



# Social Impact Report 2019

This is how we live our values



# Unleashing... The power of U

We champion the power of people to connect the world for good

**We know that we are making a difference.**

**In 5 years, Torrens University Australia has proven that public good can be delivered from private investment.**

Not just that. We are punching above our weight.

Here is just a snapshot.

We are Australia's fastest growing university, comprising higher than national average of diversity of students.

According to a new report by Deloitte Access Economics, between 2015 and 2018, our ongoing operations contributed an estimated \$1.2 billion to the Australian GDP, supporting nearly 2000 full time equivalent jobs during the period. The economic impact of the University's skills graduates was \$1.4 billion in public and private benefits, attributable to 2015-2019 graduates. This means that the economic impact of Torrens University in Australia, from 2015 to 2019, was above \$2.6 billion.

Importantly, we are providing industry relevant education, and training which is setting our graduates up for careers, progress and fulfilment – which impacts their lives, those of their families and their societies.

We are extremely proud that in 2018 more than 90% of our students are finding employment within 12 months of graduation.

While focussed on these outcomes for our students, we continue to build the foundations of academic excellence through strong research aimed at addressing many challenges and opportunities in our societies.

Our strengths lie in our commitments to mobilise, volunteer, unlock aspirations of the traditionally disadvantaged and forge partnerships focussed on delivering good.



### Cover artwork

Our cover artwork is the work of Samantha 'Sammy' Hill, a Koori woman of Dharawal and Wandandian lineage. It is part of a series of works especially produced for Torrens University Australia.

Sammy was born in Port Kembla in 1984, and raised in the Illawarra, a region of eclectic landscapes, lush with beaches, bush, mountains, and lakes. Her artwork is deep in pattern-work and intense colours, drawing on Aboriginal styles from across Australia. The most appealing aspect of Aboriginal artwork to her is the idea of telling stories within stories.

She currently feels most at ease in the digital arena. Her contemporary Aboriginal artwork is created with a graphics tablet and computer, with her subject matter being modern stories that matter to her.

Sammy is honoured now to share her artistic passion with Torrens University Australia.



“  
Quite simply, we champion  
the power of people to  
connect the world for good.  
”

## Letter from Linda Brown

**We only have ten years remaining before the deadline of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals must be met. This is why Torrens University, Think and MDS are here to do good.**

To connect the world for good is not intended to be a lofty vision. It's a call to action. It's a daily reminder that learning must be relevant and transformational. That research must be engaged and must be answering the most urgent and pressing questions. It is a mantra for anyone in the business of education.

Every student who walks through our doors, is trusting us with their lives and their futures. This is why we don't shy away from our role as change makers through our teaching, our research, and our engagement. But we strive for something more.

You will see in this report that through our Here for Good agenda, we deliver impact for communities and individuals where it is most urgent and needed, through harnessing the energy of our people, facilitating community engagement, embedding change making and advancing public leadership.

I write this statement, as the world around us is dealing with the devastating impact of climate change. This generation entering our institutions, is the first generation that may see a world that no longer has global poverty. Equally they are the generation that will live with the devastating impact of climate change. This is why our education most not only be exceptional, but relevant. It's why we try to build change making into everything we do.

### **How we have made Here for Good our own**

The words Here for Good have echoed throughout Laureate International University's around the world, in over sixty institutions. In the past eighteen months, I believe we have firmly found what Here for Good means in an Australian and New Zealand context and how we bring this mantra to the world.

- We are here for good because we have no other choice at a moment like this.
- We are here for good because it's what our students believe in.
- We are here for good because our staff are brave, bold visionaries.
- We are here for good because the world needs change makers and innovators and agitators.
- We are here for good because a university should be relevant, open.
- We are here for good because we strive to be creative.
- We are here for good because we believe that profit and purpose can go hand in hand.

Let me focus on just two examples.

**Joshua Robinson**, a student of the Media Design School, produced a film of his life experience of domestic violence and mental health. The film Home has now been screened at the imagiNATIVE Film and Media Arts Festival in Canada and at Maoriland Film Festival in Aotearoa, New Zealand.

