

FLINDERS UNIVERSITY ANNUAL REPORT 2020



MISSION

To be internationally recognised as a world leader in research, an innovator in contemporary education, and the source of Australia's most enterprising graduates.



Students in the Hub at Bedford Park



Flinders Station

VISION

Changing lives and changing the world.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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Disclaimer

Every effort has been made to ensure the information in this publication is accurate at the time of publication. You can find updated information on our website at flinders.edu.au

Cover

Students at Bedford Park campus

CRICOS No. 00114A

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CHANCELLOR'S REVIEW

The trials of 2020 will be reflected on as a transformative moment in our history – from which we have emerged smarter, stronger and more resilient.

What does a university of significance represent to the wider community? The 2020 year has indicated how significant that role is. Flinders University faced stern tests through 2020 as the COVID-19 pandemic gripped the world, yet its nimble reaction to address the crisis and the deft abilities of staff and students has seen Flinders play an impressive leadership role through a troubling and uncertain time.

It has been especially gratifying to see, from my vantage point as Chancellor, the entire Flinders community heed the call to best serve the community and each other, as researchers, teachers, practitioners and carers set themselves to solve problems and resolve key issues triggered by the COVID-19 crisis.

Flinders University not only underlined its broad research expertise across multiple academic disciplines, but also its teaching staff responded magnificently during the year in ensuring that the interest of our students were effectively and appropriately looked after.

Flinders University provided crucial financial and pastoral support for students in need – especially our beleaguered community of international students, many who found themselves stranded far from home.

It has been an unprecedented time of generosity from our alumni and friends, as they recognised the importance of supporting our institution that laid the foundation for their personal and professional journeys. More than 500 donors including University Council members and staff made significant contributions to the University during the year, and their generosity has been acknowledged in more detail within the Annual Report.

The trials of 2020 will be reflected on as a transformative moment in our history – from which we have emerged smarter, stronger and more resilient. The result of our endeavour, prudence and careful planning in the years up to and including 2020 means that Flinders University is in good financial shape and therefore able to progress our future plans.

Now we look ahead, excited by the promise of the Flinders Village Development that lies immediately before us. The commencement of train services from the city to Flinders and the opening of the Flinders railway platform offers a powerful sign that our Bedford Park precinct will be connected to the heart of Adelaide like never before.

The next phase of work in this exciting precinct will begin later this year, as construction starts on the new Flinders Health and Medical Research Building. This will ensure Flinders University's continuing role as an innovative leader in health and medicine, supporting the vital work of more than 380 world-class researchers in areas including cancer, heart disease, neuroscience and digital health technologies.

An important development during the year occurred at our Tonsley precinct with the development of automated manufacturing through our Line Zero project in association with BAE Systems. It represents a significant new development for the University after years in the planning.

Our success in these areas underlines that the quality of our people is paramount, clearly reflected in our staff – but also the achievements of Flinders people within the wider community, catalogued in the vast array of service medals awarded to more than 30 alumni, donors and current University staff in the 2020 Australia Day and Queen's Birthday honours lists.

We are also inspired by our leading alumni who have been awarded the Convocation Medal – the highest honour bestowed by Flinders University – for making incredible differences to improve the lives of many in our community. In 2020, we pay tribute to medallists Ms Sarah Brown AM, Chief Executive Officer of Purple House that facilitates improved health services for Indigenous Australians living in remote communities, and Professor Jamie Cooper AO, whose medical and administrative expertise as Director of the Australian and New Zealand Intensive Care Research Centre has transformed Intensive Care efficiency and outcomes in hospitals throughout the nation.

Such people form the beating heart of the Flinders University community and set a high standard we are all compelled to follow.

Our determination to boldly evolve and improve is a key point of difference for Flinders University. It is an attribute made possible through the continued hard work of the University Council with Vice-Chancellor Professor Colin Stirling and his senior executive team. It takes hold and forms the spine of this University's culture, thanks to the dedication and enthusiasm of our leadership and staff. It is a place that truly makes a difference.

All of this leads to realising the goals mapped out in our strategic plan, Making a Difference: The 2025 Agenda, underlining that our strategic developments have not been upset by obstacles laid across our path. Together, we have forged ahead, understanding the connection between teaching and forever striving to learn more, to innovate and create for the benefit of all, to grow as people and understand our place and role within a robust, caring community.

Reflecting on such achievements through a tumultuous year, I thank our entire community at Flinders University for their commitment to help realise our strategic goals, to enrich our students, and to make the world a better place.

I also acknowledge the support and commitment which I and the University community have received from the members of Council and its various Committees during the year.

Stephen Gerlach AM
CHANCELLOR

VICE- CHANCELLOR'S REVIEW

There can be little doubt that 2020 will be remembered as one of the most challenging and unexpected times in most of our lives.



There can be little doubt that 2020 will be remembered as one of the most challenging and unexpected times in most of our lives. However, while the COVID-19 pandemic impacted all members of our University community we rose collectively to the challenge and continued to deliver outstanding outcomes in both education and research.

Amid this great upheaval, the quality of our researchers shone brilliantly leading to the University attracting its highest ever levels of grant funding. In 2020 Flinders University increased its HERDC research income by over 25% to nearly \$68 million, and a continuation of three consecutive years of exceptional growth. The figure includes our highest ever total for Australian Government funding and also our highest ever funding from industry, demonstrating the relevance of our research to real world problems. External research funding represents the best leading indicator of research success and our progress demonstrates the value of our 2019 decision to invest in the research uplift programme.

Our researchers were also quick to apply their expertise to issues arising from the pandemic, with 35 projects funded across all six Colleges addressing questions as diverse as 3D printed facial guards and the effects of the pandemic on individual wellbeing.

We also saw the impact of our research reflected in the plaudits for our leading scientists, including Associate Professor Justin Chalker winning the Prize for New Innovators in the 2020 Prime Minister's Prizes for Science and Professor of Clean Technology Colin Raston sharing the honour of being named the 2020 South Australian Scientist of the Year.

During 2020 we also continued development of the Flinders University Health and Medical Research Institute (FHMRI) to bring together 18 separate centres across research, clinical application and education, and encompass almost half of our University's research.

Our students were hugely impacted by the onset of the pandemic. Not only were study patterns disrupted but many students faced added financial and emotional burdens made worse by the uncertainties associated with the growing pandemic.

The response from our staff was nothing short of outstanding. We quickly shifted to online modes of delivery so that students could continue their studies. We also shifted many support services online to help keep students engaged.

Such efforts to provide the best outcome for students saw Flinders' online learning platform receive positive endorsement from 87.5% of undergraduates in the 2020 Student Experience Survey – a significantly higher engagement rating than the national universities average. Indeed, Flinders University improved against the sector average in every single category of the Survey.

Our teaching excellence and innovation continues to earn national plaudits, with the new Diploma of Digital Technologies winning the prestigious Training and Mentorship Program of the Year in Defence Connect's 2020 Australian Defence Industry Awards. The initial course intake in March upskilled 51 shipbuilders from BAE Systems Maritime Australia, equipping them with digital skills for modern shipbuilding.

Our student-centred ethos also required that we respond quickly and decisively to help support students facing severe financial hardship as a result of the pandemic. We created a \$12.5 million student support package that included generous donations from many staff, alumni, Council members and friends of the University. Through emergency relief payments and a new Matthew Flinders Scholarship programme we were able to support nearly 2,000 students who might otherwise have been unable to continue their studies.

We continue to champion diversity and equality of opportunity for all. Indeed this is at the heart of our first INNOVATE Reconciliation Action Plan launched in 2020 to foster an environment that recognises and embraces Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, knowledges and cultures. Recognised by Reconciliation Australia, our INNOVATE plan is grounded in the concepts of togetherness, reciprocity and respect.

We have also taken great strides towards our sustainability goals with 100% of our electrical power now supplied from renewable sources. Our own solar energy farm provides 20% of our energy needs and the remainder comes from the Willogoleche Wind Farm in South Australia's mid-north, furthering our rapid progress to become one of Australia's first carbon-positive universities.

The result of our endeavour, prudence and careful planning means that Flinders University is in good financial shape to progress our future plans.

We can all reflect on an extraordinary 12 months of great accomplishment, for which I would especially like to thank our staff for their commitment and hard work in staying focused on the needs of our students during such an eventful year.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Colin Stirling'.

Professor Colin Stirling
PRESIDENT AND VICE-CHANCELLOR

UNIVERSITY COUNCIL

Our teaching and support services went online in 2020, and our Council meetings followed suit on Zoom.

From top left to right:

- Professor Brenda Wilson AM
- Mr Stephen Gerlach AM (Chancellor)
- Mr Stephen Hains (Deputy Chancellor)
- Professor John Roddick
- Ms Natalie Hills
- Ms Sharon Wilson
- Ms Kathryn Gramp
- Ms Elizabeth Perry AM (Deputy Chancellor)
- Professor Colin Stirling (Vice-Chancellor)
- Mr Douglas Gautier AM
- Mr Aidan Cornelius-Bell
- Mr George Freney
- Dr Amanda Muller
- Ms Natasha Kidd
- Mr John Hood



SENIOR EXECUTIVE TEAM



President and Vice-Chancellor Professor Colin Stirling

Professor Colin Stirling has extensive experience in research, teaching and management. As Vice-Chancellor, he is responsible for ensuring the success and efficacy of Flinders University while providing strategic direction to its employees. Educated in Scotland, his early genetics research took him to the University of California, followed by the University of Manchester where he was awarded several prestigious prizes. Throughout an esteemed academic career, Professor Stirling has established a record of leadership, innovation and successful change management through roles including Vice-President at the University of Manchester, and Provost and Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor at Curtin University.



Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Students) Professor Clare Pollock

Professor Clare Pollock leads educational strategy and student success, and has oversight of student-related and academic services. A graduate of Oxford University and the University of London, her distinguished research career has focused on the role of psychology to improve safety. She has a long history of leadership roles at Curtin University and has held many board positions, currently serving as a member of the South Australian Tertiary Admissions Centre board and the Universities Australia Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) group.



Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) Professor Robert Saint

Professor Robert Saint oversees research including research students. A University of Adelaide graduate, he has a notable background in science research and innovation, particularly in the area of molecular biology. Professor Saint has been a member of the Prime Minister's Science Engineering and Innovation Council, the ARC College of Experts, NHMRC Grant Review Panels and the Human Frontier Science Program Grant Review Panel. Prior to Flinders University, he led research teams across Australia including at the Australia National University and University of Melbourne. Professor Saint has received several prestigious awards throughout his career, including his appointment as a Member of the Order of Australia in 2017.



Vice-President and Pro Vice-Chancellor (International) Sebastian Ranekold

Sebastian Ranekold has responsibility for international strategy and activities, ensuring internationalisation is integrated into University teaching, research and engagement. A social anthropology graduate from Lund and Stockholm Universities, he has a strong track record in strategic business development, marketing, stakeholder collaboration and international relations. Mr Ranekold has held international leadership roles in Australia and Sweden and is a member of the International Committee of the Innovative Research Universities (IRU) and the Study Adelaide Board. He also sits on the International Network of Universities Executive Council and is a member of several professional bodies including IEAA (International Education Association of Australia) and EAIE (European Association of International Education).



Vice-President (Corporate Services) Mark Gregory

With a leadership background in Australia and the United States, Mark Gregory has twenty years' experience in higher education, capital projects, regional development and start-up incubation. He has been Chief Information Officer at the University of Adelaide and Associate Vice-President, Finance and Administration at Portland State University. Mr Gregory oversees a broad portfolio including finance, people and culture, information technology, property, governance, student accommodation and the university library. He holds an MBA and degrees in computer science, mathematics and psychology.



Executive Director, Office of Communication and Engagement Callista Thillou

Callista Thillou is responsible for leadership of Flinders University's marketing, media and communications, alumni, and external engagement functions. She has global experience in strategic higher education management, including leading the United Kingdom's higher education representation and engagement with the European Union through senior roles at Universities UK. In Australia, Ms Thillou's previous roles include Director of Communications and Government Relations at the Australian Vice-Chancellors Committee. She holds a Bachelor of Business in Communications and a Masters degree in Marketing.



