

ANU by 2030

Draft Strategy v2 | June 2026

Acknowledgement of Country

The Australian National University acknowledges the Ngunnawal and Ngambri-Kamberri people, who are the Traditional Owners of the land upon which the University's Acton campus is located. This Ngunnawal and Ngambri-Kamberri land supports students and staff throughout their time at ANU. It will continue to hold a space for future generations to come together and learn from Country and one another.

We also pay respect to the Traditional Owners of the lands on which our other campuses and facilities are located.

We pay our respects to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, Indigenous peoples, past, present and future, and acknowledge that this land from which we benefit has an ancient history that is both rich and sacred.

The ANU community makes a commitment to always respect the land upon which we stand and to ensure that the voices of this land's Indigenous peoples are both heard and listened to so that we may move towards a future marked by cooperation and mutual respect.

Contents

Foreword.....	4
1. The Strategy on a page.....	6
2. Our purpose as The Australian National University	7
3. Our commitment to Indigenous peoples.....	10
4. ANU in numbers	11
5. Our excellence, relevance and impact.....	12
6. Our enabling capabilities.....	17
7. Our strategic initiatives.....	19
8. Implementation of the Strategy	22

Foreword

ANU exists to serve Australia

The Australian National University (ANU) was established by an Act of Parliament in 1946, in the shadow of global conflict and with a clear and urgent purpose: to serve Australia's future national interest through knowledge. Prime Minister Ben Chifley put it plainly: "scientific research is a necessity for the maintenance of our standard of living and even for our survival."

Eighty years on, that founding logic has not faded – it has sharpened. We live in a world that is contested, uncertain and fast-moving. A world where the lines between domestic and international, health and environment, security and economics, technology and society are increasingly blurred by their interdependencies.

The Australian National University's response remains the same as it was at its founding: to contribute, not just observe.

ANU has a proud legacy on which to build, one steeped in academic rigour and a passion for service through intellectual inquiry and the generous sharing of knowledge. We have a research culture of global standing, and a responsibility to sustain our excellence within international research networks. We have a student community which rightly expects the best possible: research-led education; support to succeed in their studies and beyond; and student experience.

We hold obligations – to the nation, to Indigenous peoples, to Asia and the Pacific, and to the Australian Capital Territory – that guide our priorities. In our service of Australia, we balance our role as a builder of sovereign capabilities for, and with, the Australian Government, and our unique position as a university where our value is also to be a critic and conscience for policymakers and the public.

ANU is a uniquely valuable university

Australian higher education faces its own reckoning. Our sector experiences funding pressure, changing student expectations, and a public conversation about the value and purpose of universities – our social licence – that demands honest reflection and, more importantly, response. Our campuses have not always been the places of safety essential for all students and staff to succeed.

For ANU, the pressures that we face are real. We are the stewards of limited resources which need to be thoughtfully applied for the benefit of the nation, and in ways which enhance our long-term sustainability. We have not always met the rightfully high expectations for our institutional governance, or care for our people. We must, and will, do better.

We are the nation's university. In our work, this means that:

- We seek to look like our nation in the composition of our students and staff, embracing and celebrating their diversity;
- We are actively outward-looking to build and nurture connections with our city, country, Asia and the Pacific region, and the world;
- We draw in talented staff and students from all over the world;
- We have a culture which is ambitious in its pursuit of excellence, where we are committed to truth, and where different perspectives co-exist;
- We make real our commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through our respect for Country, in our research and education, and in how we work;
- We hold ourselves to the highest standards of governance and submit ourselves openly to external scrutiny;
- We are leaders in environmental sustainability;

- We are custodians of knowledge, artefacts, equipment and facilities, for the benefit of all Australians.

Our unique obligation to help Australia understand itself means that we are active in public discourse, that we engage actively in public policy, and we are challengers to the status quo, to vested interests, and to undisciplined thinking.

The ANU Strategy focuses our efforts in service of the nation

This *ANU by 2030* Strategy is our response to both the challenges that we face and the obligations that we hold as the national university. The document is not a comprehensive account of everything we will do but a statement of where we are, where we want to be, and a set of commitments about what we will prioritise.