**Luiz Bispo**, an international business student from Torrens University is tackling climate change and its impact on global agriculture. Luiz's personal life story is why we do, what we do. From the slums of Sao Paulo, as an orphan who was adopted at a young age, Luiz is now an MBA student at Torrens, and recently spoke about climate change at the United Nations.

These are our values in action. This is why Here for Good is more than a line, or a mantra. It's fundamental to every part of our work.

I hope you see through this report why we care so much about this work.

Be Good.

**Linda Brown**  
President,  
Torrens University Australia

# Delivering on our Values in 2019



## We take our B Corp status seriously

Being a Certified B Corporation is not about displaying a badge of honour.

It is about our genuine endeavors to transform lives through education and our commitment to the communities we serve – while meeting the highest social and environmental standards, accountability and transparency.

It is about results, outcomes and impact.

Yes, as a Public Benefit Corporation, we are required by law to create general public benefit through positive impact on society.

And as accredited educators in Australia and New Zealand, we are obligated to demonstrate public benefit and excellence in teaching learning, research and engagement.

To become B Corp certified, we had to provide evidence that our operations considered social and environmental impacts. We were certified according to global standards.

But what we have achieved consistently in the last five years shows momentum and drive embedded in our collective consciousness.

We have prioritized graduate employability, volunteered our expertise and services, supported climate change awareness campaigns, produced research of national and global significance, and ensured opportunity for all, including the disadvantaged.

We will continue on this path, collaborating with other B Corp partners. The potential is enormous. Right now there are more than 260 B Corps in Australia.

But we will not stop here. We will be part of the momentum to encourage more organisations to use business as a force for good.



# We champion the power of people to connect the world for good



## Begin & end with people

Be student centred & united in purpose

**16,396** Total current students

**292** Indigenous students

**2,500** Lower socio economic status students



## Be Good

Do good. Achieve the highest quality, leading with care, respect & purpose

**\$50,000+** Fund-raised

**7,500** Hours volunteered

**2,847** Patients at our student clinics



## Be Creative

Be curious and playful, find innovative solutions

**80+** Social impact focussed WIL projects

**1st** in Australia and New Zealand for animation

**15+** volunteer projects using music, tech and design



## Be Bold

Aim high, be courageous, commit and push the boundaries

**2893** First in family to attend Uni

**5** Economic and social well-being research centres

**12,048** new enrolments Australia's fastest growing university



## Be Global

Celebrate diversity, broad thinking and open mindsets

**53%** International Students

**105** different nationalities

**8412** International students

**30%** of research output published in top 10 international journals



# Doing good starts with respect and acknowledgment

**On the lands where our campuses are located, teaching, learning and research have taken place since time immemorial. These are traditional lands.**

Yet in Australia and New Zealand, Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and Maori peoples continue to be under-represented in higher education.

At Torrens University we are proud that we have nearly 300 students who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Our projects and initiatives are focussed on ensuring increased participation, providing positive experiences and deepening understanding of indigenous cultures.

Torrens University Australia and Think Education are leading significant projects with and by First Nations' people.

We recently launched an online Yarning Space for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and 100% of our scholarships in Trimester Two were awarded to First Nations' students.

We are doing great work that must continue, but we must work in partnership and with patience.

If we are here for good then our liberation is bound together.



## Scholarships

Scholarships are available to assist Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in their studies. In 2019, 10 education cost scholarships (valued at \$2,500) and six 50% tuition scholarships were awarded to students. A new commencement scholarship, valued at \$500, was also introduced to assist start-up costs for studies.

## Yarning Space

The Yarning Space is an online platform for our students to meet and interact with fellow Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in a culturally safe and judgement-free environment. The platform aims to celebrate student achievements and share experiences. It hosts monthly online collaborative sessions facilitated by our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Liaison.

## Celebrating Culture

Acknowledging and celebrating Indigenous culture remains a strong focus for both students and staff. We commissioned Aboriginal artist Samantha Hill to develop artwork for our campuses. They reflected the themes of learning, technology and aspirations with vibrant energy and depth.

## NAIDOC Week

In July, we joined the nation to celebrate the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples during NAIDOC Week. Across our campuses in Sydney, Brisbane, Melbourne and Adelaide, special presentations, film screenings, design workshops, fundraising, art exhibitions and food events were held.