Chief Financial Officer Richard Porter

With previous roles as CEO and CFO across a range of South Australian sectors, Mr Porter has a wealth of experience in business strategy, finance and accounting. A University of South Australia graduate, he holds a Bachelor of Economics and an MBA and is a Certified Practising Accountant. Mr Porter is charged with managing Flinders University's finance function including reporting, operations, procurement, tax and insurance.



Vice-President and Executive Dean, College of Business, Government and Law Professor Phyllis Tharenou

Professor Phyllis Tharenou has held several executive roles at Flinders University, following earlier senior positions including Executive Director of Social, Behavioural and Economic Sciences at the ARC and Dean Research at the University of South Australia. Recognised for research in international careers, global mobility, gender differences in managerial career advancement, and human resources especially of training, Professor Tharenou is a Fellow of the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology in the United States, and the Australian and New Zealand Academy of Management.



Vice-President and Executive Dean, College of Education, Psychology and Social Work Professor Mike Kyrios

Professor Mike Kyrios is a clinical psychologist who has held a range of academic, professional and administrative roles. His research covers the biopsychosocial spectrum and focuses on anxiety, depression, behavioural addictions and obsessive-compulsive disorders. An internationally sought-after speaker, he has been President of the Australian Psychological Society (APS), National Chair of the APS College of Clinical Psychologists and Scientific Chair for the International Congress of Applied Psychology and the World Congress of Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies. Professor Kyrios holds adjunct positions at the University of Melbourne, Swinburne University and the Australian National University. He completed his postgraduate studies at LaTrobe University.



Vice-President and Executive Dean, College of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences Professor Vanessa Lemm

Professor Vanessa Lemm has held executive and academic appointments in Latin America, Europe and Australia including senior leadership positions at the University of New South Wales and the Diego Portales University in Chile. An internationally recognised expert in European Continental and Political Philosophy, she has published widely on Friedrich Nietzsche, biopolitics, and contemporary political thought, is the editor in chief of Nietzsche-Studien: International Yearbook in Nietzsche Studies, and co-founded an international research network on biopolitics. She completed her PhD at the New School for Social Research in New York.



Vice-President and Executive Dean, College of Medicine and Public Health Professor Jonathan Craig

Professor Jonathan Craig has contributed substantially to kidney disease research, including leading the formation of state, national and international networks for trials and being instrumental in the development of best-practice methods and guidelines. A past member of a WHO expert review panel for public health, Professor Craig's many current advisory roles include member of the National Health and Medical Research Council's Health Translation Advisory Committee, the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee, Medical Services Advisory Committee and Commonwealth Department of Health Life Savings Drug Program.



Vice-President and Executive Dean, College of Nursing and Health Sciences Professor Alison Kitson

Professor Alison Kitson joined Flinders University following her leadership of the University of Adelaide's nursing school. She has held executive roles at the Royal College of Nursing in the United Kingdom and published extensively on nursing and health care, with a focus on research translation. Professor Kitson is a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Health and Medical Research, the American Academy of Nursing and the Royal College of Nursing of the United Kingdom. She also was awarded an Honorary Doctorate from Malmo University Sweden for her work on nursing quality and standards of care.



Vice-President and Executive Dean, College of Science and Engineering Professor Alistair Rendell

Professor Alistair Rendell joined Flinders University in 2019 following a 23-year career with the Australian National University, including more than five years as Director of the Research School of Computer Science where he oversaw a near trebling of its size. He has significant experience in both academic leadership and high-performance computing research. With an undergraduate degree in chemistry and a PhD in theoretical chemistry he has made contributions to several widely used computational chemistry software packages and is currently part of a US based team developing software for the world's leading fastest computer.



General Counsel and University Secretary David Lim

A highly experienced General Counsel and Company Secretary, Mr Lim's experience spans ASX listed and public sector organisations and private legal practice. A Bachelor of Economics and Bachelor of Laws graduate from the University of Adelaide, his expertise and experience include acquisitions and divestments, infrastructure projects, capital markets and funding transactions, commercial property, corporate governance, Board and Board Committees, ASX requirements, executive contracts and remuneration, and risk management.

KEY STATISTICS

STUDENT AND STAFF NUMBERS – FIVE-YEAR FIGURES

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
STUDENT NUMBERS					
Australian	20,513	20,734	20,663	20,529	21,033
International	4,653	4,788	5,401	5,227	5,089
Offshore	1,662	1,537	1,652	1,583	1,534
Onshore	2,991	3,251	3,749	3,644	3,555
Total	25,166	25,522	26,064	25,756	26,122

Gender					
Female Students	16,038	16,427	16,891	16,820	17,213
Male Students	9,124	9,090	9,164	8,925	8,890
Indeterminate/Intersex/Unspecified	4	5	9	11	19
Total	25,166	25,522	26,064	25,756	26,122

STAFF (FTE)					
Academic	844	828	879	831	868
Non-Academic	1,115	1,091	1,116	1,174	1,161
Total	1,959	1,920	1,995	2,005	2,029

HIGHER DEGREE RESEARCH ENROLMENTS

Masters Research	94	72	67	61	66
PhD	1,089	1,026	985	916	860
Total	1,183	1,098	1,052	977	926

FINANCIAL – KEY FIVE-YEAR FIGURES

	2016 \$'000	2017 \$'000	2018 \$'000	2019 \$'000	2020 \$'000
UNIVERSITY – CONSOLIDATED RESULTS					
Income					
Teaching	333,825	348,400	369,179	379,815	386,047
Research	80,565	77,077	79,890	80,327	84,725
Other Government (Non-Research)	27,094	25,869	27,838	29,047	27,839
Investment	9,884	10,755	9,439	19,053	13,230
Other	38,827	35,440	28,778	22,019	23,219
Total Income	490,195	497,540	515,125	530,261	535,060
Expenses					
Employee Related	313,526	309,958	322,173	321,749	324,300
Depreciation and Amortisation	33,869	35,244	38,124	42,260	41,703
Other	115,214	125,968	135,659	141,439	130,680
Total Expenses	462,609	471,170	495,956	505,448	496,683
Net Result	27,586	26,370	19,169	24,813	38,377
Operating Margin	5.6%	5.3%	3.7%	4.7%	7.2%

UNIVERSITY – CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL POSITION

Assets					
Cash and Term Deposits	75,800	97,894	92,548	85,733	124,913
Investments	69,768	93,606	113,741	140,527	148,336
Property, Plant and Equipment	602,093	599,963	607,224	627,701	648,592
Other Assets	99,325	97,196	111,112	128,677	125,026
Total Assets	846,986	888,659	924,625	982,638	1,046,867
Total Liabilities	148,995	158,163	165,857	206,098	224,887
Net Assets	697,991	730,496	758,768	776,540	821,980
Current Ratio	1.4	1.4	1.3	1.1	1.3

2020 HIGHLIGHTS

Pictured: Yunggoorendi building entrance

Digital Up-Skilling

The Diploma of Digital Shipbuilding begins, with 53 shipbuilding workers involved in a digital up-skilling program at Tonsley, funded by the Commonwealth and South Australian Governments.

COVID-19 Support

Matthew Flinders Scholarships are initiated as Flinders University launches a \$12.5 million package to support students in need due to COVID-19 disruptions.



3D Aerial Maps

3D aerial maps of bushfire affected Adelaide Hills and Kangaroo Island regions, produced by Flinders Emeritus Professor Jorg Hacker, help to assist swift fire ground recovery.

Advanced Technologies

Innovative Manufacturing Cooperative Research Centre is launched to help develop and pilot advanced manufacturing technologies for building Australia's Hunter Class frigates.

Pictured: Teaching Advanced Technologies

Pictured: Australia's Hunter Class frigates

Genomics & Bioinformatics

Flinders University is announced as one of six foundation partners of the \$7 million South Australian Genomics Centre, an initiative to support genomics and bioinformatics research in South Australia across all disciplines, from environmental, plant and agricultural research to human health.

COVID-19 Vaccine Trials

Human trials of a potential COVID-19 vaccine developed at Flinders commence in South Australia, with a Phase 1 trial conducted at the Royal Adelaide Hospital.

Pictured: Genome research

Pictured: Flinders University maritime archaeologists

New Trading Room

The College of Business, Government and Law opens its new Trading Room, providing a dynamic simulated financial trading centre for students to develop commerce skills in real-time financial trading situations.

Climate Change

Professor David Karoly, one of the world's leading climate experts, provides fresh insights into the ongoing effects of climate change for the 2020 Flinders University Investigator Lecture, which was streamed online to address COVID-19 gathering restrictions.



Underwater Discovery

Flinders University maritime archaeologists lead the discovery of underwater Aboriginal artefacts off the north-west coast of Western Australia that rewrite knowledge on Australia's ancient landscapes.

Campus Elders

Indigenous elders on Campus are introduced at Flinders University, with Kaurna Elder Uncle Lewis Yarluburka O'Brien at Bedford Park, Larrakia and Wurramongu Elder Richard Balang/Japaljarri Fejo at Darwin campus and Arrernte Elder Dr Pat Miller AO in Alice Springs.

Pictured: Flinders University Trading Room

Pictured: Diploma of Digital Technologies students



Training & Mentorship Award

The Diploma of Digital Technologies, created in partnership with ASC Shipbuilding, wins the prestigious Training and Mentorship Program of the Year at Defence Connect's Australian Defence Industry Awards.

Worldclass Manufacturing

Line Zero Factory of the Future is announced, pointing to a worldclass manufacturing accelerator developed in collaboration with BAE Systems Maritime Australia and embedded within the Tonsley Innovation District.

International Students

Summer Break Series, featuring events, advice and support from Flinders University staff and alumni, is launched to support 2500 international students remaining in Adelaide after completing their study year, due to COVID-19 travel restrictions.

Flinders Railway

The new Flinders Line that extends from the city to the Flinders Medical Centre and Flinders University precincts, commence passenger services – and the new Tonsley and Flinders railway stations are opened.



Pictured: New Flinders train line

INNOVATE RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

Flinders University set its INNOVATE Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) in motion during 2020, an expansive policy and ongoing series of initiatives to ensure Indigenous strategies and cultural perspectives are embedded throughout the University.

Developed over many months of consultation with students, staff, alumni and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities across South Australia and the Northern Territory, its launch in June set the University on its own unique journey to reconciliation.

Crucial support, guidance and wisdom to set out along this path came from respected elder and leader Professor Tom Calma AO – a former diplomat, government advisor, Social Justice Commissioner, Race Discrimination Commissioner, co-chair of Reconciliation Australia, and co-chair of the ‘Indigenous Voice to Government’ initiative.

His input ensured the RAP’s strength to withstand critical scrutiny of its fundamental elements, including embedding cultural learning across all Flinders University campuses, acknowledging the long-held philosophies, knowledges, research strengths and contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and a determination to detect and address unconscious bias or structural discrimination.

Illustrating a determination to build a new inclusiveness for Indigenous people at Flinders University grounded in the concepts of togetherness, reciprocity and respect, the INNOVATE RAP will embed Indigenous perspectives across activities and deepen a commitment to our First Nations peoples and their knowledge and cultures in a spirit of equity, integrity and unity.

Flinders University’s RAP recommends 16 core actions informed by many more deliverables, under the themes of relationships, respect, opportunities, and governance. This includes developing an Indigenous Research Strategy, a procurement strategy to buy more goods and services from First Nations suppliers and increasing the proportion of staff and students who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

Riding at the forefront of this change, Associate Professor Simone Ulalka Tur was appointed Flinders University’s inaugural Pro Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous) in February. Hailing from Yankunytjatjara community in north-west South Australia, Associate Professor Tur is responsible for engagement with Indigenous students, staff and the broader community to enhance respect for Indigenous knowledge systems and perspectives, and progress Indigenous advancement in education, research, employment and wellbeing.

Such cultural developments dovetail into the importance of key research, including Dr Annabelle Wilson’s work to establish a peer-mentoring scheme for dieticians working with Aboriginal people, to refocus on improved nutrition of a post-Colonial diet for Aboriginal people.

Ngarrindjeri and Kaurna man Dr Christopher Wilson – the first Indigenous person in Australia to complete a PhD in Archaeology (2017) – brings crucial perspective to this academic discipline by studying Aboriginal sites through the lens of Aboriginal experience.