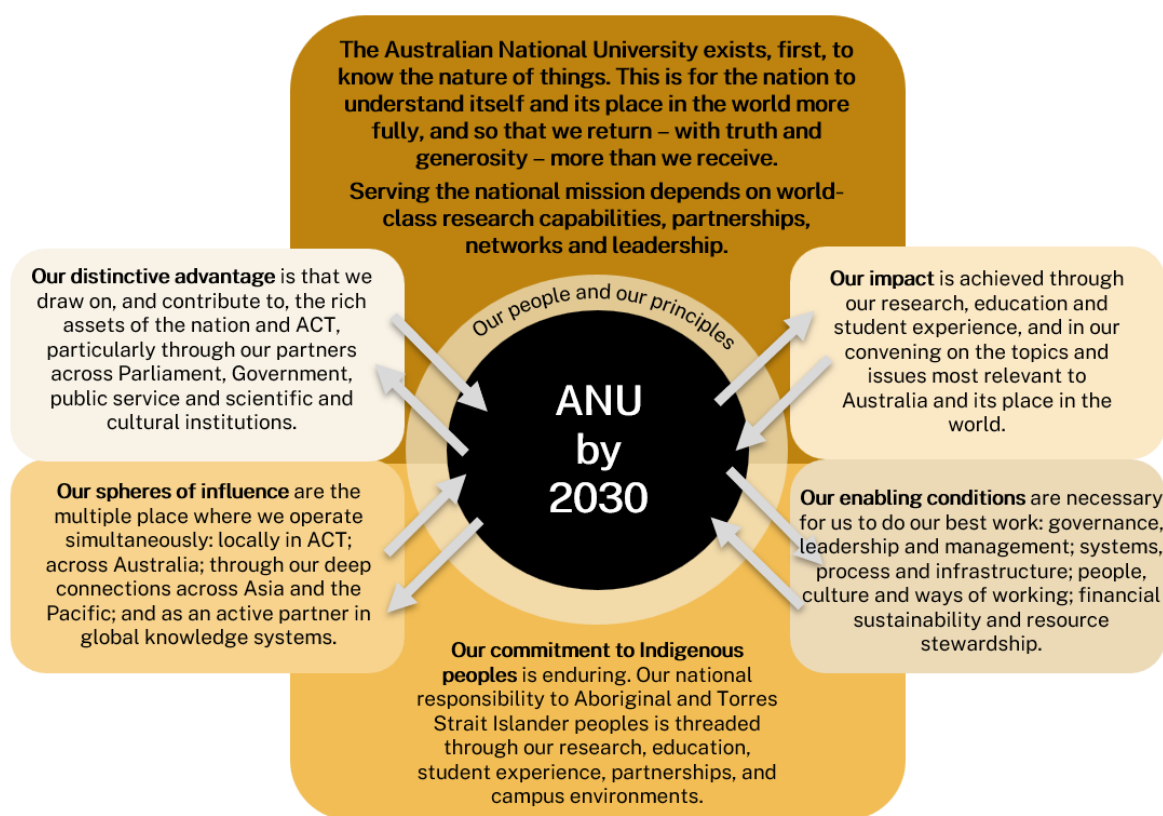
Implementation of the Strategy requires ongoing dialogue – within our community, between our leadership and our colleagues – and between the University and the students, alumni, partners, and the public that we exist to serve.

The codesign process that produced this Strategy was extensive. Hundreds of staff and students contributed their thinking, their provocations, and their hopes for this institution.

Delivering this Strategy means continuing to work in dialogue – adjusting as we learn, being honest when things are not going as planned, and holding ourselves accountable to the commitments we make here. The Implementation Plan, which is the necessary complement to this Strategy, sets out the specific actions, owners, and timelines that give these commitments meaning. Regular community dialogue will make our progress visible.

Eighty years on from our founding, the task of service for the nation remains our guiding light. We will honour the trust placed in us and continue our work in service of Australia.

1. The Strategy on a page



Our strategic initiatives:

1. The highest standards of governance. By 2030, we will be the exemplar of good governance for the tertiary education sector where trust is paramount and there is demonstrable alignment of incentives and resources to the University's purpose.

2. Partnership with Parliament, Government and the Public Service. By 2030, we will have re-articulated and re-energised our relationship with the Australian Government and consistently demonstrated the positive impact of the National Institutes Grant through the rigorous evaluation and reporting that demonstrate our effective stewardship. We will be known as a trusted advisor across parliament, government and the public service. Our academics and students will see direct benefit from our investment in nurturing this relationship.

3. The academic portfolio with mission-critical depth. By 2030, investment decisions will focus on benefiting our unique national role and global excellence. We will apply a consistent test to every capability decision: does this contribute to our role? We will not make decisions driven by financial need without a strategic framework.

4. The facilities and support systems which enable us to operate effectively. By 2030, the campus and its systems are recognised as a national asset aligned to our purpose. Our campus, its systems, and its support structures must be fit for a 21st century national university. Facilities and systems will be designed to support the work of the University. We will make sure that the people who do the work have what they need to do it well.