For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, this is a very significant week of pride, and building bridges focussed on reconciliation. Rochelle Kudawoo, our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Liaison describes it as "such a big event, it can't be missed. Everyone is connecting and celebrating culture. It's like corroboree."

# Maori and Pasifika Values lighting our way



**Media Design School has a long history of supporting its local community, including those of Pasifika and Māori heritage.**

But we are taking an even more important step now – embedding Maori and Pasifika perspectives into MDS, heightening awareness and building cultural competency...

A new course led by Dr Jo Diamond covering Māori language and culture was launched at Media Design School during Māori Language Week in Aotearoa New Zealand. Twenty staff members were immersed in the course, which is now an important part of professional induction and development.

The course provides a brief introduction to Māori language, protocols and history, such as the Treaty of Waitangi of 1840 and subsequent legislation that dominates education and business in Aotearoa New Zealand. It also aims to encourage further research into Māori culture by staff and practical applications to enhance our students' learning experience.



## Pacifika Sparks project

The Pasifika Sparks Community project, now in its second year, focuses on encouraging, motivating and empowering Auckland's Pasifika youth to participate in extra-curricular activities. This year, Media Design School partnered with Kelston Girls College to support their Samoan Polyfest group of cultural performers. The funding assisted the group with costumes, transport and other performance-related costs, enabling these talented young artists to celebrate their cultural roots.

## Scholarships

Each year, Media Design School offers scholarships to assist Pasifika and Māori students in their studies. In 2019, 40 fully-funded scholarships were offered to emerging talent within the Māori and Pasifika community. Four scholarships were offered to students for academic excellence, while 40 bursaries with a 50% tuition reduction were also offered.

## Malaga program

Malaga is a mentoring program that encourages Pasifika students to enter the digital design and creative industries and supports them throughout their studies and early stages of their career. It was established by the MDS team and encompasses a number of initiatives, from mentoring sessions, monthly meet-ups and scholarships.

## Maori students

Media Design School has 44 identifying Māori students and integrates Māori culture, protocol and teachings into the School. This year, it welcomed The Kapu Haka Group from Waiorea School in Auckland's inner suburbs to perform at the Media Design School graduation ceremony.



## Joshua Robinson's story

First-year Media Design School student Joshua Robinson tackles domestic violence and mental health in his animation film Home. In October, Joshua attended the international premiere of Home at the imagineNATIVE Film + Media Arts Festival, the world's largest presenter of Indigenous screen content. Home premiered at Māoriland film festival in Aotearoa, New Zealand.

**Artwork by Te Iwihoko Te Ranghirawe**  
Media Design School Graduate



“

With Rosa Rosa, I decided to take a more ethical approach, and wanted to manufacture locally, have all fabrics be cruelty free and have a strong message behind my clothing.

”

**Christina Hewawissa**

Billy Blue graduate and fashion designer





# We always begin and end with people

### Delivering on some awesome dreams

Media Design School tutor Ali Cowley knows what it is like to make dreams come true. His new film Meet Munch Jr. tells the story of how he brought his teen son Nikau's cartoon character (pictured) to life through animation and puppetry. The film involved Ali working closely with Nikau who has Asperger syndrome and "doesn't see anyone who is quite like him."

The premiere of the film at the launch of Loading Docs 2019 season was even more special when Nikau introduced Meet Munch Jr. to the Loading Docs crowd. "It was a magical moment and a great night," Ali said.

### Techy scavenger hunt reveals realities of Tourette Syndrome

In late 2018, Associate Dean of Design Robyn Latimer (pictured) provided a live brief to our Communication Design students. The brief was close to her heart as a parent and educator. It also reflected her passion for community work.

She put forward a mission which could significantly benefit the not-for-profit Tourette Syndrome Association of Australia.

What she perhaps didn't realise at the time was that she would also demonstrate the power that we have as educators and the power of our network across Australia and New Zealand.

Our students Andy Lee and Ruby Trenerry designed TAC'TICS, a scalable and immersive scavenger hunt app to promote awareness and understanding of Tourette Syndrome. Conceived at our Billy Blue College of Design at Torrens University Australia, TAC'TICS is now taking flight across Australia.