Having been a part of Flinders University life for the past 17 years, Dr Wilson is now Senior Lecturer in Archaeology and Indigenous Studies and his work includes repatriating Ngarrindjeri ancestral remains from domestic and UK museums, and assisting in community reburials.

Narrunga woman Dr Natalie Harkin’s work as a DECRA Research Fellow at Flinders University is cataloguing important fresh historical perspectives, using archival-poetic methods to research and unlock colonial-era surveillance records to document Aboriginal women’s domestic service and labour histories in SA.

Laying further groundwork for change, Dr Maree Meredith, a Bidjara woman and Deputy Director of Poche SA + NT, a centre for improving Indigenous health outcomes, has been carefully examining the need to build a so-called ‘pipeline’ of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people throughout the higher education sector, to increase the representation of Indigenous Australians in higher education.



Pro Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous) Associate Professor Simone Ulalka Tur

The introduction of respected Senior Elders-On-Campus brought new levels of emotional support and Indigenous wisdom to Flinders University sites, through making access available to Uncle Lewis Yarluburka O’Brien, Kaurna Elder based at Bedford Park; Uncle Richard Fejo, Larrakia Elder based in Darwin, and Aunty Pat Miller, Arrernte Elder based in Alice Springs.

In recognising the value of Elders in significant leadership roles and the benefits of their collective wisdom, mentorship and Indigenous knowledge, Flinders University launched its Uncle Lewis Yarluburka O’Brien annual public lecture in June – a notable feature of campus activities during National Reconciliation Week. It reinforced that Elders bring keen cultural perspectives to diverse activities - through student learning, research and everyday actions, reinforcing their value to the entire community as knowledge holders, advisers, counsellors, spirit guides and healers.

Yunggorendi Tjilbruke student lounge was opened, an inclusive shared space offering a fresh sense of belonging to Indigenous students – especially following the completion of a magnificent mural by contemporary Aboriginal artist Elizabeth Close, a Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara woman and Flinders alumna, who also painted a huge Indigenous-inspired carpark dot mural at Sturt campus. Her choice of vibrant blue, teal, ochre and bold black colours represented the sea, sky and the University’s unique landscape. An outdoor gathering space is also planned next to the Yunggorendi building, which will provide a much-needed shared space to bring together Indigenous students, the university community and Indigenous community members.

To show support for Flinders University’s RAP, a series of 20 lapel pins was created as miniature replicas of the hand-painted ceramic tiles at the Yunggorendi building’s external entrance.

Flinders supporters are encouraged to purchase and wear these pins as a symbol of their commitment to Reconciliation. Proceeds from the sale of these pins go towards the Flinders Indigenous Scholarships fund, which provides grants of up to \$5000 to support Indigenous students meet their study-related costs, from resources, textbooks and accommodation to daily travel.

All this work underscores that the Reconciliation Action Plan is truly embraced and applied throughout the University – because education is a key to enduring change.

INNOVATE RAP WILL EMBED INDIGENOUS PERSPECTIVES ACROSS ACTIVITIES AND DEEPEN A COMMITMENT TO OUR FIRST NATIONS PEOPLES AND THEIR KNOWLEDGE AND CULTURES IN A SPIRIT OF EQUITY, INTEGRITY AND UNITY.

ADDRESSING COVID-19: RESPONSE & RESEARCH

Challenge and change engendered by the global COVID-19 pandemic showed Flinders University's great capacity to be nimble, pragmatic and truly innovative, rising to meet the demands of shifting student needs and providing timely research outcomes that benefited the entire community.

Rapid response to key issues during the COVID-19 crisis highlighted Flinders' broad expertise across multiple academic disciplines, swiftly addressing the community's urgent safety concerns, especially for medical staff and others working at the front line of medical testing and care.

Not content to rely on external grants only, Flinders in 2020 committed internal funds which were granted to 35 COVID-19 related projects across our six Colleges, including some in collaboration with external partners. They touched myriad aspects of society, recognising that COVID-19 greatly affected the general community, not just those afflicted by the disease.

Flinders was instrumental in establishing Australia's first dedicated testing facility for protective gowns, to ensure more locally made personal protective equipment (PPE) was available to keep healthcare workers safe from COVID-19 and other infections.

The Medical Device Research Institute (MDRI) at Tonsley, led by Professor Karen Reynolds, tested fabric samples from gown manufacturers for resistance to bacteria, virus and fluids. Flinders also helped develop the South Australian Mask Testing Facility at Tonsley, to test respirator and surgical masks produced by local manufacturer Detmold – a stringent process previously taking some three weeks in the United States. Fast-tracking the process locally ensured that SA industry could ramp up production of safe protective equipment used by health professionals.

Another innovative trial at Flinders Medical Centre tested 3D-printed face mask seals moulded to the faces of individual healthcare workers, to reduce the potential for any infection caused by ill-fitting masks when treating COVID-19 and during other high-risk procedures.

Beyond serving the medical community, Flinders University's tests of commonly available fabric masks proved they significantly reduce the number of aerosolised viruses to which a wearer could be exposed.

A published study found that even the poorest performing mask filtered at least 63% of virus numbers in aerosols of a size produced by coughing and small enough to be inhaled into the lower respiratory system – reinforcing community confidence in these important infection control measures.

Providing effective and easily accessed mental health initiatives to an apprehensive community has been of critical importance. The Órama Institute of Mental Health and Wellbeing at Flinders University found that 80% of its research participants showed high levels of psychological distress or low levels of wellbeing since the start of COVID-19 restrictions, and Órama offered practical solutions by implementing new evidence-based strategies, delivered online by trained facilitators. This included Professor Mike Kyrios's STREAM techniques to help people stressed and worried by self-quarantine or working from home.

The fight to protect people against the disease saw Professor Nikolai Petrovsky harness Oracle Cloud technology to speed the development of a vaccine candidate for the SARS-Cov2 coronavirus responsible for the COVID-19 pandemic, which commenced public trials in July.

Other COVID-19 related research projects at Flinders range from finding a bacterial link to respiratory failure, to tracing the virus in South Australia's sewage systems; figuring how to enhance wellbeing among front-line health workers; evaluating the effectiveness during isolation of home telemonitoring for patients with chronic conditions, and examining remote Aboriginal community understanding and responses to the pandemic.

Researchers probed deep into surprising outcomes triggered by COVID-19 restrictions, from the impact on illicit drug trafficking and supply in Australia, to studying how parents managed family life and the effective use of physical activity during lockdowns.

Professor David Lynn will look to the future, investigating the long-term effects of COVID-19 on the immune system.

COVID-19 also greatly affected the way Flinders was able to teach its students, but staff were clever and nimble in their efforts to find swift solutions. In a mere matter of weeks our dedicated lecturers, supported by our professional teams, transitioned from face-to-face teaching to full online delivery, earning high praise from the Vice-Chancellor.

In March, Flinders became the first university in SA to move all its lectures online, closely followed by online delivery of other classes, workshops, tutorials and seminars, enabling students to continue to learn via digital delivery methods. Flinders' online learning system experienced up to 85 times the traffic compared with the previous year and coped easily with the increased volume.

The creativity, commitment and continued effort of staff to provide the best outcome for students saw Flinders' online learning platform receive positive endorsement from 87.5% of undergraduates in the 2020 Student Experience Survey – a significantly higher engagement rating than the national universities average.

Other innovations that cleverly bridged the University's research and teaching functions include the free "Braving COVID-19" online lecture series – an extension of Flinders' ongoing BRAVE public lectures that highlight the work of leading researchers. In addressing subjects from epidemiology updates to COVID-related influence on climate activism, this forum provided a crucial information portal that kept the whole population informed of current, evidence-based best scientific practise, and highlighted Flinders voice as strong and responsible community leader.

**FLINDERS WAS THE FIRST
UNIVERSITY IN SA TO MOVE
ALL ITS LECTURES ONLINE
IN MARCH.**

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

Professor Julie Ratcliffe



A record year for research success

2020 saw Flinders University lift its research income 26%, continuing an upward trend over the past five years to post its highest ever income. It has led to research breakthroughs that shift the way we think and react with the world around us.

A telling example is the startling discovery by Flinders University maritime archaeology researchers that has redefined the boundaries of Australian history. Their precious find of Aboriginal stone tools and grinding stones located on the seabed off Western Australia's Pilbara coast represents the first evidence of an ancient time when climatic change and rising seas inundated the earliest Australian Indigenous coastal settlements thousands of years ago.

Flinders maritime archaeologist Associate Professor Jonathan Benjamin led an international team which confirmed what Aboriginal communities had long believed – that ancient communities historically occupied a far greater Australia than exists today. It represents an important first step towards unlocking the secrets of ancient coastal habitation, which is a vast domain for future exploration, as 21% of Australia's original land mass is now under water – an area larger than the state of Queensland.

This research was but one highlight in a year characterised by Flinders University Colleges flexing their academic expertise to address significant social needs.

The Caring Futures Institute demonstrated the strength of a multi-disciplinary approach to provide solutions for complex public health issues. Mining Flinders' rich lode of health science, medical, nursing and social welfare experts, Professors Alison Kitson, Julie Ratcliffe, Sue Gordon and Jennifer Tieman led teams that engaged with Australia's healthcare industry to improve the lives of the elderly by making strong recommendations to the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety.

Such holistic engagement with a broad industry sector showed Flinders research having great influence and driving necessary reform – informing government policy, advising industry best practise and workforce improvements, and delivering stronger models for the care of all older people. Professor Sally Robinson's submissions to the Royal Commission into Violence, Neglect, Abuse and Exploitation of People With Disability also pursued this rigorous line.

Strength through collaboration

Consolidation of Flinders Health and Medical Research Institute (FHMRI) reinforced collaborative strength through bringing together many of the University's world-leading innovative and inspiring research experts striving to improve health, prevent disease and combat health inequalities.

This includes teams led by experts in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health (led by Associate Professor Tamara Mackean), Eye and Vision (Professor Jamie Craig), Health Data Science (Professor Derek Chew), Heart and Vascular Health (Associate Professor Anand Ganesan), Mental Health (Professor Malcolm Battersby), Neuroscience (Professor Karin Nordstrom), Primary Care (Professor Richard Reed), Sleep Health (Professor Danny Eckert), Social Determinants (Dr Annabelle Wilson and Dr Toby Freeman), Infection and Immunity (Professor Geraint Rogers), Rural and Remote Health (Dr Vivian Isaac), Healthy Ageing (Associate Professor Kate Laver and Professor Maria Crotty) and Cancer (Associate Professor Michael Michael).

Fuelled by the appointment of Professor Peter Eastwood as new FHMRI director and the deep connections with the South Australian Medical Research Institute (SAHMRI) and the Southern Adelaide Local Health Network (SALHN), FHMRI is enhancing Flinders' research in basic and applied molecular biosciences, building healthy communities and clinical translation.

Paving the way towards reform

The sum of Flinders expertise was also evident in research that influenced important public campaigns. Academics from five Colleges and spanning many disciplines were heavily involved in five years of campaigning by the SA Abortion Action Coalition that led to the Termination of Pregnancy Bill 2020. Drawing on their research and teaching expertise, Associate Professor Barbara Baird (Women's and Gender Studies), Associate Professor Catherine Kevin (History), Dr Prudence Flowers (History), Dr Monica Cations (Psychology), Mr Mark Rankin (Law), Adjunct Professor Judith Dwyer (Public Health), Ms Brigid Coombe (Nursing) and Dr Jessie Shipman (Health Sciences) worked with a broad-based group of lawyers, health care providers, unionists, students and individual activists to pave the way towards historic law reform.

Making sure the mind matters

Órama Institute for Mental Health and Wellbeing research into ensuring stronger mental health through preventable measures with the introduction of the Be Well Plan, created in partnership with the SAHMRI. This evidence-based, facilitated program coaches participants as they craft their own personalised wellness strategy, and is now supported by a tracker application that provides ongoing assessment of each participant's wellbeing.

Research into post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) by Professors Reg Nixon, Sharon Lawn and Associate Professor Bed Wadham led to introduction of the Military Academic Pathway Program, which has enabled 48 veterans to obtain the necessary support to start university studies. Recognised as a national finalist for Veteran Support Program of the Year in 2020, the new pathway has strengthened Flinders' relationship with the Australian Defence Force, military industries and veterans' associations.