5. The ANU culture that supports all staff and students. By 2030, ANU is known as a place of choice to work and study. Students and staff succeed irrespective of their gender, race, sexuality, disability, beliefs or identity. Staff and student surveys show sustained improvement in belonging, trust in leadership, and confidence in the University's direction.

6. The financial sustainability which underpins our capacity to plan for, and deliver, our national role. By 2030, ANU has a revenue and cost base that minimises the University's vulnerability to a single policy change or market shift. The proportion of income from mission-aligned sources like the NIG, Commonwealth research partnerships, endowment, and targeted philanthropy has grown.

2. Our purpose as The Australian National University

The Australian National University exists, first, to know the nature of things. This is for the nation to understand itself and its place in the world more fully, and so that we return – with truth and generosity – more than we receive.

We are embedded in the working machinery of the country, alongside the Parliament, the public service, and the national institutions and collections through which Australia governs and understands itself. Our privilege is a position that no other university holds, and one we hold in trust for the benefit of the nation.

Our national mission depends on us being a globally competitive research powerhouse where we bring our global expertise to benefit Australia.

Our purpose is to turn our unique position into excellence: research of real consequence, education that opens the best that the country can offer to the widest range of students, and expertise the nation cannot secure elsewhere, including the work of helping the country understand itself honestly. We look outwardly to the world as an active participant in global knowledge systems, and we bring talented students and staff from across the world to do their best work here in Australia.

Our partnerships are built on reciprocity and mutual benefit, on shared agenda-setting and long-term investment in relationships. As we know from the *Intergenerational Report*, ageing, technological and digital transformation, climate and the net zero transition, the rising demand for care, and geopolitical fragmentation are key forces that will define Australia's future. ANU exists to meet exactly these challenges with the rigour and independence they demand.

We are the builder of sovereign capability, a trusted advisor to governments, and a research powerhouse in our own right.

Our people and principles

The University's quality and culture depend on our people – academic and professional staff, and students – who choose to be part of our community, and on how well we support them to do their most meaningful work here. Our relationship with our people extends far beyond their time at ANU: we embrace our alumni, alongside the friends and supporters of the University, as essential to our community.

Every person at ANU should feel valued, safe, respected, and able to thrive. Our commitment to inclusion, diversity, equity and accessibility is essential for belonging. That belonging is the foundation of our collective impact.

We work in an authentic partnership with our students and value everyone's unique identity and experiences. We celebrate students' contributions to our community and seek a lifelong connection for alumni.

Our principles are the bedrock upon which the University is built.

- **Academic freedom** is the foundational precondition from which honest and critical inquiry follows.
- **The pursuit of excellence** – through openness, humility, and intellectual generosity – is essential for creating knowledge and serving our national mission.
- **Serving the public good** is our focus for maximising the positive impact of the University for the benefit of the nation.

We work in service of a wiser, safer and more prosperous Australia.

By 2030, ANU will be amongst the best places in the nation – and the world – to work and study at a university. A place people come to do meaningful work, develop and thrive, and choose to stay.

Ours is the culture dedicated to service: to knowledge, and to the nation. That service is not abstract. It lives in how we treat one another – how we support our colleagues and students to succeed, how we disagree well, and how we hold ourselves to what we say we will do.

We will be known for honesty when things are hard, for trust earned through delivery rather than declared, and for care that is real and shapes our decisions. We ask the necessary questions and follow where they lead. We see the person first, and support them to succeed.

A great culture depends on getting the basics right. By 2030, our systems, processes, and ways of working will be designed and aligned to create the space for everyone to do their best work. We want our people's time and energy to go to the work that matters: excellent research, and excellent education outcomes for students and the nation. When the institution works well, people do well.

This is a culture defined by our behaviours, not our intentions – by what we do when it is difficult, and by the principles we hold in common.

By 2030, ANU will be a community worthy of its mission: ambitious, honest, and humane, where the national purpose gives daily work its meaning.

Our distinctive advantage and influence

We draw on, and contribute to, the rich assets of the nation and ACT, particularly through our partners across the Parliament, Government, public service and scientific and cultural institutions. We are stewards of the National Institutes Grant for the benefit of the nation.

Our human relationships are essential to our success, and our natural environment and campuses are the foundation for our great work and community. Our residential campus is a unique asset which is a place of work and study, and a home for thousands of students. ANU offers one of the best staff-to-student ratios in the country, giving our educational experience a human scale.

