




Charles Sturt
University

A photograph of a man and a woman sitting on a wooden bench outdoors. The man is on the left, wearing a dark jacket and shorts, and the woman is on the right, wearing a dark top with a blue lanyard. They are both smiling and looking at each other. The background is a lush green garden with trees and bushes.

Asia Pacific Hub Community-Based Global Learning Collaborative

Hosted by Charles Sturt University



**The Community-Based
Global Learning
Collaborative**
Asia-Pacific Hub

Executive Summary

The Asia Pacific Hub of the Community-Based Global Learning Collaborative successfully launched in 2025 through a comprehensive four-part online series, directly advancing Charles Sturt's Graduate Learning Outcomes in Global Citizenship and Sustainable and Ethical Practice.

The initiative, sponsored by Charles Sturt University and aligned with our Education Vision Strategy 2030, has generated substantial regional engagement, situating Charles Sturt as a leader in ethical international education transformation.



Strategic alignment with Education Strategy Vision 2030

The Hub directly supports multiple signature themes from our Education Strategy Vision 2030:



Empower communities

"Educating for modern regional Australia"

The Hub addresses emerging regional issues while creating sustainable systems that respond to Asia Pacific opportunities and needs, with our regional outcomes generating global impact.



Inspire students

"Creating seamless pathways" and "We're for students"

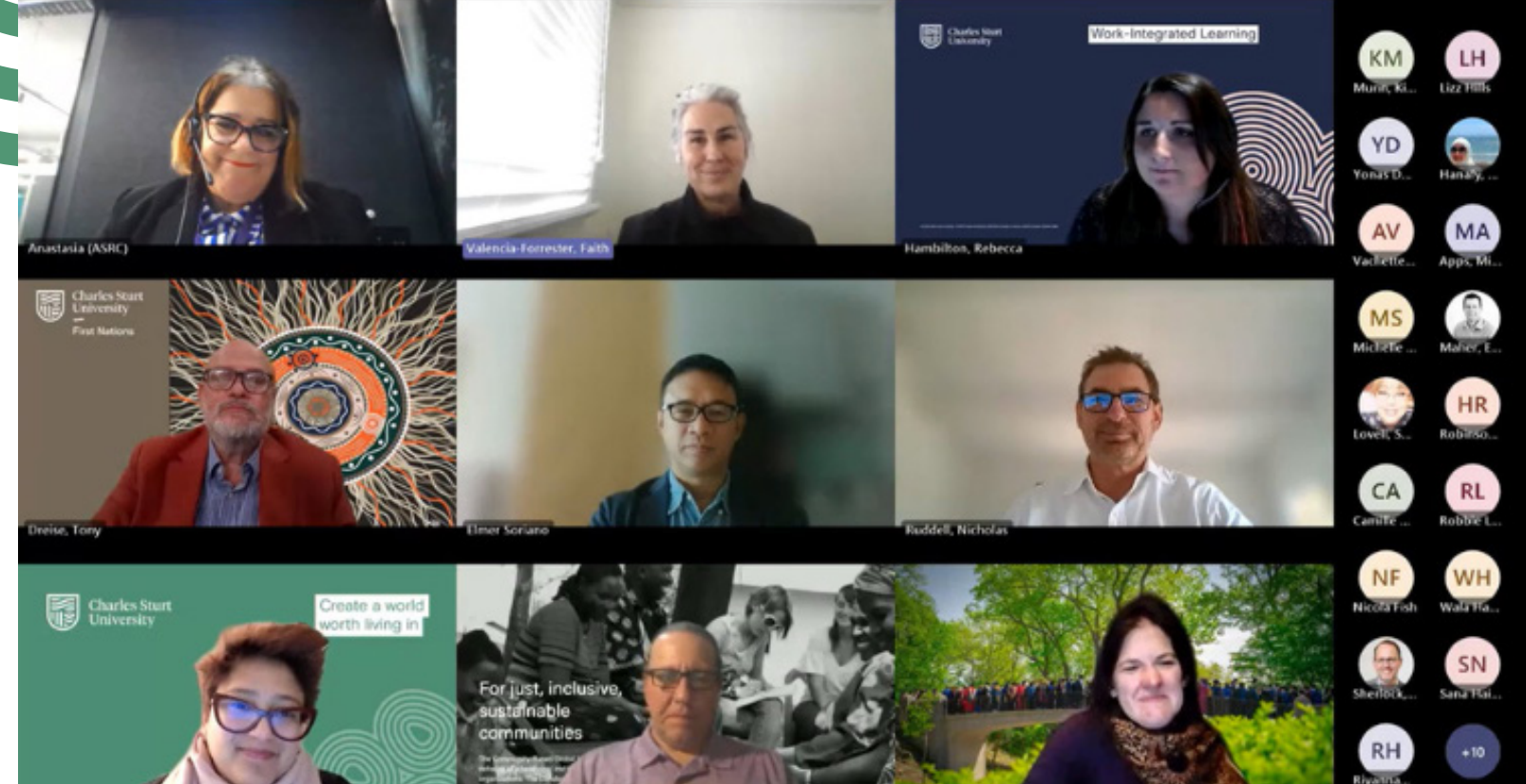
The Hub offers innovative approaches to lifelong learning that support diverse student backgrounds, ensuring inclusive education experiences that prepare students for meaningful global engagement.