Evaluating change in climate

The Climate and Sustainability Policy Research group contributed to the development of an evidence base for climate and coastal adaptation in South Australia, working in partnership with the Department of Environment and Water and local councils throughout South Australia. Led by Associate Professor Cassandra Star, this group evaluated the efficacy of current climate adaptation planning and benchmarked it against international best practice to improve policy formulation and intervention outcomes.

Looking back in time to better understand the effects of changing climates and species development, Professor John Long led a year of great accomplishment among the Palaeontology team. His research into an ancient *Elpistostege* fish fossil, published in the journal *Nature*, revealed new insights into how the human hand evolved from fish fins.

Furthering Green chemistry

Within the College of Science and Engineering, myriad new applications are being discovered for the Vortex Fluidic Device – a Flinders University invention that writes a fresh chapter in the possibilities for Green chemistry in everything from manufacturing to adapting super-hard nano-materials and even food processing. Professor of Clean Technology Colin Raston says 2020 breakthroughs, from developing more efficient lithium-ion batteries to producing more sustainable Omega-3 oils, have built on the body of about 100 papers that his research group has published about the Vortex Fluidic Device, "and we have only scratched the surface about what is possible for this device," he explains.

Similarly, the Chalker Lab expanded its ground-breaking work to create versatile new polymers from industrial waste products, discovering that a new type of self-repairing rubber can be made from sulfur, canola cooking oil and dicyclopentadiene from petroleum refining.

Outstanding recognition for Flinders researchers

Two Flinders University researchers received exceptional awards recognising their contribution to research and innovation. Professor Colin Raston was named 2020 South Australian Scientist of the Year while Associate Professor Justin Chalker was awarded the 2020 Prime Minister's Prize for New Innovators.

Professor Peter Eastwood



Professor Alison Kitson



Associate Professor Cassandra Star



Professor Sally Robinson

INDUSTRY ENGAGEMENT

Robust engagement with industry is reinforcing Flinders University's research strengths and propelling its most powerful collaborative projects.

Factory of the Future



Factory of the Future

Aware that industrial transformation is a fundamental challenge facing Australia's economy and society, Flinders is taking a leading role in shaping our future workforce. Flinders' research expertise is providing substantial benefits for companies embracing industrial transformation by delivering practical solutions through innovative thinking and decisive action.

Professor John Spoehr, Pro-Vice Chancellor of Research Impact and Director of Flinders University's Australian Industrial Transformation Institute says this research supports the development of world class digital shipbuilding in Australia. As part of this, the Government of South Australia announced \$5 million support in November, matched by Flinders, to develop stage one of the Line Zero – Factory of the Future at Tonsley, where Flinders University and BAE Systems Maritime Australia will partner with a range of companies to test advanced manufacturing technologies for potential deployment in support of the \$35 billion Hunter Class Future Frigate program, as well as other shipbuilding programs and advanced manufacturing more broadly.

To ensure these developments ride at the cutting edge of the advanced manufacturing revolution, Flinders is working with the best-of-breed research and development facilities globally, including the Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre in Sheffield, UK (the world's leading advanced manufacturing accelerator funded by the UK Government's Industry Catapult Program) and the University of Strathclyde's Advanced Forming Research Centre.

Delivering for Defence

Flinders University continued to build its national and international reputation as a defence industry research partner of choice, underlined by its selection as a finalist for the Academic Institution of the Year Category in the 2020 Australian Defence Industry Awards.

Important research contributions to Defence industries included developing its advanced manufacturing research to support the Hunter Class Frigate Program. This includes a project funded by the Innovative Manufacturing Cooperative Research Centre, BAE Systems Maritime Australia and Flinders University designed to accelerate the uptake and diffusion of innovative manufacturing technologies in Australian shipbuilding and supply chain.

Flinders and Naval Group Pacific is developing an innovative digital shipyard vision through utilising mobile machining robots and exoskeleton technologies. Flinders was also selected by Lockheed Martin Australia as one of its research partners to develop advanced technologies for Australia's Future Submarine Program.

Flinders researchers across all six Colleges have secured new defence related research projects. This includes a \$5 million National Electronic Warfare initiative at Flinders to develop research and training programs that build electronic warfare defence capabilities in Australia, and a \$445,000 Australian Research Council Discovery Project to develop novel electrically conducting carbon-based paints that are stable in marine environments and provide a green solution for controlling the biofouling of surfaces.

Flinders is also playing a key role in a \$15 million research and development project led by Thales Australia supported by the Trusted Autonomous Systems Defence Cooperative Research Centre, which will see Flinders researchers working with project partners to design, develop, test and evaluate various teams of autonomous vessels, to develop new systems for underwater mine detection and clearance.

Shaping the future of public health

The Caring Futures Institute at Flinders University draws on the combined research expertise of health science, medical, nursing and social welfare experts, and is engaging with Australia's healthcare industry to establish a clear way forward in the wake of recommendations laid down by the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety. Within this space, Professor Julie Ratcliffe leads a team that continues ARC-funded work on Quality of Life measures, formulating solutions through close collaboration with aged care providers and consumers – with a tool to inform routine sector-wide quality assessment and economic evaluation currently in development.

Professor Rebecca Golley leads a team that has been working with CSIRO and other institutions to develop the important VegKit initiative, designed to help educators, health professionals and research agencies improve the eating habits and nutritional diets of young children through increasing their vegetable intake.

Assemblage presents new artistic opportunities

The establishment of the Assemblage Centre for Creative Arts at Flinders University has expanded possibilities for innovative artistic research collaboration. This new research centre, headed by former Australian Dance Theatre artistic director Professor Garry Stewart, has been designed to draw together myriad artistic and academic disciplines at Flinders University, while also encouraging external artists, researchers, industries and communities to join as partners in new artistic ventures. It aims to forge bright new ideas for research that can stimulate, measure and qualify the social and commercial impact of Arts endeavours, resulting in a new type of knowledge creation. This includes major collaborative projects being undertaken in The Void, one of the largest virtual reality and motion capture labs in South Australia, that is bringing together filmmakers, choreographers, actors, dancers, gamers, archaeologists, medical researchers and technicians in collective digital vision projects.

Collaboration ensures better Bight knowledge

Flinders University marine biology experts were part of the Great Australian Bight Research Program involving more than 100 scientists and technical staff from a range of organisations. The project uncovered more than 300 species of wildlife and other aspects of conservation significance during a four-year, \$20 million research program to improve understanding of the environmental, economic and social values of the Great Australian Bight.

Facilities provide real-time, real business experiences

New additions to facilities within the College of Business, Government and Law set the platform for stronger interaction with industry to deliver superior student learning outcomes. The Business Trading Room offers students a cutting-edge market simulation program where they can access time-series data on security prices and exchange rates, execute trades in real time, and plug into financial modelling that mimics the global derivatives market – ideal for course subjects including Foundations of Finance and Investments and Portfolio Management. In December, the new Wine Sensory Room opened, with wine tasting benches for up to 30 students, teaching facilities and temperature-controlled wine storage cabinets – ready for the first full year of student intake for the Bachelor of International Business (Wine, Spirits and Tourism) in 2021.

New Venture Institute

The renowned UBI World Benchmark Study included Flinders University's New Venture Institute as the only Australian incubator and one of three that top the Asia Pacific region for 2019/20 among its top global business incubators from among 1580 programs. It reinforced NVI's reputation as Australia's leading University Business accelerator, that has - since its inception in 2013 – hosted more than 12,000 event participants, trained 2000 innovators, and founded, supported and grown 421 startups that have raised more than \$3.5 million for projects and ventures. It has served as a vital springboard for such companies as GoMicro, whose versatile artificial intelligence microscope is being used in a kit to diagnose leishmaniasis in war-torn nations, on farms to identify pests, and to grade tuna for consumption in Sri Lanka.

NVI was a partner in such important industry summits as FOMENT, a four-week wine and tourism tech accelerator event held in Adelaide during October, that presented an array of innovative business ideas involving technology solutions with potential to shape the future of the wine and tourism industries.

Commercialising our intellectual property

In late 2020, Flinders was closely involved with the launch of start-up company NuLife BV, in conjunction with majority investor and venture partner IQ Medical Ventures. The seed investment of \$350,000 will be used to progress clinical milestones for a novel IVF pharmaceutical intervention developed at Flinders by Professor Kelton Tremellen that is designed to improve IVF success rates.

Flinders secured lead commercialisation partner Clean Earth Technology to drive commercialisation and scale-up of a new polysulfide polymer developed by Associate Professor Justin Chalker and his team while also funding on-going research at Flinders. The polymer from waste sulfur and vegetable oil binds mercury, gold, and other heavy metals and therefore has a wide range of potential uses. Scale-up of production of the polymer from approximately 1kg per week to 5kg per hour has already been achieved, with Clean Earth Technology developing a high-tech automated production facility in Adelaide that will achieve over 1 tonne per day for export. Partly as a result of this commercial impact Associate Professor Chalker was awarded the 2020 Prime Minister's Prize for New Innovators.

Careers and employability

Challenges presented during 2020 saw Flinders University's Careers and Employability shift its industry and student engagement activities from in-person to virtual delivery, which resulted in increased engagement. Almost 1200 students joined the Flinders Horizon Professional Development Award, while workshop attendances increased by 47% (the most popular being Professional Resilience and Mindfulness), leading to a 46% increase in students achieving the Leadership Specialisation. Career Development Consultants also expanded their workshop delivery, with 97% of student attendees reporting their skills and knowledge had been improved, while more than 100 students made use of the University's Disability Employment Advisor through the Specialist Employment Partnerships program.

TEACHING EXCELLENCE

Equipping workers with new digital skills

Flinders University, in partnership with ASC Shipbuilding, launched the Diploma of Digital Technologies in March 2020, with its initial intake upskilling 51 shipbuilders from ASC Shipbuilding, BAE Systems Australia, equipping them with digital skills for modern shipbuilding. In this program, which is supported by the Federal and State Governments and delivered in partnership with TAFE SA, students developed future focused skills in innovation and industry 4.0, cybersecurity, digital design, design for manufacture, cyber-physical systems, robotics and automation.

The immediate success of this new diploma saw it win the prestigious Training and Mentorship Program of the Year in Defence Connect's 2020 Australian Defence Industry Awards. Flinders University Professor in Innovation and Program Director Giselle Rampersad says this recognition highlights the successful partnership between university, industry and government, and also the importance of Australian organisations being able to use digital technologies to boost sovereign manufacturing capacity in a cost-effective fashion. Plans are underway to expand this program to include SMEs and organisations from a broad range of sectors, from defence to manufacturing, health, energy and construction.

Citations for Australian teaching awards

The 2020 Australian Awards for University Teachers applauded the work of several Flinders educators who received citations for making outstanding contributions to student learning. Dr Masha Smallhorn, from the College of Science and Engineering, received a citation for engaging large first-year cohorts in biological sciences through research-informed, inquiry-based learning practical sessions that led to improved student learning outcomes and increased student success rates.

The Environmental Health Team - comprising Associate Professor Kirstin Ross, Professor Howard Fallowfield and Dr Harriet Whiley, from the College of Science and Engineering – were recognised for creating creative curricula that targets online accessibility and strong industry engagement to ensure graduates are ready and confident to meet workforce expectations.

The Work Integrated Learning in Sport team from the College of Education, Psychology and Social Work, comprising Dr Deb Agnew and Associate Professor Shane Pill, was applauded for its use of an integrated model of international Work Integrated Learning for Sport that has enhanced the student experience while delivering the Bachelor of Sport, Health and Physical Activity through such endeavours as international student placements.

Vice-Chancellor applauds teaching innovations

Marking an extraordinary year of challenge for the University's teaching staff, the Vice-Chancellor's 2020 Excellence in Teaching and 2020 Innovation in Teaching awards rewarded outstanding performers in unusually demanding and disrupted circumstances.

A Vice-Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching was presented to Dr Louisa Matwiejczyk and her team from the College of Nursing and Health Sciences for innovation and leadership: A recipe for enhancing the student experience and teaching and learning through short-term study abroad experiences in nutrition and dietetics.