Our academic independence enables us to be the trusted advisor to governments, and others: our rigour and pursuit of truth are our most valuable qualities. We are a central part of a knowledge system which includes fellow universities, the Academies, peak bodies and other non-governmental organisations.

We are directly engaged in the complex and contested work to address the most pressing policy challenges facing the nation, region and world. We also enable current and future leaders in the public service to access the professional learning and development opportunities which they need to succeed in their careers, and through that work benefit Australians.

We return the investment in us many-fold through our impact. We re-invest in nurturing our people, relationships, networks, community and environment.

Our spheres of influence

ANU operates simultaneously as a civic institution in Canberra, as a national university with obligations to all Australians, as a regional leader within Asia and the Pacific, and as a leader in global knowledge and partnership networks. These are not separate identities but a single, integrated commitment to place and purpose.

A civic university and good neighbour. ANU is an anchor institution in the ACT. We are one of Canberra's largest employers, a driver of cultural and civic life, and a steward of public space

that is open to the community. Our campus is a precious resource – a place of work, a place of discovery, and a home – and we will continue to make it more accessible through public programming, events, conferences, and partnerships that bring our research and our people into contact with the city around us.

Being a good neighbour means more than presence. Our Environmental Sustainability Plan commits us to empowering our community to lead on environmental sustainability by embedding our ambitions across our planning and decision-making, operations, research and teaching to enable meaningful action.

We recognise our responsibility to future generations and protect the natural systems on which life and learning depend, and we use our expertise, connections and public leadership to help shape a more sustainable future beyond campus.

We are leaders in the tertiary education and research sector nationally and globally, and embrace our role as a custodian of infrastructure and intellectual resources for the public good.

We nurture our partnerships with industry, government, and NGOs to strengthen graduate employment pathways and the conditions for innovation. We engage constructively with other higher education and vocational providers and recognise that a healthy tertiary ecosystem benefits everyone who lives and works here.

Australia's university for Asia and the Pacific. The University's founding mission included a particular orientation toward Australia's region, and that commitment has deepened over our history. We host the largest assembly of research expertise on Asia and the Pacific in the English-speaking world, with depth and breadth of disciplinary, regional and language expertise. We teach more languages than any other Australian university, many offered nowhere else in the Southern Hemisphere. This is a national capability that we will protect and sustain.

Our alumni hold senior positions in governments, public agencies, and institutions across the region. Our researchers have helped shape the governance, public policy, and security arrangements of countries that matter enormously to Australia's future.

We will continue to deepen our engagement with regional partners, governments, and institutions, recognising that our knowledge of, and education for, Asia and the Pacific is a national strategic asset.

Connected to the world. Our research addresses questions of global significance. We pursue those questions in partnership with leading institutions internationally, and we welcome students, scholars, and collaborators from across the globe.

Our international engagement is an expression of our purpose: to benefit Australia through generating and disseminating knowledge, and contributing to a more hopeful, just, stable, and flourishing world.

3. Our commitment to Indigenous peoples

Our national responsibility to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is threaded through our research, education, student experience, partnerships, and campus environments.

Our responsibility to Indigenous people, Traditional Knowledge, and their place in Country is work that never reaches completion and is the continuing expression of who we are as Australia's national university.

To live out this commitment, we will:

- Take a whole-of-University approach to ensure that: Traditional Knowledge; principles of self-determination; and respect for Traditional Owners are implemented across the University.
- Embed the [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#) (UNDRIP) as a guiding institutional framework, and implement its principles across research practices, education and community engagement.
- Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to achieve successful outcomes, and enable academics and professional staff to thrive at ANU through culturally safe and equitable recruitment, retention, progression, professional and leadership development, and wellbeing initiatives.
- Ensure that our Indigenous research and education agenda is led by the needs of, and through consultation with, Indigenous communities throughout Australia.
- Measure, and publicly report on, our progress to ensure accountability for the commitments that we make and the change that we seek to achieve.