Launched at our 2019 Australia and New Zealand Leadership Summit in Melbourne, 200 of our staff tested TAC'TICS in real time and provided feedback to our students. Following the success of the day, we also donated \$12,000 to the Tourette Syndrome Association of Australia.

### Remembering the homeless

In Adelaide, Torrens University Australia students completing a degree in Community Services gathered information about what happens when homeless people die and how they are remembered. Their report, which investigated findings in South Australia, nationally and around the world, was delivered to Centennial Park Management for implementation.

### Building our research and scholarship for good

Torrens University Australia is the proud home to four PhD graduates – with our first PhD graduating in 2017, two more in 2018 and one in 2019.

In 2019, Nick Hadjinicolaou graduated with a PhD in Project Management which examined whether project portfolio management (PPM) can improve project success. Nick successfully developed a framework for the implementation of PPM that can increase the likelihood of project success rates in Australia.

### PHIDU

#### Mapping the state of the nation's health

The Public Health Development Unit (PHIDU) at Torrens University Australia develops policy shaping research which provide critical insights into health across Australia.

In 2019, the release of various reports attracted significant media attention across the country.

#### Australia's potentially preventable hospitalisations

The first national report revealing trends over time in potentially preventable hospitalisations according to where Australians live, was released by PHIDU in 2019.

It focussed on situations where hospital admissions could have been prevented through health intervention and early disease management.

#### Revealing the links between housing quality and health

In July 2019, PHIDU released a first-of-its-kind report, based on national data, which demonstrated that adequate and affordable housing is an important determinant of good health in Australia.

#### Closing the Gap Time Series Atlas

PHIDU made a significant contribution to the Council of Australian Governments' efforts to address Aboriginal disadvantage across the country by publishing data relevant to the Councils strategy.



Robyn Latimer, Associate Dean of Design



Nikau Cowley

“  
I'm now sharing my experiences with PhD students and helping them through their journey.  
”

**Dr Nick Hadjinicolaou**

# We will be bold, unafraid to push boundaries in creating a better world



## Challenging policy mindsets on frailty

Sometimes it can take the recasting of a word to ensure the vulnerable are protected.

Exercise Physiologist and Gerontologist, Dr Elsa Dent (from Torrens University Australia and The Baker Heart and Diabetes Institute) is passionate about the reframing of frailty – the physical state before disability.

She believes it critical to ensuring it receives adequate recognition so we can advance evidence-based treatment and cost-effective care strategies.

Dr Dent published a significant research paper: Management of frailty: opportunities, challenges and future directions, arguing the case.

Dr Dent says in recent years there has been a rapid expansion in the recognition and knowledge of the phenomenon of frailty, a new frontier of medicine, but says there is a long way to go in learning how to detect and treat this condition in a cost-effective way. She says it is important frailty does not become a new aspect of ageism.

## Art busting the stigma of seeking help

Third year Media Design School student Mona Gabr's project Allay was developed to help the 79,000 Kiwi Youths who are affected by psychological distress.

Mona created the app that is a support network for young creatives and helps reduce the stigma of seeking help through its art therapy, allowing young people to express their feelings.

Mona won Bronze in the Student Public Good Award category at the Designer Institute of New Zealand's 2018 Best Design Awards.

## A story of survival and climate change revealed in Virtual Reality project

For the second time in three years, Torrens University Australia has committed to sharing key historical events with the power of Virtual Reality (VR), while raising awareness of broader issues facing humanity.

First came Kokoda VR in 2017, enabling thousands of Australian students to learn about the World War 2 Kokoda track campaign.

Now a partnership with environmentalist Tim Jarvis and Adelaide design studio Mwonkeystack will unearth the story of legendary explorer, Sir Ernest Shackleton.

Shackleton led a 1914 expedition that aimed to be the first to cross Antarctica coast-to-coast.

However his ship became trapped in ice early on and 10 months later sank. Thin Ice VR tells the story of how Shackleton and his crew survived as they journeyed through Antarctica. It also reveals his extraordinary leadership.