Excellence in Teaching Awards were also presented to Dr Maria Giannacopoulos (College of Business, Government and Law) for developing cutting edge, research-led curricula in Criminology which addresses contemporary global questions of Indigenous and racial justice, and to Ms Ying Yu and her team from the College of Nursing and Health Sciences for improving consistency in teaching and learning clinical skills and optimising student capacity to develop competency through the development of the Clinical Skills Storybook.

An increased number of seven Vice-Chancellor's Innovation in Teaching Awards recognised clever solutions to overcome the unusual challenges of 2020 and ensure better learning engagement. They were presented to Dr Christine Barry (College of Medicine and Public Health) for 3D pelvic anatomy learning online; Mr Joss Rankin (College of Education, Psychology and Social Work) for engaging students as partners in Outdoor Education; Dr Nina Sivertsen and team (College of Nursing and Health Sciences) for the Malpa program; Dr Masha Smallhorn and Mrs Narelle Hunter (College of Science and Engineering) for Online Virtual Practical Simulations in Biological Sciences; Dr Philip Palmer (College of Business, Government and Law) for using Quitch in company accounting; Dr Sam Elliott (College of Education, Psychology and Social Work) for targeted Work Integrated Learning in the Bachelor of Sport, Health and Physical Activity; and Dr Vipul Pare and Dr Rajesh Johnsam (College of Business, Government and Law) for gamification to enhance student engagement.

New media teaching wins global plaudits

The quality of teaching in new media has been amplified by the continuing success of Flinders University's partnership with CDW Studios. Together, they have triumphed in the global Rookies rankings for digital design and illustration, rocketing to number four in the world during 2020 for concept art and illustration; number six for 2D animation; making the revered best overall creative media and entertainment school list for the first time; and placed in the world's top 20 schools for game design and visual effects.

Flinders University students at work in CDW Studios



Expanded work placements

Flinders University's Work Integrated Learning program resulted in almost 14,000 placements completed in 2020. While 2330 placements were affected by COVID-19 disruptions, some were rescheduled and others delivered via alternative learning options. This included introducing the Flinders Engineering Consulting model to ensure Masters of Engineering students could complete their placements, and third-year Exercise Science students running EXStradordinary Brain Breaks as placement alternatives.

Online Learning and Teaching

In response to the online delivery of teaching and learning, usage of Flinders University's learning technology platforms experienced significant growth in 2020 – especially Kaltura (video platform, up to 20 times more traffic), Collaborate (web conferencing, with attendees up to 60 times higher), and with up to 3000 students accessing both Collaborate and Kaltura software. To improve online study interaction, FLO interface was updated to provide some significant benefits, including a more contemporary appearance, better ability for students to control how topics are viewed, improved navigation, a timeline feed showing upcoming due dates and easier access to recently visited topics and activities – all in a more mobile-friendly application.

Outstanding student research

The outstanding quality of work published by Flinders University students was underlined with the 2020 Best Higher Degree by Research (HDR) Student Publication Prizes. The winners were Piyamas Kanokwongnuwut (College of Science and Engineering), Dr Lito Papanicolas (Medicine and Public Health), Victoria Bridgland (Education, Psychology and Social Work), Dr Brittany Johnson (Nursing and Health Sciences), Mohammad Khorsand (Science and Engineering), Stephen Muller (Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences) and Dr Sian Troath (Business, Government and Law), while the Vice-Chancellor's Award for Excellence in HDR Supervision went to Dr Helen McLaren.

HDR Student Research Impact prizes were awarded to Dr Lauren Meyer (Science and Engineering) and Dr Sarah Fraser (Nursing and Health Sciences), while Vice-Chancellor's Awards for Doctoral Thesis Excellence went to Dr Darryl Sellwood and Dr Jennifer Slape (Nursing and Health Sciences), Dr Lisa Alcock, Dr Alex Newcombe, Dr Elen Shute and Dr Meruyert Beknazarova (Science and Engineering), Dr Matthew Tieu, Dr David Turnbull and Dr Sean Gilbert (Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences), Dr Simone Deegan (Business, Government and Law) and Dr Sasha Quayum and Dr Cara Rossi (Education, Psychology and Social Work). Dr Quayum also received the Australian Psychology Society Award for Excellent PhD thesis in Psychology for her thesis titled "An Investigation into the Mechanisms Underlying the Memory Amplification Effect".

14,000

Work Integrated Learning
Placements

FOURTH

in the world for
Digital Design & Illustration

TOP 20

School for Game Design
& Visual Effects

UP TO 3,000

students accessed Flinders University's
Learning Technology Platforms

CENTRAL CORRIDOR SA & NT

Flinders NT is a hub of health research, education and workforce development – and it works in partnership with Flinders University Rural Health SA to facilitate high quality, multidisciplinary health education and research, and provide local placement opportunities for rural students.

The Flinders NT Medical Program is especially valuable, providing workforce support, inspiring healthy living and careers in health, and supporting NT communities through innovative initiatives such as the Poche SA + NT Centre for Indigenous Health.

Dr Maree Meredith, acting deputy director of Poche SA + NT, presents a compelling case that a different language is needed to improve Indigenous health. Her research says Indigenous people want to be engaged – in a language they want to listen to. “For most of these people, English is their third language. If we shape the health conversation in their terms, it shifts power to the people who need to benefit from our medical research. If not, we won’t make progress.”

Dr Meredith and her colleagues are striving to introduce change. Their research shows that Aboriginal communities experience and discuss health very differently to conventional health personnel. She insists the existing system and current means of communicating with Indigenous people about health is not working. “We’re advocating for a social model of health. For Indigenous Australians, you cannot have an effective conversation about health unless it is also about language, culture, country and family. These four aspects cannot be separated from what it means to be healthy. It must be a holistic conversation.”

Dr Meredith says the biomedical model and relationships with doctors will not improve unless broad relationships are improved with Aboriginal communities, which requires a big shift from how the medical sector currently operates, with greater empathy needed. “The biomedical model is only one way of dealing with health. There are traditional healers who have been practising for millennia, and Indigenous knowledge also needs to be at that interface,” she says. “Medical people come with their expertise, but Aboriginal people bring their lived experience, along with their experience as traditional healers. It all has to come together.”

Dr Meredith says change will come through a health system that respects Indigenous community approaches, which is being employed by Poche SA + NT. “We don’t go into a community unless we are invited. We don’t impose our ideas. Instead, we accept their invitation to help, either from individuals or from communities. That’s the first step of respect. And due to this, invitations for the Poche Centre to work with communities are coming thick and fast. The great opportunity right now is how we train the current generation of students to be the next practitioners.”

Flinders University plays a crucial role in education and community interaction through the vast central corridor spanning this nation – from regional South Australia through remote central Australia to the Northern Territory’s top end.

It’s why we have increased the numbers of Indigenous members of staff, and have Indigenous Elders on campus – so that when a non-Indigenous person comes into our program, the first thing they see is an Aboriginal face.”

Career pathway advice goes online

Due to COVID-19 concerns, Top End Health Services and the Flinders NT Regional Training Hub postponed an annual face-to-face Medical Careers Expo for 2020, but replaced it with a Medical Career Pathway Webinar Series that allowed NT medical students and pre-vocational doctors to interact with specialist colleges and progress their training and career planning. The programs featured Fellows and trainees speaking of their experiences within the NT and beyond, how to optimise training prospects, and ways to connect with relevant health departments and support systems. Ten speciality Colleges and organisations recorded and uploaded video segments onto the Flinders NT RTH webpage, along with other career pathway resources.

Expanding Paramedic studies

In commemorating 20 years of teaching Paramedic Science in 2020, Flinders University expanded its teaching offering to include a new Paramedic Science course in NT from 2021. Tailored specifically for the NT, the course is delivered in collaboration with St John NT, the South Australian Ambulance Service and Ambulance Victoria, ensuring industry relevance. Theory components can be completed online from anywhere in the Northern Territory, while face-to-face components will be delivered via practical workshop intensives in state-of-the-art facilities in Darwin each semester, with 300 hours of emergency ambulance placements over the duration of the degree with St John NT. It will provide a pathway for graduates to apply for the Flinders NT medical program under the Postgraduate entry pathway into the Doctor of Medicine degree.

Practical education sessions for remote clinics

While COVID-19 travel restrictions limited learning opportunities for some remote practitioners, Flinders NT educators at Nhulunbuy assisted local health services by providing practical education sessions. Nursing Lecturer Chloe Lyons and Senior Lecturer in Remote Medicine Dr Katie Williamson visited clinical staff at Gunyangara Clinic, part of the Miwatj Health Aboriginal Corporation that provides essential Aboriginal Health services across the East Arnhem region, to help with Basic and Advanced Life Support refresher training, developing realistic simulations for the teams to troubleshoot. Flinders University medical and nursing students were also involved in the training session, gaining insight into challenges facing small remote clinics.

INTERNATIONAL

Extraordinary circumstances saw COVID-19 impact Flinders University’s international engagement across all priority areas in 2020, with the nature of international student recruitment fundamentally changed due to international border closures. This resulted in a raft of adaptations, including transitioning to fully digital/online recruitment activities; enhanced engagement and relationship management with the University’s agent network; support of offshore recruitment partners; enhanced conversion campaign initiatives; webinars and masterclasses which were developed and supported by Academic staff, and a new Go Beyond Scholarship Scheme.

However, despite COVID-19 interferences, total international enrolments for 2020 reached 97% of the 2019 enrolment total, and Flinders exceeded its International student recruitment target in Semester 1.

International Student Support

Flinders International led the critical incident response and retention strategy of students who were unable to travel to Australia in Semester 1, 2020. Emergency Remote Learning expanded as the University’s International Student Support Services (ISS) transitioned online, including the provision of all support services; advisory, orientation and student engagement activities. Semester 2, 2020 saw recruitment of a new offshore student cohort, which commenced online studies with the intention of travelling to Australia when possible.

Staff across the University worked with Flinders International to create a Consolidated Student Services Point that ensured students could receive personalised face-to-face support during South Australia’s COVID-19 lockdowns. This was an important and successful initiative that received positive feedback from both students and staff. Flinders International also led the University’s contribution to the Student Return to South Australia Pilot Program, working in collaboration with the SA Government, UniSA, University of Adelaide and Study Adelaide.

Despite such difficulties affecting their study year, Flinders’ international students won three tertiary student categories in the StudyAdelaide 2020 International Student Awards, with awards granted to Rubayat Sawar (Bangladesh), Natasha Nagle (United States) and Sisley Li (China), while Najma Khaliq Khan from Pakistan, and Mey Wong (Wong Yeng Mey) from Malaysia were highly commended.

Learn Without Borders

The University’s Learn Without Borders team led the critical incident response and repatriation of students, with Virtual Study opportunities explored in lieu of border closures.

Transnational Education

Flinders University was able to deliver seven courses to 1382 students in collaboration with international partners in China, Malaysia and Singapore. Flinders Transnational Education (TNE) programs include Masters and Bachelor courses in Psychology, Education, International Relations and Health Administration. In 2020, more than 650 Flinders students celebrated their graduation from postgraduate degrees in China, taking the University’s TNE alumni in China (including Hong Kong SAR), Malaysia and Singapore to 8842 people.

20-year Masters Partnership

The twentieth anniversary of Flinders University’s partnership with Nankai University in Tianjin, China, to deliver Transnational Education programs was marked in 2020 through the ongoing delivery of three successful Masters programs. With Nankai University having celebrated its 100th anniversary celebrations in 2019, the relationship between the two prestigious universities has flourished since the initial collaboration established by the late Professor Noel Tracy from Flinders’ former School of International Studies, working with Professor Binglian Liu from the College of Economic and Social Development at Nankai University. Now, the successful delivery of the Master of Arts in International Relations, Economy and Trade (MAIRET), Master of Hospital Administration (MHA) and the Master of Educational Leadership and Management (MELM) has seen more than 5600 students graduate from the three joint programs.

India Strategy

In February 2020, Flinders University’s largest and most senior delegation travelled to India to build on valuable Indian partnerships as well as forge new connections with a strategic focus on research, student recruitment, education and mobility. Flinders University Vice-President and Pro Vice-Chancellor (International) Sebastian Raneskold met with Chitkara University Chancellor Dr Madhu Chitkara to sign a new Memorandum of Understanding, resulting in a Flinders-Chitkara dedicated scholarship and the opening of a ‘Flinders Corner’ at Chitkara to give students Flinders course information.

