responsible investment

UQ does not hold direct investments, but invests in managed funds. No fossil fuel investments of material significance form part of these managed funds.

All fund managers used by UQ are either signatories to the United Nations-supported Principles for Responsible Investment (PRI) or a member of the Responsible Investment Association Australasia (RIAA). The PRI is the largest global network for investors to publicly demonstrate their commitment to responsible investment.

UQ is committed to using its position to undertake actions that support sustainability in the local and global community. The \$125 million investment in the Warwick Solar Farm is an example of UQ proactively investing to create direct change.

## ADMINISTRATION AND PLANNING

### Planning

**The UQ Sustainability Strategy 2021-2025 is our commitment to outstanding environmental outcomes and represents the contribution from the many students, staff and the broader community in its development.**

UQ's governance includes Senate, the Academic Board, executive leadership and formal leadership positions including committees and student entities.

There are also many leaders in various capacities coordinating sustainability work, collaboration and activities for shaping a more sustainable future across the many facets of environmental and social sustainability.

This Strategy serves to further embed sustainability in leadership, governance and operational decision making at all levels and within all groups at UQ by detailing a clear vision of a low carbon and sustainable future and providing a road map to guide action plans, inform decision making and provide measurable objectives.



### Sustainable Development Goals



*“There are also many leaders in various capacities coordinating sustainability work, collaboration and activities for shaping a more sustainable future across the many facets of environmental and social sustainability.”*



ADMINISTRATION AND PLANNING

Wellbeing



The vitality and personal wellbeing of our people underpins UQ’s success. Our achievements reflect the strength of our students, staff and alumni, reflected by our commitment to enhancing quality of our campus community and by providing quality programs across the health professions.

UQ supports healthy living and wellbeing through our wellness initiatives, healthcare programs, our sports facilities and campus safety programs.

We are committed to nurturing the physical, mental and spiritual health of our community for a sustainable work life balance, a sustainable University and a sustainable world.

“UQ supports healthy living and wellbeing through our wellness initiatives, healthcare programs, our sports facilities and campus safety programs.”

Sustainable Development Goals



ADMINISTRATION AND PLANNING

Equity

UQ values equity, diversity and inclusion, and seeks to reflect the broader community by attracting and retaining high-quality students and staff from a range of backgrounds.

We recognise that diversity enhances learning and we value the importance of embracing diverse groups that come together to work collaboratively for local and global sustainability solutions.

We are committed to identifying and addressing areas of under-representation among students and

staff and aim to provide a respectful and healthy study, research and work environment for all.

Higher education provides access to opportunities for a more equitable world and UQ recognises that education should be accessible to all regardless of gender, ethnicity, religion, culture, socioeconomic background, carer’s responsibilities or disability.

UQ supports equity through our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander networks and employment strategy, involvement in gender equity programs including the SAGE pilot of the Athena

SWAN program, participation in Australia’s world-first Respect.Now. Always. program, our award winning UQ Ally program, UQ’s LGBTIAQ+ inclusion initiatives and UQ scholarships for access to higher education. These initiatives are underpinned by our Reconciliation Action Plan and Disability Action Plan.

We are committed to a socially diverse environment and seek to be a global leader in disability inclusion in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

“We are committed to a socially diverse environment and seek to be a global leader in disability inclusion in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.”



Sustainable Development Goals





ADMINISTRATION AND PLANNING

# Investment and finance

**Responsible investment promotes sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth to support entrepreneurship, creativity, innovation, job creation and productive employment.**

UQ is committed to responsible investment by applying strong environmental, social and governance principles across all investment and finance transactions.

UQ does not hold direct investments, but rather invests in managed funds. No fossil fuel investments of material significance form part of these managed funds. All fund managers used by UQ are either signatories to the United Nations-supported Principles for Responsible Investment (PRI) or a member of the Responsible Investment Association

Australasia (RIAA). The PRI is the largest global network for investors to publicly demonstrate their commitment to responsible investment.