Be exceptional

"Exceptional educators"

The initiative positions our educators as thought leaders drawing inspiration from First Nations ways of being, knowing and doing, while meeting students "where they are" in their learning journey.



Connecting our regions globally

The launch series exemplifies the Community-Based Global Learning Collaborative's approach to connecting regions globally – establishing the Asia Pacific Hub as a vital center that both contributes to and draws from international expertise, while ensuring that global learning initiatives are grounded in local contexts and Indigenous knowledge systems. This model creates pathways for cross-regional collaboration and knowledge exchange that strengthen community-based global learning practices worldwide.

Background and strategic rationale

Building on Dr Valencia-Forrester's long-standing relationship with the Community-Based Global Learning Collaborative since 2019, the Hub addresses a critical gap in North American-centric global learning approaches.

This initiative directly supports Charles Sturt's Graduate Learning Outcomes by developing students' capacity to "work effectively in a global world across social, cultural, economic, geo-political and environmental contexts" while ensuring "sustainable practice and ethical decision making."





Action Team founders



Professor Janelle Wheat

Pro-Vice Chancellor | Division of Learning and Teaching | Charles Sturt University

Janelle is an interdisciplinary research academic with experience in radiation therapy and nuclear medicine. She leads the Division of Learning and Teaching at Charles Sturt University, drawing on her metropolitan and regional university experience to develop innovative curricula and teaching strategies.



Dr. Faith Valencia-Forrester

Academic Lead, Work-Integrated Learning

Charles Sturt University

Faith combines her media experience and degrees in Arts, Law, and Business with her PhD in inclusive work-integrated learning to help students create social impact. She specialises in innovative projects that bring students, academics, and industry together for meaningful community change.



Dr. Nicholas Ruddell

Senior Lecturer in Indigenous Education

Charles Sturt University

Nick is a Senior Lecturer in Indigenous Education at Charles Sturt University, where his research applies Indigenous relational theory emphasising interconnectedness and collective knowledge sharing. He maintains connection to his Whakapapa through the Ngapuhi and Ngatiwai in Aotearoa New Zealand.



Rebecca Hambilton

Communications Officer
Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) Strategy Team | DLT

Charles Sturt University



First Nations perspectives



Professor Tony Dreise

Pro Vice-Chancellor of First Nations Engagement

Charles Sturt University

Professor Tony Dreise (pronounced 'drice') is Pro Vice-Chancellor of First Nations Engagement at Charles Sturt University and a proud member of the Guumilaroi and Euahlayi First Nations. With over 30 years in education, public administration, and Indigenous policy, he served as inaugural Professor of Indigenous Policy at Australian National University. He holds a PhD from ANU and previously chaired the Indigenous Literacy Foundation.



Uncle Lloyd Dolan

Academic Lead (First Nations Curriculum)

Charles Sturt University

Lloyd is a Wiradjuri man from Hay, NSW, with family ties to Narrandera through the Christians and Mathi Mathi connections with the Murray and Kirby families. He has previously served as a lecturer in Indigenous Studies at Charles Sturt University and formerly managed Indigenous Student Services there. A First Nations educator and former head teacher of Aboriginal Studies with TAFE NSW, Lloyd provides crucial Indigenous perspectives on decolonising versus indigenising educational approaches.

Launch Series Overview



Session 1: Foundations and Indigenous Epistemologies (Launch Session)

Theme: *Community sovereignty, decolonial praxis, and generative democracy*

This foundational session established the Hub's commitment to centering Indigenous epistemologies and community sovereignty, challenging traditional Western-dominated global education models and creating space for diverse ways of knowing that reflect Asia Pacific contexts and values.