Generous support pledged for students

Many of Flinders University’s International students needed increased support due to COVID-19 disruptions, which resulted in a phenomenal generosity of staff, alumni and supporters to raise money for the Matthew Flinders Scholarship Fund, forming part of Flinders’ \$12.5m support package for students in need. An estimated 3500 international students struggled as a result of the pandemic - many losing part time work, some lacking IT access required to transition to online study and others feeling the stress of isolation – which is why the scholarships provided relief payments to students with urgent and immediate needs, especially those unable to return to their home countries due to border closures.

Other initiatives supported by Flinders International to help mitigate international student financial hardship included the FUSA Emergency Hardship fund and the SA Government International Student Support Package.

“FLINDERS UNIVERSITY HAS SHOWN GREAT SUPPORT TO ME AND MY FELLOW INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS DURING THIS COVID-19 PERIOD. THEY HAVE GIVEN US FINANCIAL SUPPORT AND PROVIDED ALL THE DEGREE SUPPORT ONE NEEDS TO EXCEL IN THEIR ACADEMIC STUDIES.”

Olayinka Abioye, Master of Civil Engineering student, from Nigeria



Flinders University Alumni Award recipients 2020 with President and Vice-Chancellor Professor Colin Stirling

OUR PEOPLE

Associate Professor Justin Chalker



Innovator earns Prime Minister's Prize

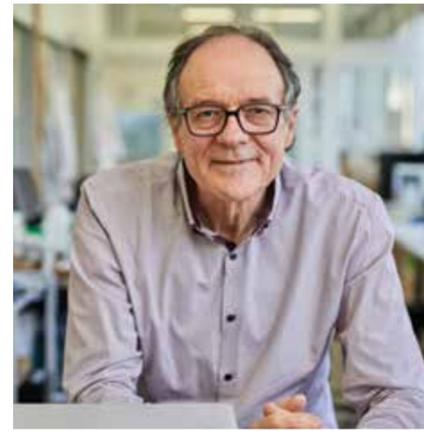
Associate Professor Justin Chalker won the Prize for New Innovators in the 2020 Prime Minister's Prizes for Science, recognising his discovery and development of a new class of polymers that provide sustainable solutions to some of humanity's greatest challenges – clean air, fresh water and sustainable food production. Associate Professor Chalker's invention allows polymers to be synthesised directly from elemental sulfur (a by-product of the petrochemical industry) and renewable, low-cost plant oils such as limonene and canola – a welcome substitute for the unrenewable methods used in traditional plastic and rubber manufacture – and these inventions have led to a global commercialisation and distribution agreement with Clean Earth Technologies.

SA spotlight on Raston and Reynolds

Flinders University took the spotlight at the 2020 SA Science Excellence and Innovation Awards, with South Australia's Scientist of the Year honour shared by Professor of Clean Technology Colin Raston (with Professor Sharad Kumar), while the nation-leading South Australian Medical Device Partnering Program, led by Professor Karen Reynolds, won the Excellence in Science and Industry Collaboration Award.

Trio stand proud as Tall Poppies

Three of Flinders University's emerging stars of research – hydrogeologist and water management expert Dr Margaret Shanafield, archaeologist Dr Ian Moffat and palaeontologist Dr Alice Clement – were named in 2020 SA Tall Poppy Science Awards. The recognition is announced to coincide with National Science Week, along with the annual Unsung Heroes of SA Science Awards, which included Mrs Pat Vilimas as a finalist. The Technical Officer in Microscopy and Pathology from Professor Damien Keating's laboratory in the College of Medicine and Public Health was commended for her ongoing commitment to supporting medical research.



Pictured (L to R): Prof Colin Raston, Prof Karen Reynolds, Prof Nicola Spurrier

Alumni making an impact on society

At the 2020 Flinders University Alumni Awards, the achievements of recent graduates were celebrated for the first time, among 16 awardees recognised for their impact on society. The expanded array of awards, which reflected a vast influx of nominations, included two Convocation Medals (the highest honour for Flinders University graduates), 7 Distinguished Alumni Awards and 7 recipients of inaugural Early Career Alumni Awards.

The Convocation Medalists were Sarah Brown AM, Chief Executive Officer of Purple House that facilitates improved health services for Indigenous Australians living in remote communities, and Professor Jamie Cooper AO, Director of the Australian and New Zealand Intensive Care Research Centre, Head of Critical Care Research at Monash University and Senior Specialist in Intensive Care at The Alfred Hospital.

Distinguished Alumni Awards went to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health researcher David Tarnda Copley; Glenunga International High School principal Wendy Johnson; Professor Ross McKinnon; arborist, botanist and ecologist Dr Dean Nicolle OAM; bioethics activist Professor Wendy Rogers; and maritime archaeology Adjunct Associate Professor Mark Staniforth. Dr Ian Davis OAM received a posthumous award for his service to people living with motor neurone disease, notably through establishing advocacy organisation FightMND.

The seven inaugural Early Career Alumni recipients were Saadia Adnan, for her innovative educational programming to more than 40 million children in Pakistan during the COVID-19 pandemic; Daniel Ajak, for his contribution to the African-Australian community; screen editor and film post-production mentor Veronica Buhagiar; Dr Melanie Farrier, for promoting equity within the STEM community; Dr Lauren Meyer for innovative research in shark trophic ecology; Dr Gemma Sharp for mental health research and clinical practice within the field of body image and eating disorders; and Dr Christopher Wilson for bringing crucial perspective to archaeology by studying Aboriginal sites through the lens of Aboriginal experience.

National honours for service

A large contingent of 18 people from the Flinders University community were acknowledged with 2020 Australia Day Honours, including 13 alumni along with current and former staff, and donors to the University.

Flinders graduate and Convocation Medallist Professor Anthony Thomas, physicist and an Australian Laureate Fellow, was one of five Australians to take the top honour of Companion of the Order of Australia (AC) – and other award recipients included maverick fossil hunter and conservationist Professor Rod Wells and physics teacher Associate Professor Maria Parappilly.

The 2020 Queens Birthday awards recognised 16 Flinders people, led by current Flinders University council member and Deputy Chancellor Elizabeth Perry AM. Awards also went to neurophysiology expert Professor Marcello Costa AO; defence technology researcher Professor Jackie Craig AM; remote and Indigenous health advocate Sarah Brown AM; Medical educator Dr Sara Louise Jones AM; hearing expert Dr John Craig Byrne AM; medical administrator Professor Paul Nathaniel Smith AM and forensic scientist Professor Adrian Linacre OAM.

Outstanding public health leadership

Professor Nicola Spurrier was awarded the 2020 Basil Hetzel Leadership in Public Health Award. The Chief Public Health Officer for the South Australian Department for Health and Wellbeing and Flinders University professor (academic status) was recognised for outstanding leadership and contributions as the state dealt with devastating bushfires followed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Water expert takes on ARC role

Internationally renowned earth scientist, hydrogeologist and groundwater expert Professor Craig Simmons joined the Australian Research Council as Executive Director, Maths, Physics, Chemistry and Earth Sciences. A Fellow of the Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering, Professor Simmons is a multi-award winning researcher whose accolades include SA Scientist of the Year (2015) Australian Water Professional of the Year (2017), Flinders University Convocation Medallist (2017) and Director of the National Centre for Groundwater Research and Training at Flinders University.

Museum honour adds to Long list

Globally recognised palaeontology expert Strategic Professor John Long was made an Honorary Associate of the Australian Museum in November 2020, applauded for his position as one of the most distinguished evolutionary biologists in Australia. Only nine of these lifetime honorary appointments have been awarded in the museum's 190-year history, prompting Professor Long to announce "this is quite an unexpected accolade".

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Flinders University's efforts to engage with the wider community were challenged and transformed due to COVID-19 disruptions during 2020 – but smart initiatives brought forward innovative thinking and fresh possibilities.

FUMA

Although periodic lockdowns prevented much face-to-face engagement, FUMA (Flinders University Museum of Art) – one of the largest university art collections in Australia, with more than 8000 works - still presented art and inspiration to audiences through new digital offerings. In the hold: Decolonising Cook in contemporary Australian art was installed in the gallery to coincide with the launch of the University's Reconciliation Action Plan and the 250th anniversary of Captain Cook's Botany Bay landing - but was also adapted for online format, providing virtual access to the works and interpretive texts. This exhibition provided the platform for FUMA's first virtual symposium, a full-day event that featured 22 speakers from Tasmania, South Australia, Queensland and Hawaii.

Talking Art and Ideas was another new initiative that brought artists and art enthusiasts together for livestreamed long-format conversations over a four-part series. Despite disruptions to classes, FUMA also continued to fulfil its important role in collections-based teaching and learning, ensuring digital access to artworks, facilitating lecture recordings in the museum, and developing resources for online delivery. FUMA's nationally significant holdings of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art comprises a vital component for a raft of Indigenous studies programs, across Art History, Education, Geography, History, Health Sciences, Literature and Social Sciences. FUMA collections also support topics in Media Studies, Visual Art, Drama and Social Work, as well as a powerful program for Psychiatry and Medicine students – resulting in more than 100 object-based-learning bookings during 2020.



In the hold: Decolonising Cook in contemporary Australian art, FUMA exhibition



Health2Go, Flinders University's allied health clinic

Sporting partnerships

Visible engagement in the southern suburbs has continued with Flinders University's 12-year sponsorship support of South Adelaide Football Club taken to an even greater level with the re-naming of the Panthers' home ground at Noarlunga as Flinders University Stadium. This agreement builds on the relationship between South Adelaide and Flinders University that also sees the Flinders logo emblazoned across the playing jumpers for both men's and women's football teams, and interaction between Flinders sports programs with South Adelaide footballers. In other sporting codes, Flinders University remained Adelaide United's naming rights sponsor on the players' jerseys for home games for the men's and women's teams played at Coopers Stadium in Hindmarsh.

Health2Go continues to grow

The Flinders Health2Go allied health centre at the University's Sturt campus expanded its community health services by commencing four new services in 2020 - Exercise Physiology, Nutrition, Diabetes and a Multi-Disciplinary service called Healthy for Life. This builds on its already successful optometry, physiotherapy, hearing and speech pathology services that are both affordable and high quality, while providing more than 350 placement training experiences for students and research opportunities using the newest technology. With almost 4100 consultations provided during 2020 – a number comparable to 2019 consultations, thanks to the expanded range of services, and despite significant limits imposed on physical Optometry and audiology testing due to COVID-19 restrictions. Importantly, the modification of many services to a telehealth format during COVID provided more than 150 patients with care that might otherwise have been missed.

Mentors connect with Arts students

Launching the Student to Alumni Mentoring Program (StAMP) for Creative Arts enabled final year Arts students to connect with Flinders alumni who have relevant Arts industry experience, to share their advice, knowledge and expertise. A diverse collection of 23 mentors participated in StAMP, including Flinders University Alumni Award winners Basia Bonkowski (executive producer at Screentime Australia), theatre director Geordie Brookman, cinematic editor Veronica Buhagiar, writer and illustrator Alan Tucker, and Julianne Pierce (Executive Officer of Arts Industry Council SA).

Nurses acknowledged with respect

To celebrate International Year of the Nurse and Midwife, Flinders University nursing and midwifery academics held a Candlelight Vigil to meet the dawn with one minute's silence in the Bedford Park Hub on International Nurses Day (12 May). It was designed to show support for colleagues around the world working at the coalface of COVID-19 treatment and patient care, while more than 770 nursing graduates from the class of 2020 were mailed a special Nursing-Midwifery pin to celebrate their achievement during the Year of the Nurse and Midwife.

Science viewed through the lens of young females

The Flinders University Cochlear Aurora Photo Contest – part of Flinders University's engagement with schools to promote STEM studies among local female high school students – attracted a record number of entries that creatively captured the topic "science is everywhere". As an initiative of Flinders University's STEM: Women Branching Out group, the five-year-old competition aims to inspire more girls to delve into the wonder of science and ultimately consider their futures working among its many disciplines. The 2020 contest included Year Seven students for the first time, as public, private and Independent schools were represented across wide economic demographics.