Within the managed funds, UQ has established the UQ Socially Responsible Investment (SRI) Green Fund with an initial \$3m contribution. This fund operates with sustainable and socially responsible investments and will not invest in companies excluded from the FTSE All-World ex Fossil Fuels Index Series. The UQ SRI Green Fund provides a responsible and sustainable investment option for those giving donations and bequests to the University.

UQ's investment framework is continually reviewed to ensure sustained financial return in line with social and responsible investment.

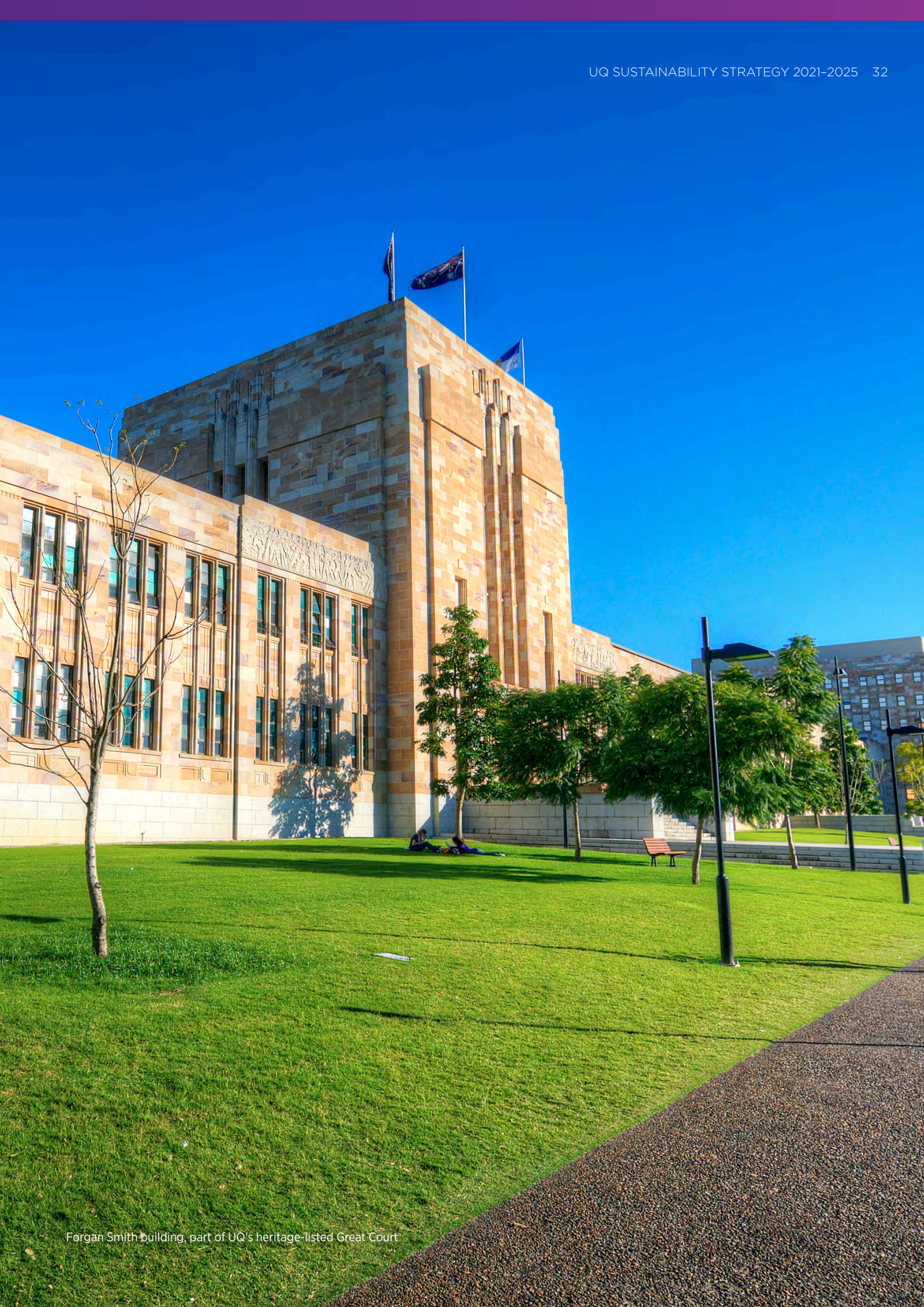
Beyond investment in the traditional sense, UQ is committed to using its position to undertake actions that support sustainability in the local and global community. The \$125 million investment in the Warwick Solar Farm is an example of UQ proactively investing to create direct change. This initiative re-directed UQ's future expenditure on electricity bills into the construction of a renewable energy plant to be owned and operated by the University for the next 25 years.