When modern day adventurer Tim Jarvis recreated the famous events of Shackleton's voyage, he discovered that climate change had drastically impacted the region. Thin Ice VR, written and directed by Torrens University Design lecturer James Calvert, will in the footsteps of Shackleton and Jarvis. It will allow users to experience the journey of survival firsthand and see for themselves the effect climate change has had on the Antarctic region over the last 100 years.



“  
It is impossible for any institution to have credibility in industry and in society without making sure we generate relevant knowledge.  
”

**Professor Alwyn Louw**  
Vice Chancellor

“

I have always been interested in swarms in nature. As a kid I used to play with ants, give them food and follow their trails.

So I found a perfect field of study called swarm intelligence.

It is inspired by nature to develop algorithms in computers to solve the most challenging problems that we face as humans.

”

**Associate Professor Ali Mirjalili**  
Director, Torrens University Centre  
for Artificial Intelligence Research



# Impact 21: Partnerships delivering good



In 2019, Torrens University Australia partnered with innovative not-for-profit entity e.motion21, Inc to help young adults living with Down syndrome develop their education and secure meaningful and sustainable employment.

The world-first initiative, Impact21, involves 12 students who have Down syndrome undertaking an intensive 12-month work-readiness program to help them secure customised, paid employment with blue chip companies such as Dulux Group, PwC Australia, JB Hi-Fi, Sodexo and Deakin University in collaboration with CVGT Australia.

The pilot program is running at the Flinders Street campus with our education, health and research teams supporting the initiative.



# Our staff and students are ready to volunteer

In 2019, our staff and students volunteered over 7000 hours of their time to projects and activities involving research, analysis, IT, production of reports, film making, designing strategies and campaigns helping not-for-profit, social, environmental and community causes.

We collaborated with teams in higher education, local council, philanthropy organisations, the Red Cross, government departments, the private sector and more.

The activities focussed on a broad many areas and demonstrates not just our genuine commitment to do good, but also how we are able to make a difference in so many different parts of society:

- Community engagement
- Ageing
- Reconciliation
- Dementia
- Adult literacy
- Childrens well being
- Hearing loss
- Breast Cancer
- LGBT and gender equality
- Disability
- Impact of cholera on communities
- Diversity and inclusion.

## Global Days of Service

The time of year when our students, staff and faculties unite as change makers over a few weeks and give back to the community through volunteering.

In 2019 the smiles on the faces of our teams said a lot about our pledge to be good through action and commitment.



“

The mix of Design, Art and Education is a totally symbiotic relationship.

It is something the little boy in polio boots could barely have dreamed of.

It goes to building something worth belonging to.

”

**Professor Helmut Lueckenhausen**  
Pro Vice Chancellor, Academic



# We can be creative with solutions



## Career fashion need not cost a fortune

Eighty clients from Sydney's Asylum Seekers Centre (ASC) received donations of work-appropriate clothing, fashion styling sessions and career coaching from students and Success Coaches from Billy Blue College of Design at Torrens University Australia in July 2019.

Approximately 120 kilograms of designer garments and smart casual business attire was donated by staff and students. Each ASC client received several items of clothing that were personally selected and styled for them by the fashion students, while Success Coaches reviewed their resumes and held discussions around careers possibilities.

## Collaborative research making buzz with Dengue

Findings by a Torrens University Australia research team into how the potentially fatal mosquito borne disease Dengue fever is diagnosed were published in the Tropical Medicine and International Health Journal. Our research team of Dr Gary Low, Dr Jakob Kagize and Katherine Faull worked in collaboration with the Universiti Putra Malaysia. They found that some predictive/ diagnostic statistical models in use have limitations and need re-validation and improvement.

## Designing ways out of Dyslexia

"Design can be a powerful tool for social transformation and breakthroughs in education," says Torrens University's Darren Taljaard.

The Design lecturer and second year PhD student is undertaking a research project focussed on improving learning outcomes for people with dyslexia.

The reading and learning difficulty is experienced by one in five people.



## Can't get more creative than making new life

Some of Australia's leading fertility specialists and alumni of our Southern School of Natural Therapies at Torrens University Australia released a book Create a Fertile Life for hopeful parents-to-be.