Cochlear Aurora Photo Contest Years 7-10 Category: People's Choice Award - Jade Whiting, Mitcham Girls High School

GOVERNANCE & RISK

Flinders University and its governing Council is established under the Flinders University Act 1966. The University is regulated by the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) and is registered as a self-accrediting institution. The University's governing Council exercises stewardship of the University's activities and governance framework.

The primary responsibilities of Council are:

The primary responsibilities of Council are:

- Appointing and monitoring the performance of the Vice-Chancellor as Chief Executive Officer;
- Approving the mission and strategic direction of the University, including its annual Budget and Business Plan;
- Overseeing and reviewing the management of the University and its performance;
- Establishing policy and procedural principles consistent with legal and community expectations;
- Approving and monitoring systems of control and accountability, including controlled entities;
- Overseeing and monitoring the assessment and management of risk, including commercial undertakings;
- Overseeing and monitoring the academic activities of the University; and
- Approving significant commercial activities of the University.

Council Members

The Council consists of the following members:

- the Chancellor *ex officio*;
- the Vice-Chancellor *ex officio*;
- the presiding member of the Academic Senate *ex officio* or if the presiding officer is the Vice-Chancellor, an academic staff member of the Academic Senate who is not a student of the University, elected by the Academic Senate;
- eight persons appointed by the Council on the recommendation of a selection committee (the term of office is 2 or 4 years determined on the recommendation of the selection committee)

- if the Council so determines, one person co-opted and appointed by the Council; (the term of office is 2 or 4 years determined by Council)
- one member of the academic staff elected by the academic staff (the term of office is 2 years)
- one member of the professional staff elected by the professional staff (the term of office is 2 years)
- two students of the University (not being persons in the full time employment of the University), one of whom must be a postgraduate student and one of whom must be an undergraduate student, appointed or elected in a manner determined by the Council (the term of office is 2 years).

Committees of the University Council

To assist with its responsibilities, Council has established Standing committees which contribute to the effective governance of the University.

The standing committees of Council are:

- Executive Committee
- Academic Senate
- Audit & Risk Committee
- Finance & Investment Committee
- Remuneration Committee

Each of the standing committees provide expert advice to Council in their key area of responsibility and is chaired by a member of Council, ensuring effective communication with, and accountability to, Council.

The Council refers matters to its standing committees in accordance with their terms of reference.

Committee terms are generally for 2 years with members being eligible for re-appointment at the end of their term.

Executive Committee

Composition

Chancellor *ex officio* (Chairperson); and Six (6) Chancellor-appointed members, as follows:

- Vice-Chancellor *ex officio*
- 2 x Deputy Chancellors *ex officio*
- Chair, Academic Senate *ex officio*
- 2 x external members of Council.

Key Responsibilities

The Executive Committee is responsible for advising and assisting the Council in the performance of its responsibilities, including governance requirements; composition, structure and monitoring of Council and its committees; the appointment of the Chancellor, Deputy Chancellors and Vice-Chancellor; succession planning; and advising the Council on the University's strategic plan, emerging risks and opportunities.

Academic Senate

Composition

Appointed members (13):

- Chairperson (a member of the academic staff appointed by the Vice-Chancellor)
- Twelve (12) senior academic staff, namely, two (2) from each College, with skills and experience appropriate to the Academic Senate's terms of reference, appointed by each Vice-President and Executive Dean giving due consideration to gender balance.

Ex officio members (14):

- Vice-Chancellor
- Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research)
- Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Students)
- Vice-President and Pro Vice-Chancellor (International)
- Six (6) x Vice-President and Executive Deans of College
- Pro Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous)
- Dean of Graduate Research
- Student President
- Education Officer, Student Council.

Key Responsibilities

Academic Senate oversees and monitors the academic activities of the University and ensures the academic quality and integrity of the University's academic operations.

Senate has four sub-committees to which it has delegated some of these responsibilities:

- Education Quality Committee
- Research Quality Committee
- Student Appeals Committee
- University Higher Degrees by Research Committee

Audit & Risk Committee

Composition

The Committee is appointed by the Council and comprises at least three members:

- The Chair will normally be selected from amongst the external membership of Council.
- All members will be persons external to the University.
- All members must have an understanding of the content of financial statements and the key financial issues facing the University. At least one member must be qualified and experienced in accounting or finance.
- The Chancellor will not be a member of the Committee.

Key Responsibilities

The Audit & Risk Committee assists Council to discharge its oversight and monitoring responsibilities by providing advice on financial reporting, compliance with legal and regulatory requirements, internal control structure, risk management procedures, and the internal and external audit functions.

Finance & Investment Committee

Composition

The Committee comprises the following members appointed by the Council:

- The Chair will be an external member of Council, other than the Chancellor, with financial and/or commercial expertise.
- Up to five persons external to the University with relevant expertise, subject to the resulting composition having an equal or greater number of Council members compared to other persons.
- Vice-Chancellor (*ex officio*).

Key Responsibilities

The Finance & Investment Committee advises Council on matters concerning the overall financial performance and management of the University, including matters having a significant financial impact, annual budget setting and performance, and monitoring of investments and resources.

Remuneration Committee

Composition	Key Responsibilities
The membership will comprise the members of the Executive Committee except that the Vice-Chancellor will not be a member of the Committee.	The Remuneration Committee assists Council to discharge its oversight and monitoring responsibilities in relation to the setting and annual review of remuneration and performance goals for the Vice-Chancellor and senior executive remuneration and succession planning.

Council Member Attendance – 2020	FA	C	AS	ARC	EC	FIC	RC					
*Mr Stephen Gerlach AM, <i>Chancellor (ex officio)</i>	1/03/10	7	7		9	9	2	2				
*Professor Colin Stirling, <i>Vice-Chancellor (ex-officio)</i>	1/01/15	7	7	5	4		9	9	6	6	2	2
*Professor John Roddick <i>Presiding member of Academic Senate (ex-officio)</i>	1/07/17	7	7	5	5		9	9			2	2
*Mr George Freney, <i>Appointed member of Council</i>	1/01/19	7	7		4	3						
*Mr Douglas Gautier AM, <i>Appointed member of Council</i>	19/04/12	7	6				9	9			2	2
*Ms Kathryn Gramp, <i>Appointed member of Council</i>	1/01/15	7	6		4	4						
*Mr Stephen Hains, <i>Appointed member of Council</i>	1/01/11	7	7		4	4	9	8			2	2
*Ms Elizabeth Perry AM, <i>Appointed member of Council</i>	8/08/13	7	7				9	9	6	6	2	2
*Mr John Hood, <i>Appointed member of Council</i>	9/03/17	7	7						6	6		
*Professor Brenda Wilson AM, <i>Appointed member of Council</i>	1/10/15	7	7				9	6			2	1
^*Ms Sharon Wilson, <i>Appointed member of Council</i>	23/08/19	7	6									
*Dr Amanda Muller <i>Academic Staff member elected by Academic Staff</i>	13/07/18	7	7									
Ms Natalie Hills <i>Professional Staff member elected by Professional Staff</i>	1/01/17	7	7									
*Mr Aidan Cornelius-Bell, <i>Elected PG student member</i>	1/01/20	7	7									
*Ms Natasha Kidd, <i>Elected UG student member</i>	1/01/20	7	7									

#Data for Council Members only

*Membership continuing

^Reflects attendance at meetings while the person was eligible to attend as a member

- Number of meetings held
- Number of meetings attended
- FA First appointed/elected
- C Council
- AS Academic Senate*
- ARC Audit & Risk Committee*
- EC Executive Committee*
- FIC Finance & Investment Committee*
- RC Remuneration Committee*

This table reflects attendance at formal meetings only.

#Data for Council Members only * Membership continuing ^ Reflects attendance at meetings while the person was eligible to attend as a member.

GOVERNANCE & RISK

Code of Best Practice

The University adheres to the Voluntary Code of Best Practice for the Governance of Australian Universities.

This Code seeks to provide support and guidance to university governing bodies and to university leadership more broadly. It outlines the key roles and responsibilities of governing bodies and provides a suite of recommendations and guidelines to support their effective functioning.

Risk Management

The University has a risk management framework which is supported by risk management and legislative compliance policies and regular reporting to Council and its standing Committees on enterprise and operational risk, including work health and safety. The approach to risk management is consistent with the Australian and New Zealand Standard (AS/NZS ISO 31000:2018).

The University maintains a rolling three-year Internal Audit Plan that is undertaken by the University's internal auditors and is developed with regard to the University's risk register.

The 2020 audit areas included Cybersecurity, Security and Quality requirements for Managing Defence Contracts and Course Accreditation. The University also maintains a corporate insurance program that is regularly reviewed with regard to the University's risk profile.

During 2020, senior executives and leaders were also provided with training on fraud, cyber-security, conflict of interest and other related issues.

Response to COVID-19 Pandemic

During an unprecedented year, the University's response to the COVID-19 pandemic was multifaceted with staff acting rapidly to implement health and wellbeing measures, move to online teaching and changing the way we deliver student support services, as well as creating innovative events such as the *Virtual Open Days* for prospective students and other members of the community to experience the world-class attributes of our University.

A COVID-19 Taskforce was established and led by the Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor to ensure that the University responded effectively to COVID across all operational areas to keep students and staff up to date with the evolving situation. COVID-safe plans were implemented to ensure appropriate physical distancing and related measures designed to ensure staff and students remained safe once they were able to return to the campuses.

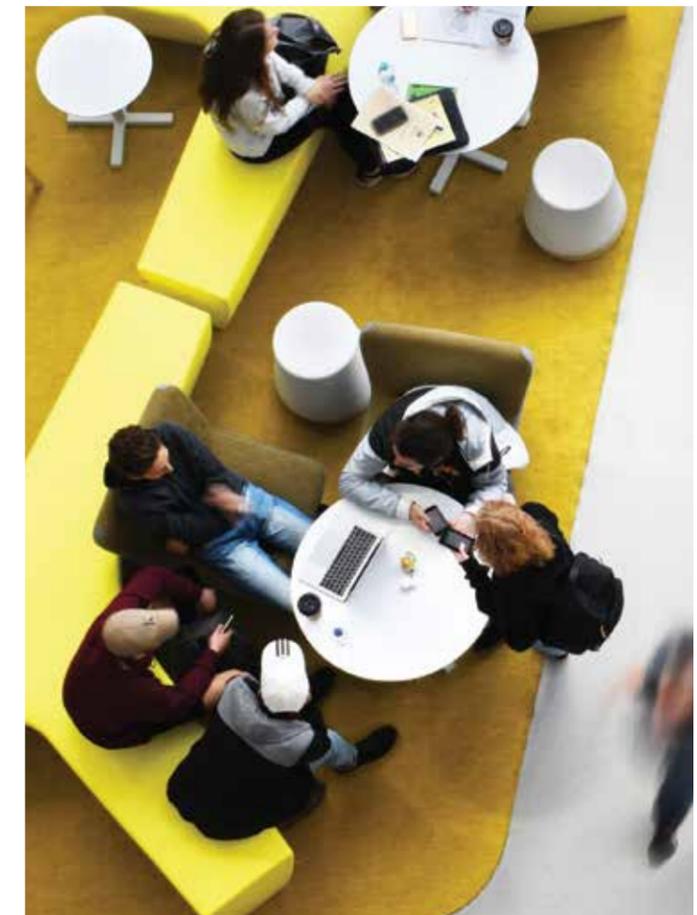
The University also established a \$12.5 million Student Support Package to support students facing financial hardship as a result of the pandemic.

Sustainability

The *Sustainability Plan to 2025* sets out the University's aspirations including achieving zero net emissions from electricity by 2021 and generating 30% of its energy needs from renewable sources.

In line with this Plan, Flinders entered into an agreement at the end of 2020 with global energy provider ENGIE for the supply of the University's electricity needs from 100% renewable sources. The supply complements our existing investments in solar carpark and rooftop systems that were already generating 20% of electricity needs at our main campus. Our investment in a range of renewable supply and storage projects has Flinders making rapid progress to become one of Australia's first carbon-positive universities.

In addition, Flinders' vision to decarbonise its transport fleet is well underway having installed 13 electric vehicle charging stations at its main campus and having 3 electric vehicles in its fleet with plans for more in the future.