Together, these initiatives provide a holistic approach to sustainable investment, contributing to positive and more sustainable global financial system.

*UQ is committed to responsible investment by applying strong environmental, social and governance principles across all investment and finance transactions.*



Sustainable Development Goals



Forgan Smith building, part of UQ's heritage-listed Great Court



# Sustainable Development Goals

Goal	Sustainability strategy	Research impact theme
 <b>1 No poverty</b> End poverty in all its forms everywhere	Public engagement, Wellbeing, Equity	Achieving resilient environments and livelihoods, Designing technology for tomorrow
 <b>2 Zero hunger</b> End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture	Food and dining	Building better bioeconomies, Designing technology for tomorrow
 <b>3 Good health and wellbeing</b> Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all at all ages	Transport, Waste, Climate, Buildings, Grounds, Food and dining, Purchasing, Wellbeing	Leading healthy lives, Designing technology for tomorrow
 <b>4 Quality education</b> Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all	Teaching and learning, UQ community, Public engagement, Equity	Designing technology for tomorrow, Transforming societies
 <b>5 Gender equality</b> Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls	Planning, Equity	Transforming societies
 <b>6 Clean water and sanitation</b> Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all	Water, Waste, Buildings, Grounds, Purchasing	Designing technology for tomorrow
 <b>7 Affordable and clean energy</b> Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all	Energy, Climate, Buildings	Designing technology for tomorrow
 <b>8 Decent work and economic growth</b> Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all	Waste, Purchasing, Public engagement, Wellbeing, Equity, Finance	Transforming societies
 <b>9 Industry, innovation and infrastructure</b> Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation	Research, Transport, Buildings	Designing technology for tomorrow, Transforming societies

Goal	Sustainability strategy	Research impact theme
 <b>10 Reduced inequalities</b> Reduce inequality within and among countries	Equity	Transforming societies
 <b>11 Sustainable cities and communities</b> Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable	Water, Transport, Climate, Buildings, Public engagement, Planning	Designing technology for tomorrow, Transforming societies
 <b>12 Responsible consumption and production</b> Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns	Transport, Waste, Buildings, Food and dining, Purchasing, UQ community, Public engagement	Designing technology for tomorrow, Transforming societies
 <b>13 Climate action</b> Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts	Teaching and learning, Energy, Transport, Climate, UQ community, Planning	Building better bioeconomies, Achieving resilient environments and livelihoods, Designing technology for tomorrow, Transforming societies
 <b>14 Life below water</b> Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development	Water, Waste, Food and dining	Achieving resilient environments and livelihoods, Designing technology for tomorrow
 <b>15 Life on land</b> Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss	Grounds, Food and dining, Purchasing	Building better bioeconomies, Achieving resilient environments and livelihoods, Designing technology for tomorrow, Transforming societies
 <b>16 Peace, justice and strong institutions</b> Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels	Research, Public engagement, Planning, Finance	Transforming societies
 <b>17 Partnerships for the goals</b> Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Finance	Public engagement, Planning	Transforming societies