The book, described as a 'preconception bible', is the culmination of years of work by naturopaths who are highly respected in the sector, including Charmaine Dennis and Rhiannon Hardingham and our Fitzroy clinic supervisor, Tina Jenkins.

It provides readers with evidence based, clinically proven guidelines, insights and tips on achieving a healthy pregnancy.



“

We made a beautiful batch of burn creams. It was our way to give back to the communities dealing with bushfires. They will go straight to the animals and people who need them.

”

**Narelle Steguis**

Lecturer, Southern School of Natural Therapies



# Passion for environment sparked in remote Brazil, fuels journey across continents, to the UN and Torrens University

**I sometimes surprise people when I tell them that I am a Master in Business Administration student with a passion for environmental action.**

But when I explain that my advocacy work has included attending a UN Climate Action Summit in New York, I am understood better.

It was my childhood which most influenced my academic and career path, and what I do at Torrens University. I grew up in São Paulo, Brazil. Life was challenging and I was an adopted kid.

But there were beautiful moments including visiting my adoptive grandmother in remote Brazil. There, water was scarce, wild animals were rare and growing food was difficult. But an Aunt still showed me the beauty of life in gardens.

It sparked my passion and interest in nature and a commitment to make a difference.

I knew education (and hard work) would make it happen. I was right.

My Bachelor's degree in Forest Engineering, scholarships, my work in bush-land restoration and my conservationist advocacy have allowed me to join young people in environmental and climate programmes on every continent. I am lucky to be on UNESCO's Man and Biosphere programme

But I still feel this is not enough. There has to be more of us learning more about small actions and big actions which will heal our world and heal us – from writing to politicians to volunteering and working with nature.

I am focusing for now on business, negotiation, system-thinking and management strategies – connecting it with my forest and environmental knowledge. I know that doing my MBA at Torrens will be a magnificent value-added for my future goals and vision.

**Luiz Bispo**  
Master in Business  
Administration student





# Global in thinking, learning and impact



## The circle of good in Myanmar

Over 50 years ago, current lecturer Philip Maw was a disadvantaged child in Myanmar. One day, in a turn of fortune, a woman from Australia, Mrs Peggy Bird, sacrificed her savings for Philip to continue his primary education. Because of this education, Philip's life changed. His family and his community were transformed.

Now, years on, after studying with the Blue Mountains International Hotel Management School and then lecturing at the School, Philip would like to provide the same opportunities to disadvantaged youth in Myanmar. His family is currently constructing an education and training centre in Myanmar. Philip says: "It seems impossible, but I believe that my dream will come true and I will follow my heart, no matter what happens."



## A bright future in hospitality for Sala Bai youth in Cambodia

Special funds raised at Torrens University will provide 15 fully funded places for young Cambodian students at Sala Bai Hotel School in Cambodia, which was set up to help underprivileged youth.

Staff and students at our Blue Mountains International Hotel Management School at Torrens University Australia raised more than \$18,000 at their annual dinner for the Sala Bai Hotel School in Siem Reap.

Impressively, 100% of students who study at Sala Bai are employed within one month of graduating.



## Young Lontya shows how business fuels world goodness

Torrens University Australia Bachelor of Commerce student Lontya Kalililo represented Australia at the One Young World Summit 2019 in London. It is a highly regarded global forum that brings together young leaders (with the counsel of world leaders and influencers) to develop new ideas for social change. Lontya, a Student Ambassador with Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand (CA ANZ), was chosen for the Summit by CA ANZ – a remarkable achievement as only two delegates are chosen by the professional association to represent Australia and New Zealand each year.

“  
I truly believe  
we can empower  
people with a  
disability by the  
way we provide  
services and design  
our communities.  
”

**Marcia Teperman**  
Disability Liaison Adviser



## Melanie Tran: Tech For Good

Twenty-three-year-old Melanie Tran, our 2018 Here for Good award winner and Torrens University graduate was named as one of the 2019 Australian Financial Review's (AFR) Top 100 Women of Influence. Melanie is an innovator, entrepreneur and activist who is leading change in the provision of support services for people with disabilities, through her role as user experience designer for Hireup (the online platform for Australians with disability to hire and manage the support workers they choose).

The prestigious AFR accolade is a testament to Melanie's insights, tenacity and her commitment to making the world more inclusive and accessible for people living with a disability.