4. ANU in numbers

Work in progress

Our community

- ~17,000 equivalent full-time students
- ~4,750 staff
- ~150,000 alumni

Our Library

- 61,292 works digitised
- More than 7 million electronic resources accessed
- 48,418 print resources borrowed
- 933,699 physical visits to our libraries

Our campus

- 6,500 beds in student residences
- 867 public events held in the Kambri precinct
- 85 events at Llewellyn Hall
- 2,547 other functions held across campus
- 100% renewable electricity used across all ANU campuses
- 100% green waste composted
- 75 net gain of trees across campus bringing the total number of trees to 10,105

QS World University Rankings 2027

- ANU ranked 29th in the world

QS World University Rankings by subject

- 42 ANU subjects ranked among the world's best

Among Australian university subjects

- First for Natural Sciences
- Second for Arts and Humanities
- Third for Social Sciences and Management

Among global university subjects

- Arts and Humanities (32nd)
- Natural Sciences (34th)
- Social Sciences and Management (36th)
- Engineering and Technology (76th)
- Life Sciences and Medicine (140th)

The highest number of subjects among Australian university subjects scoring in the top 20 globally

- Philosophy (8th)
- Anthropology (9th)
- Archaeology (10th)
- Development Studies (10th)
- Politics and International Studies (11th)
- Geography (20th)

Here is a selection of facts and figures, a subset of those shared in the 2025 Annual Report. In the final Strategy, this section will be updated with the latest figures (where relevant) and be expanded to include further details, for example, on our: campuses, collections and infrastructure, partnerships.

5. Our excellence, relevance and impact

Our research

ANU research is grounded in the deep disciplinary strengths that give the University a foundation for quality. Disciplinary excellence and transdisciplinary practice reinforce each other: rigorous disciplinary depth generates the questions and methods upon which transdisciplinary practice depends, and engagement across disciplines opens new directions for disciplinary inquiry.

We pursue curiosity-driven inquiry and fundamental research, and applied problem-solving through engaged research. The University's research generates impact through excellence and through the deliberate engagement with communities, partners and end-users throughout the research lifecycle.

Our stewardship of the NIG enables targeted investment and building sovereign capabilities. We invest this resource to deliver material and sustainable benefits for the nation.

We celebrate Traditional Knowledge and ways of conducting, interpreting and communicating research.

Our concentrations of world-class infrastructure – in spaces, facilities and equipment, libraries, archives and collections, and in our convening ability and connective substrate – amplify what individual researchers and teams can achieve. We enable the conditions for the hardest questions facing our nation to draw on the full breadth of knowledge they require.

Translation and commercialisation are part of how our research serves the nation. We support researchers and students to move discoveries responsibly from inquiry into use, recognising that pathways to impact differ across disciplines. We reinvest the returns of successful commercialisation to seed the next generation of ideas, and we work with partners across the Canberra innovation ecosystem to connect our people to the networks, capital and capability that turn knowledge into national benefit.

We nurture intellectual richness as a world-class research-intensive university through rigorous and well-supported research degree programs and through attracting, developing and retaining talented researchers. We continue to invest in building and sustaining an exceptional community of academics.

Research of this depth and breadth is a foundation for our education: students who learn here become part of the research enterprise in return.

We will continue to support deep, broad and sustainable research excellence through talent retention and strategic recruitment, and continued investment in human-led, physical and digital infrastructure. We will use the annual planning process, and School, College and Institute reviews to support research culture, quality and sustainability, and the interdependence of excellent research and excellent education.

By 2030, ANU will be recognised as the leading research university in Australia and among the best in the world, focussed on research in support of the nation.

ANU will be confident in fulfilling its founding purpose as a national institute for world-class research, public policy development, and understanding of our region. The University's national identity is central to our research mission and direction. We are a broad, but not fully comprehensive, university with a portfolio distinct from our peers. ANU provides deep insight into the questions of national importance that no one else is positioned to answer.

Building on the University's purpose to be "first, to know the nature of things", patient, rigorous disciplinary inquiry will underpin our ability to address the largest problems and give research opportunities for students and early- and mid-career researchers who will drive the future of our mission within, and beyond, the University. ANU will promote engaged research and impact through collaborative, transdisciplinary partnerships which both address national and societal need, and through which diverse ideas in-turn increase the capacity and quality of our foundational work.

The University supports national research infrastructure on which Australia's sovereign expertise depends and holds archives and collections through which Australia can understand its past, present and future. These research-focussed connections to serving Australia as the national university enrich our research and offer a distinctive advantage.

We are dedicated to delivering on our mission, and our responsibility to Australia and the region through the National Institutes Grant, by focussing investment in ANU capabilities that offer unique sovereign expertise for the nation, nationally relevant collaborative capability in the humanities and sciences, and best-in-Australia, and world-leading, disciplinary excellence.

Our education and student experience

ANU education is research-led in the most direct sense: students learn in a community of scholars from researchers, encounter knowledge at its edges, and develop the intellectual capabilities that research demands. Our graduates are in high demand across industries.

The ANU student body should reflect the full diversity of Australia. Every qualified student who seeks an ANU education should be able to access – and succeed at – the University. Students should be able to enjoy an ANU education in a safe and supportive environment.