Students at
Bedford Park campus

FINANCIALS



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To be read in consultation with the full financial statement.

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE STATEMENT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020

	CONSOLIDATED		UNIVERSITY	
	2020 \$'000	2019 \$'000	2020 \$'000	2019 \$'000
INCOME STATEMENT				
Total income from continuing operations	535,060	530,261	532,198	527,561
Total expenses from continuing operations	496,683	505,448	494,403	502,481
Operating result	38,377	24,813	37,795	25,080
Operating margin	7.2%	4.7%	7.1%	4.8%
BALANCE SHEET				
Net assets	821,980	776,540	820,977	776,193
Current ratio	1.3	1.1	1.2	1.1

2020 was a year of challenge for the University, not least in having to respond to the impact of COVID-19. With strong cash reserves and minimal debt the University had the financial capacity to react quickly and decisively to the uncertainty and disruption to operations.

This included transitioning modes of teaching online, the introduction of programmes to support student welfare and those financially disadvantaged, and expansion of the University's capacity to support both students and staff learning and working from home or offsite, along with strategies to curtail operational and capital expenditure. This has resulted in the University recording an operating surplus of \$37.8m compared to a surplus of \$25.1m in 2019.

Total revenue increased slightly to \$535.1m compared to \$530.3m in 2019 with an increase in Australian Government Funding for teaching and research offsetting the lower fees and charges from students and lower investment gains.

Total salary expenditure increased slightly from 2019 noting the University did not incur any staff separation costs linked to COVID-19 during the 2020 financial year. Significant savings in discretionary non salary expenditure have flowed directly through to the University's bottom line, being a major contributor to the final operating result.

The University remains cautious about the impact of the global COVID-19 pandemic on future earnings, particularly in the context of international travel restrictions and the effect this will have on future international student revenue.

The successful financial result for the year further strengthens the University's balance sheet with total Net Assets of \$821.0m (2019: \$776.2m) underpinning the capacity of the University to meet this challenge while at the same time continuing to progress planned strategic investments.

INCOME STATEMENT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020

	CONSOLIDATED		UNIVERSITY	
	2020 \$'000	2019 \$'000	2020 \$'000	2019 \$'000
INCOME FROM CONTINUING OPERATIONS				
Australian Government financial assistance				
Australian Government grants	235,972	234,405	235,972	234,405
HELP – Australian Government payments	111,984	106,559	111,984	106,559
State and local government financial assistance	7,088	7,236	7,088	7,236
HECS-HELP – Student Payments	6,234	7,506	6,234	7,506
Fees and charges	124,653	126,239	124,590	126,149
Investment revenue	11,154	9,843	11,150	9,741
Royalties, trademarks and licences	821	809	815	776
Consultancy and contracts	16,305	12,333	16,366	12,324
Other revenue	18,633	15,901	15,881	13,407
Gains on disposal of assets	140	220	140	220
Share of profit or loss on investments accounted for using the equity method	89	(37)	–	–
Other investment gains	1,987	9,247	1,978	9,238
Total income from continuing operations	535,060	530,261	532,198	527,561
EXPENSES FROM CONTINUING OPERATIONS				
Employee related expenses	324,300	321,749	322,508	319,276
Depreciation and amortisation	41,703	42,260	41,581	42,120
Repairs and maintenance	14,674	17,234	14,601	17,168
Borrowing costs	496	300	496	300
Impairment of assets	107	9	107	(192)
Other expenses	115,403	123,896	115,110	123,809
Total expenses from continuing operations	496,683	505,448	494,403	502,481
Net result from continuing operations	38,377	24,813	37,795	25,080
Net result attributable to				
University	38,377	24,713	37,795	25,080
Non-controlling interest	(74)	100	–	–
Total	38,303	24,813	37,795	25,080

COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

COMPREHENSIVE INCOME STATEMENT – FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020

	CONSOLIDATED		UNIVERSITY	
	2020 \$'000	2019 \$'000	2020 \$'000	2019 \$'000
Net result for the period	38,377	24,813	37,795	25,080
ITEMS THAT WILL BE RECLASSIFIED TO PROFIT OR LOSS:				
Gain/(loss) on financial assets designated at fair value through other comprehensive income	7,790	16,757	7,790	16,757
Total	7,790	16,757	7,790	16,757
ITEMS THAT WILL NOT BE RECLASSIFIED TO PROFIT OR LOSS:				
Gain / (loss) on revaluation of land, buildings, library and artworks	(801)	4,650	(801)	4,650
Total	(801)	4,650	(801)	4,650
Total other comprehensive income	6,989	21,407	6,989	21,407
Total comprehensive income	45,366	46,220	44,784	46,487
Total comprehensive income attributable to:				
University	45,440	46,120	44,784	46,487
Non-controlling interest	(74)	100	-	-
Total	45,366	46,220	44,784	46,487

Full audited financial statements are available online at flinders.edu.au

FINANCIAL POSITION

FINANCIAL POSITION STATEMENT – AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2020

	CONSOLIDATED		UNIVERSITY	
	2020 \$'000	2019 \$'000	2020 \$'000	2019 \$'000
ASSETS				
CURRENT ASSETS				
Cash and cash equivalents	124,913	65,366	123,271	64,248
Receivables	17,394	21,412	15,275	19,713
Contract Assets	2,487	1,857	2,487	1,857
Inventories	113	177	111	175
Other financial assets	-	20,367	-	20,367
Other non-financial assets	12,798	9,957	12,729	9,876
Total current assets	157,705	119,136	153,873	116,236
NON-CURRENT ASSETS				
Receivables	45,374	50,136	45,374	50,136
Investments accounted for using the equity method	646	557	-	-
Other financial assets	139,932	132,123	141,525	133,816
Property, plant and equipment	648,592	627,701	647,211	626,240
Investment properties	8,404	8,404	8,404	8,404
Intangible assets	43,945	41,865	43,867	41,746
Other non-financial assets	2,269	2,716	2,269	2,716
Total non-current assets	889,162	863,502	888,650	863,058
Total assets	1,046,867	982,638	1,042,523	979,294
LIABILITIES				
CURRENT LIABILITIES				
Trade and other payables	49,401	41,884	46,179	38,979
Borrowings	3,402	2,280	3,402	2,280
Provisions	26,374	24,002	26,006	23,615
Other liabilities	191	538	629	895
Contract liabilities	43,185	44,028	42,996	43,966
Total current liabilities	122,553	112,732	119,212	109,735
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES				
Trade and other payables	7,783	3,012	7,783	3,012
Borrowings	13,019	8,770	13,019	8,770
Provisions	71,880	74,068	71,880	74,068
Contract liabilities	9,652	7,516	9,652	7,516
Total non-current liabilities	102,334	93,366	102,334	93,366
Total liabilities	224,887	206,098	221,546	203,101
Net assets	821,980	776,540	820,977	776,193
EQUITY				
University interest				
Reserves	205,423	198,434	209,176	202,187
Retained earnings	616,109	577,732	611,801	574,006
University interest	821,532	776,166	820,977	776,193
Non-controlling interest	448	374	-	-
Total equity	821,980	776,540	820,977	776,193

CHANGES IN EQUITY

CHANGES IN EQUITY STATEMENT – FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020

	RESERVES \$'000	RETAINED EARNINGS \$'000	UNIVERSITY INTEREST \$'000	NON CONTROLLING INTEREST \$'000	TOTAL \$'000
CONSOLIDATED					
Balance as at 1 January 2019	177,027	579,941	756,968	474	757,442
Net result	–	24,813	24,813	(100)	24,713
Gain on revaluation of land, buildings, infrastructure, library and artwork	4,650	–	4,650	–	4,650
Gain/(loss) on equity instruments designated at fair value through other comprehensive income	16,757	–	16,757	–	16,757
Adjustment due to AASB15	–	(27,022)	(27,022)	–	(27,022)
Total comprehensive income	21,407	(2,209)	19,198	(100)	19,098
Recognition of non-controlling interest	–	–	–	–	–
Balance at 31 December 2019	198,434	577,732	776,166	374	776,540
Balance at 1 January 2020	198,434	577,732	776,166	374	776,540
Net Result	–	38,377	38,377	74	38,451
Gain on revaluation of land, buildings, infrastructure, library and artwork	(801)	–	(801)	–	(801)
Gain/(loss) on equity instruments designated at fair value through other comprehensive income	7,790	–	7,790	–	7,790
Total comprehensive income	6,989	38,377	45,366	74	45,440
Recognition of non-controlling interest	–	–	–	–	–
Balance at 31 December 2020	205,423	616,109	821,532	448	821,980
UNIVERSITY					
Balance as at 1 January 2019	180,780	575,948			756,728
Net result	–	25,080			25,080
Gain on revaluation of land, buildings, infrastructure, library and artwork	4,650	–			4,650
Gain/(loss) on equity instruments designated at fair value through other comprehensive income	16,757	–			16,757
Adjustment due to AASB15	–	(27,022)			(27,022)
Total comprehensive income	21,407	(1,942)			19,465
Recognition of non-controlling interest	–	–			–
Balance at 31 December 2019	202,187	574,006			776,193
Balance at 1 January 2020	202,187	574,006			776,193
Net Result	–	37,795			37,795
Gain on revaluation of land, buildings, infrastructure, library and artwork	(801)	–			(801)
Gain/(loss) on equity instruments designated at fair value through other comprehensive income	7,790	–			7,790
Total comprehensive income	6,989	37,795			44,784
Recognition of non-controlling interest	–	–			–
Balance at 31 December 2020	209,176	611,801			820,977

CASH FLOWS

CASH FLOWS STATEMENT – FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020

	CONSOLIDATED		UNIVERSITY	
	2020 \$'000	2019 \$'000	2020 \$'000	2019 \$'000
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES				
Australian Government Grants	347,956	338,768	347,956	338,768
OS-HELP (net)	4,925	(228)	4,925	(228)
Superannuation Supplementation	3,301	3,463	3,301	3,463
State Government Grants	6,920	7,904	6,920	7,904
Local Government Grants received	168	175	168	175
HECS-HELP - Student payments	6,234	7,506	6,234	7,506
Receipts from student fees and other customers	169,003	164,387	165,701	161,129
Dividends received	5,483	4,310	5,483	4,310
Interest received	1,327	3,123	1,327	3,123
Other investment income	2,677	2,307	2,677	2,307
GST recovered/paid	10,619	9,848	10,619	9,848
Payments to suppliers and employees (inclusive of GST)	(461,029)	(489,098)	(458,294)	(486,016)
Interest and other costs of finance	(496)	(300)	(496)	(300)
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	97,088	52,165	96,521	51,989
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES:				
Proceeds from sale of property, plant and equipment	498	235	498	135
Proceeds from sale of investment	22,426	34,301	22,426	34,301
Other investing outflows	(42)	98	(42)	98
Purchase of property, plant and equipment	(59,233)	(55,491)	(59,190)	(55,415)
Payments for financial assets	(149)	(2,706)	(149)	(2,631)
Loans to related parties	–	(750)	–	(750)
Repayments of loans by related parties	120	78	120	78
Net cash provided by/(used in) investing activities	(36,380)	(24,235)	(36,337)	(24,184)
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES:				
Repayment of lease liabilities	(1,161)	(2,020)	(1,161)	(2,020)
Net cash provided by/(used in) financing activities	(1,161)	(2,020)	(1,161)	(2,020)
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents	59,547	25,910	59,023	25,785
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year	65,366	39,456	64,248	38,463
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS AT END OF FINANCIAL YEAR	124,913	65,366	123,271	64,248
Financing arrangements				
Non-cash financing and investing activities				

Full audited financial statements are available online at flinders.edu.au

CHANCELLOR'S LETTER OF TRANSMISSION



Hon John Gardner
Minister for Education
Level 9, 31 Flinders Street
ADELAIDE SA 5000

Dear Minister

I have the honour to present to you the Annual Report and audited financial statements for the period 1 January 2020 to 31 December 2020 in compliance with the Flinders University Act 1966, Section 27, and in accordance with a resolution of the members of Council at its meeting on 20 May 2021.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephen Gerlach".

Stephen Gerlach AM
Chancellor



Flinders University
Bedford Park campus