Melanie also recently completed an incredible two week trip to the US. As part of her trip, Mel shared her inspirational story with the team at Laureate International Universities as part of their Global Speaker Series.

Continuing her passion for being "here for good", Melanie is proud to be one of the key global facilitators for the "Voices of Social Change" massive online open course (MOOC) in Australia for Torrens University.

# We always begin and end with people



## No gaming without girl power

Six years after it began, Media Design School's Girls in Games program continues to have a significant positive impact on the representation of young women in the games industry.

Free game development workshops are held on campus at Media Design School for high school students and aim to encourage more young women to get into the gaming industry.

Our games faculty and support staff regularly give up their time to plan and deliver these sessions. In the last 12 months, Media Design School has hosted 108 girls during three workshops.

## Offering wellness services to the elderly

Torrens University has partnered with Opal Aged Care to deliver a truly industry immersive experience for our students. Our aesthetics students attended Opal Aged Care facilities in Brisbane and Sydney providing therapeutic beauty and wellness treatments to the residents.

Torrens University aesthetics academic staff also attended the Opal Aged Care facility in Brisbane to support an organised event for residents. The aesthetics team provided make-up and beauty services to prepare residents for their Dinner Dance event. Residents were delighted to have one-on-one time with team members, while being pampered ahead of their evening event with family and friends.

## Rolling in plates of Christmas cheer

More than 130 Meals on Wheels clients enjoyed a two-course Christmas lunch in July 2019 thanks to culinary students from William Blue College of Hospitality Management at Torrens University Australia.

The College has been involved in the annual Christmas in July and December Christmas lunches for Sydney's Meals on Wheels clients for the last five years, working alongside the Rotary Club of North Sydney.

Many of the clients are older Australians who are socially isolated and may not have families or loved ones around. So these special events help provide them with a sense of community and belonging as well as the experience and delights of a beautiful restaurant style meal.



## Report reveals winter vulnerability among aged

Think winter's mainly about colds, flu and pneumonia? A report co-authored by Torrens University Australia heart failure expert Professor Simon Stewart revealed the elderly are particularly vulnerable to heart failure during the harsh cold months. The report titled 'Peak Winter! A Report on the Seasonal Impact of Heart Failure in Australia' attracted a lot of media attention nationwide.

It is the first analysis of winter's impact on heart failure-related hospital admissions across Australia.



“

The story of elderly people finding peace and joy is important to tell.

”

**Professor Cath Rogers**  
Dean of Health





# Bushfire Hack-a-thon

## Glimpse of our 2020 vision

The Australian bushfires which began in late 2019 and continued in early 2020, impacted many of us, even from a distance.

Across our own campuses, small teams rallied to support communities and wildlife.

Then in February at our One Torrens leadership summit in Adelaide, our efforts took a big turn.

Torrens University committed 50k to develop a solution to a challenge facing communities impacted by bushfires.

The concept would come from the Summiteers, split into teams and charged with pitching to a judging panel in a competition.

The Summiteers were divided into 5 cross divisional teams. Each was responsible for a key area:

- Disaster preparation
- Communications
- Recovery
- Mental Health
- Donation distribution

Over two days, each team arrived at its pitch by following a systematic design thinking process. This encouraged diversity of innovative ideas, cross disciplinary collaboration, and enabling ideation iterative stages, and testing.

The decision to choose a winning concept was tough.

But in true Torrens University spirit – the judging panel decided to allocate 50k to develop a concept focussed on disaster preparation, but also including mental health considerations – with help from Torrens University graduate Phoebe Perkins who is developing her own phone app to assist communities.

**Mental health**

Ensuring the digital preparation game embeds mental health considerations including relevant and appropriate language, broad based networks and support.

**Preparation**

**A community self assessment tool**

Helping communities practice crisis scenarios through a digital game.

Game will teach people how to prepare, act and stay in control during a natural disaster.

**Phoebe Perkins**

Insights from an app developed to assist communities to deal with bushfires.