Our education is rigorous. We ask hard questions, design sound methods, reason from evidence, and contest ideas. Quality teaching is valued, supported and rewarded. Professional development and recognition are embedded in performance indicators and key contributors to elevating the status and quality of learning and teaching across the University.

Across our undergraduate education, three graduate attributes make our education distinctive:

- insight into Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' Knowledges and Indigenous peoples' perspectives;
- expertise for critical thinking; and
- capability to employ discipline-based knowledge in transdisciplinary problem-solving.

Career development and employability are an ecosystem: embedded in curriculum; supported through student experience; and owned by students. Our location, proximity to government, and national university identity give our graduates unique learning opportunities and a particular advantage in public sector, policy, and civic leadership careers.

Our student experience, centred on campus life, sustains our community. Residential life is an important part of our unique proposition to students, creating a supportive community of learners. Our campus functions as a living laboratory, enabling educational experiences grounded in real world contexts. We celebrate the full experience of the campus including performing and visual arts, sport, and enjoyment of the natural environment.

We will grow our student population through an attractive and compelling portfolio of research-led programs which are demonstrably: high quality; mission- and expertise-aligned; and financially sustainable. We will take a principled approach to our portfolio management and curriculum architecture to focus our efforts.

We will improve access to our education for domestic students including new pathways for students from the broadest range of social and educational backgrounds, and find flexible ways for working professionals – including current and future leaders in the public service – to access the University. We will invest in student experience and success.

We will make targeted efforts to diversify international student recruitment markets, including new transnational education partnerships.

By 2030, an ANU education will be the most distinctive in the country, and the most deliberately human-centred. We will improve access to our education, and our growth will be sustainable.

Our students will learn in a community of scholars, encounter knowledge at its frontiers, and graduate ready to lead. Because our curriculum is built around intellectual flexibility, students can shape degrees that reach the edges of what is known. The ANU double degree, drawing coherently across disciplines, will offer a research-led and transdisciplinary experience no other university can match.

What makes our education valuable will be matched by how we deliver it. We will build a genuine ANU approach to education – research-led, transdisciplinary, and grounded in our national mission – and invest in the academic development and pedagogical capability to make it real. New technologies and methods – including the need for artificial intelligence fluency – will be threaded through how our students learn and how our teachers teach, critically and well, rather than bolted on.

Our students will work inside the research enterprise, not alongside it. They will learn in our laboratories, archives, collections, and field sites, taught by the researchers creating the knowledge, so that an ANU education is an apprenticeship in inquiry itself.

We will be the natural home for those educators and students who desire to serve the nation. Our postgraduate pathways will accommodate Canberra's public service and working professionals across the country, including flexible ways to study that do not require relocation.

That human scale is our proposition, and it becomes more valuable, not less, as knowledge work is transformed by new technologies. Belonging, connection, and one of the best staff-to-student ratios in the country are why students will choose ANU. Our residential campus, the highest residential proportion in the Go8, is central to that experience: a community of learners, not simply a place to study.

By 2030, ANU will be the university that prepares Australia's next generation of leaders, in an education that is rigorous, connected, and unmistakably ours.

Our role as a knowledge convenor

Part of the University's role is to help the nation understand itself.

By 2030, ANU will be recognised as the place where the nation's most important conversations occur, where knowledge is created and shared, and where diverse perspectives come together to shape Australia's future.

Ngunnawal and Ngambri-Kamberri Country has always been a place of gathering. Long before the University was established, this Country was a place of connection and learning. Today, ANU carries that responsibility forward, creating a modern meeting place where Traditional Knowledge sits alongside world-leading research, where students learn alongside leading scholars, and where ideas are tested through dialogue with governments, communities, industry, culture and international partners.

Our campus sits at the heart of Australia's civic, cultural and intellectual life. It is where national institutions, public policy, scientific discovery, cultural expression and global engagement intersect. This creates opportunities for collaboration, learning and influence that no other Australian university can replicate.

Our campus is a living community where students, staff and visitors live, learn, work and belong together. The everyday exchange of ideas across disciplines, cultures and lived experience makes the University a place where Australia's future is imagined, tested and shaped.

By 2030, we will deliberately create the conditions for collaboration across disciplines, sectors and communities, investing in the people, spaces, partnerships and alumni networks that transform ideas into action for the benefit of the nation and our region.

When Australia faces questions that demand intellectual rigour, independence and the ability to bridge different perspectives, ANU will be the place the nation turns because of the excellence of our scholarship, and because this is where Australia's students, scholars, alumni, leaders and communities come together to imagine, debate and build what comes next.