“  
 There was real excitement  
 around the Bushfire Hackathon.  
 There were solutions which  
 would really matter to people.  
 ”

**Professor Eddie Blass**  
 Convenor, Bushfire Hack-a-thon

# On the horizon

## We do not live in isolation.

## We are part of communities – in our local neighbourhoods, at work, as nations and globally.

What we do together can reverberate, transform destinies and even change the course of history, let alone lives.

Yes, it is possible.

This is why, every few decades, the United Nations challenges us all to reach for the highest of goals which would end discrimination and hardship, break unending cycles of hopelessness, and ensure coexistence on our planet.

At present, we are calling these Sustainable Development Goals.

But if left only to governments, humanity would never advance.

We need only look to #MeToo, Greta Thunberg, Bring Back Our Girls and marriage equality movements in recent times to register the power and potency of individual and community action.

At Torrens University we believe in the power of education to change lives. But we mean much more than providing formal instruction to help graduates get a job when we say this.

We want our staff and graduates to be changemakers, with charged appetites to transform the world they inherit and live in. We will be relentless in imbuing a culture of curiosity, questioning, collaboration and partnerships.

How will we do this? Think climate action, joining big minds at the Vivid Festival, and expanding horizons through the New Colombo Plan.

This is about the right to know, grow and participate. This is about being catalysts. This is about education as a force for good.

### **Bryce Ives**

Vice President Communications and Public Affairs

## Bold and intrepid – navigating the road ahead

Committing ourselves to do good and to champion the power of people means nothing without solid plans and a clear roadmap.

On both fronts we are blazing ahead with a strong line-up of initiatives showing resolute strength of purpose.

In doing so, we are showing the world how good can be achieved and sustained by weaving values into the very fabric (or mat) of our operations and identity.

Nowhere is it more evident at Torrens University than in areas which were once deemed irrelevant or even beneath consideration.

In New Zealand, we now have a Maori and Pasifika Strategic Plan which embeds foundational principles and cultural protocols into all aspects of operations, teaching research and engagement – within the Media Design School and outside. Even our vision and strategies focussed on students and staff are framed in cultural context.

In Australia, front and centre of our acknowledgement of the traditional peoples and lands is our Reconciliation Action Plan which will drive our contribution to building bridges in the nation. It includes practical actions such as plans to embed indigenous knowledge into curriculum. While we have a way to go, it still is further than the commitment of many in the country.

Casting a rainbow over these and many other plans and initiatives is our new PRIDE Framework for the next three years. Across Australia LGBTQI+ workers carry the weight of prejudices and mistreatment. So our framework will enable the establishment of support networks, development of gender transitioning and transgender policy, assess the introduction of LGBTQI+ topics in curriculum and more.

There are others like promoting equality in a growing unequal world. There will be many more.

The bedrock upon which each of our commitments will be built is of course our academic work – our research plan, our teaching plan and our scholarly agenda. Above all, these must consistently be relevant and of excellent quality. It will reflect what our students expect. They will reflect what the community expects. They will reflect what industry expects in local and global contexts.

We will educate our students so they can apply theory and knowledge usefully. What we research will add value to the world and deliver on what is expected from innovative, advanced thinking.

The Fourth Industrial Revolution is upon us faster than we expected. Technologies like artificial intelligence and the internet of things are already setting the pace of living. A world in which the physical, digital and biological aspects are integrated is the world our students exist in and will be an important part of. This is the world we will make a difference in.

The road to doing good, is one we will continue to chart, rechart and pave. This is what progress is about.

### **Professor Alwyn Louw**

Vice Chancellor



## Voices for Social Change Massive Online Open Course

In March we launch our free online course aimed at everyone aspiring to make a change through social enterprise. The course is facilitated by eight accomplished and inspiring young social entrepreneurs from around the world. Our global partnerships underpin this unique program with the International Youth Foundation, B Lab and Laureate International Universities.

## Voices for Depression Massive Online Open Course

In June we launch our free online course co-designed with Beyond Blue to help people understand, connect and respond to individuals who experience depression, and their family and support networks.

Above all, we are ready, passionate and equipped to partner and support global, national and local projects.

Visit [torrens.edu.au/begood](https://torrens.edu.au/begood) for more information about how we can work together.



“

We're united by a belief in the  
power of education.

”

**Linda Brown**

President, Torrens University Australia