6. Our enabling capabilities

ANU is the steward of significant public and private investment. We plan for the long term while pursuing the ongoing financial stability and sustainability to ensure that we can operate today and reinvest for the future.

Governance, leadership and management

The highest standards of governance are the precondition for everything else in this Strategy. The authority we hold as trusted advisor for the nation depends on holding ourselves to the standards we expect of the institutions that we advise. We need decision-making that draws together governance, risk, planning, data and evaluation, so that those who lead the University do so with the information and foresight to make good decisions. Accountability runs alongside this: clear expectations at every level, matched by the authority and resources to meet them, so that responsibility is real rather than nominal. Holding people to account is only fair where they are equipped to succeed, and so we will invest in building management and leadership capability across the University. We will develop the people who carry responsibility, and support them to lead well. These are the foundations on which institutional trust and stability are built.

Systems, processes and infrastructure

Our campus, facilities and digital systems are a national asset and must be fit for the work of a modern national university. The people who do the work need systems that enable rather than obstruct them. We will take a holistic approach to artificial intelligence, critically interrogating its uses across research, education and professional services, and combining academic leadership in AI – including in governance and ethics – with its technical application. Infrastructure and systems exist to support the academic mission, not to constrain it.

People, culture and ways of working

The quality of the University depends on the people who choose to be part of it and on how well we work together in service of our mission. We value the expertise within our own community and draw on it first. A culture focused on positive outcomes, in which our practices match our stated values, is what allows our people to do their most meaningful work.

Financial sustainability and resource stewardship

As stewards of significant public and private investment, we are responsible for applying our resources to the benefit of the nation and for sustaining the University for the long term. Our budget model and resource allocation approach will grow value, support institutional sustainability, and reduce barriers to cross-institution collaboration in research and education, and we will align our resource allocation with our environmental sustainability goals. How we make and allocate our margin is central to delivering this Strategy.

By 2030, the way ANU runs will be one of its real strengths – competent, straightforward, and unmistakably in service of the academic mission. Our systems, processes, and infrastructure will exist to make great research and education easier to do, and they will be judged by that test alone. We seek the prize for research and education, and everything else is in service of those outcomes.

We will have designed our processes around the people who use them, so that effort flows to discovery and teaching rather than to navigating the institution. Our professional services will be capable, well led, and genuinely valued as expert work – and they will be run efficiently.

We will be an organisation that learns. With the ability to draw rapid insight from our own data, we will see clearly, decide well, and adapt as the world changes rather than after it has. AI-enabled business services will handle the routine reliably and at scale, freeing our people for the judgement and care that only people can provide.

Our staff are central to this. We will offer our people development opportunities, clear progression pathways, and recognition for the expertise – including the third space and technical work – on which the whole University depends.

7. Our strategic initiatives

1. The highest standards of governance

By 2030, we will be the exemplar of good governance for the tertiary education sector where trust is paramount and there is demonstrable alignment of incentives and resources to the University's purpose.

We will:

- Integrate governance, risk, planning, data and evaluation into a single supporting architecture so that Council, the Executive and other bodies make decisions with full information, insight and foresight;
- Embed academic expertise and student partnership into governance structures ensuring that those affected by decisions shape them;
- Report transparently on our governance reforms and change;
- Align incentives, authority and resources with accountability at every level, so that those who hold responsibility have the means to discharge it;
- Hold ourselves to the standards we expect of the institutions that we advise, recognising that our authority as a critic and conscience depends on our own conduct.

We will not:

- Treat good governance as a compliance exercise to be satisfied rather than a discipline to be practised;
- Allow decision-making to fragment across disconnected committees, systems and data sources;
- Concentrate authority without matching accountability, or impose accountability without the authority to act;
- Withhold from our own community the transparency necessary for effective scrutiny.

2. Partnership with Parliament, Government and the public service

By 2030, we will have re-articulated and re-energised our relationship with the Australian Government and consistently demonstrated the positive impact of the National Institutes Grant through the rigorous evaluation and reporting that demonstrate our effective stewardship. We will be known as a trusted advisor across parliament, government and the public service. Our academics and students will see direct benefit from our investment in nurturing this relationship.

We will:

- Demonstrate the national benefit of the NIG through rigorous evaluation and public reporting on how the nation's investment is used;
- Make the benefits of our relationships visible to our staff and students, connecting our national role to the opportunities it creates for them;
- Hold our independence as the foundation of our value, offering frank advice and always seeking to be the trusted advisor;
- Continue to build sovereign capability the nation cannot secure elsewhere, and make that capability available in service of better public decisions.

We will not:

- Treat the NIG as our own resource rather than the nation's investment held in trust;

- Trade our independence, or the integrity of our advice, for funding or favour;
- Allow the relationship to depend solely on individual relationships rather than institutional foundations and support.

3. The academic portfolio with mission-critical depth

By 2030, investment decisions will focus on benefiting our unique national role and global excellence. We will apply a consistent test to every capability decision: does this contribute to our role? We will not make decisions driven by financial need without a strategic framework.

We will:

- Support mission-critical disciplines;
- Ensure that research-led teaching is the foundation for all courses, with programs directly connected to the knowledge of our researchers;
- Build the education curriculum which is distinctive and leverages the campus benefits, the proximity to Parliament, the Australian public service, the courts, and national cultural institutions as a pedagogical asset;
- Publish the portfolio review methodology and conclusions, demonstrating that choices are principled and mission-led.

We will not:

- Shrink everything equally to avoid harder decisions;
- Compete with other universities on breadth because our advantage is depth in areas that matter to the nation;
- Retain programs that are financially viable but nationally undifferentiated.

4. The facilities and support systems which enable us to operate effectively

By 2030, the campus and its systems are recognised as a national asset aligned to our purpose. Our campus, its systems, and its support structures must be fit for a 21st century national university. Facilities and systems will be designed to support the work of the University. We will make sure that the people who do the work have what they need to do it well.

We will:

- Modernise professional services and support systems so that administrative burden does not erode the time, energy and productivity of staff;
- Develop and publish a ten-year ANU infrastructure and digital plan that aligns assets with mission priorities, not legacy footprints;
- Ring-fence NIG funding allocated to support national research infrastructure from general operating budget pressures.

We will not:

- Treat facilities and support systems as a cost to minimise rather than essential capability;
- Allow research infrastructure cuts driven by short-term financial pressure without a formal national mission assessment;
- Grow our physical presence without being able to answer why it delivers a better national mission.

5. The ANU culture that supports all staff and students

By 2030, ANU is known as a place of choice to work and study. Students and staff succeed irrespective of their gender, race, sexuality, disability, beliefs or identity. Staff and student surveys show sustained improvement in belonging, trust in leadership, and confidence in the University's direction.

We will:

- Conduct an assessment of the ANU culture and values, with findings reported to Council, staff, and students;
- Establish clear performance expectations at every level, with accountability mechanisms that are monitored and reported;
- Build management capability across the University so that good intentions translate into good practice, particularly in areas of workload, wellbeing, and performance;
- Create structured mechanisms for staff and students to contribute to strategic decisions.

We will not:

- Allow the use of external consultants to substitute for the development of internal capability and institutional memory;
- Make significant decisions affecting staff and students without fair and respectful consultation;
- Confuse activity with progress because cultural change will be measured by outcomes.

6. The financial sustainability which underpins our capacity to plan for, and deliver, our national role

By 2030, ANU has a revenue and cost base that minimises the University's vulnerability to a single policy change or market shift. The proportion of income from mission-aligned sources like the NIG, Commonwealth research partnerships, endowment, and targeted philanthropy has grown.

We will:

- Manage student enrolments strategically by diversifying the cohort;
- Secure research funding from diverse sources;
- Grow the endowment with a deliberate focus on nationally significant programs;
- Maximise benefits of the Long-Term Investment Pool;
- Ensure that every significant revenue and expenditure decision is tested against our mission: does this force us to compromise what we are here to do?

We will not:

- Maximise student numbers without regard to cohort composition or mission alignment;
- Pursue revenue streams that require compromising academic independence or the integrity of research;
- Allow commercial forces alone to determine which capabilities are supported;
- Use financial pressure as a substitute for strategic decision-making about the portfolio.

8. Implementation of the Strategy

The value of the Strategy lies in the actions that we will take. This document reflects *why* we exist, *who* we are, and *what* we will prioritise. *How* we do that is the work of the Implementation Plan.

The University Council and Executive commit to transparency in the approach to implementation, including:

- Publishing detailed actions associated with the aspirations and commitments in the Strategy, including named ownership and accountability;
- Committing the resources required to deliver the activities, and to realistic published timelines;
- Codesign of concepts, options, solutions and delivery with staff and students;
- Regular community updates on progress, including transparency when there are setbacks;
- Honesty when the evidence demonstrates that priorities should change.

The full Implementation Plan will be shared with the University community by December 2026.