Featured speakers



Sarah Stanlick, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor in the Department of Integrative and Global Studies

Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI)

Sarah Stanlick, Ph.D., is an Assistant Professor in Integrative and Global Studies and Director of the Great Problems Seminar at Worcester Polytechnic Institute. She previously founded Lehigh University's Center for Community Engagement and was a researcher at Harvard's Kennedy School, assisting UN Ambassador Samantha Power. She specialises in transformative learning, global project-based education, and social science research methods.



Dr. Elmer Soriano

Managing Director, Asian School of Governance

University of the Philippines

Dr. Elmer Soriano operates at the intersection of leadership, innovation, and climate action, reimagining universities' role in addressing climate challenges. With over 25 years in development work across Asia, North America, and Africa, he coaches mayors on governance and co-convenes the Climate Action Labs, a global network activating 10,000 university-hosted climate solution hubs. He holds degrees from Harvard's Kennedy School and is a licensed physician.



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Registered attendees



Outcomes

Generated immediate regional interest with multiple follow-up enquiries and established a foundational understanding of ethical, community-based approaches to global learning.



Dr. Sharon Welch

Collaborative Advisory Committee

Author

Dr. Sharon Welch served as Provost at Meadville Lombard Theological School and held faculty positions at University of Missouri-Columbia and Harvard Divinity School. She earned her Ph.D. from Vanderbilt, which named her alumna of the year in 2019. She co-founded the Climate Action Lab and authored six books, including "After the Protests Are Heard: Enacting Civic Engagement and Social Transformation" (NYU Press, 2019).



Anastasia Magriplis

Director of Services and Advocacy Operations

Asylum Seeker Resource Centre

Anastasia serves as Director of Services and Advocacy Operations at Asylum Seeker Resource Centre (ASRC), joining in 2019. With over 30 years in the nonprofit sector, she specialises in workforce management and community mobilisation to create systemic change. Her previous role as Head of Volunteering for UnitingCare Queensland managed 9,000 volunteers across 400 programs, contributing 1.3 million hours annually.



Session 2: Fair Trade Learning Deep Dive (29 July)

Theme: *Moving beyond extractive models to centre community voice, reciprocity, and genuine partnership*

This session demonstrated how Fair Trade Learning transforms international education by moving beyond institutional benefit to genuine community partnership, with powerful examples including life-saving reciprocal relationships during community crises and the importance of communities saying “no” as an indicator of healthy, trust-based partnerships.

Featured speakers



Sam Brandauer

Associate Provost and Executive Director of the Center for Global Study and Engagement

Dickinson College

Samantha is Associate Provost and Executive Director of the Center for Global Study and Engagement at Dickinson College. As a career-long international educator, she focuses on building inclusive, equitable international education programs. Her research examines the study abroad gender gap, intercultural competencies, and equitable partnerships. She serves on Forum on Education Abroad and PACIE boards and holds an M.A. in International Communication from American University.



Dr. Preeti Nair

Director of the Center for International Relations and Research

Parul University

Dr. Preeti Nair is Director of the Center for International Relations and Research at Parul University, leading internationalisation efforts for over 50,000 students. She holds a Post-Doctorate in National Education Policy and has built partnerships with universities across 25+ countries, developing 48+ international programs. A three-time National Award winner for Internationalisation, she coordinated mobility for 1,000+ outbound and 500+ inbound participants.



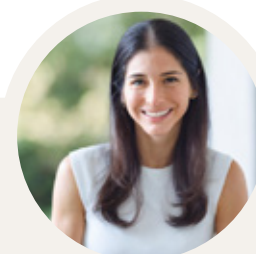
45

Registered attendees



Outcomes

Achieved exceptional engagement with no drop-off rate. The session embodied Fair Trade Learning principles through authentic dialogue and multiple perspectives.



Carolina Bolaños Palmieri

Director of Programs

Child Family Health International

Carolina is the Director of Programs at Child Family Health International (CFHI), a United Nations-recognised nonprofit specialising in ethical global health experiential education. In this role, she oversees the development of over 25 virtual and place-based programs in collaboration with CFHI's 100+ academic partners and teams across 10 countries. Carolina also serves as the Associate Director for the InterAmerican Center for Global Health in Costa Rica, where she designs and facilitates interdisciplinary curricula that promote ethical, community-centered learning.



Bibi Al-Ebrahim

Director of Experiences

AllPeopleBeHappy

Bibi Al-Ebrahim is Director of Experiences with AllPeopleBeHappy (formerly Amizade), facilitating community-based learning programs across Jamaica, Puerto Rico, the Navajo Nation, Ecuador, Brazil, and West Virginia. She serves as logistics manager, fair trade learning promoter, and grassroots community development practitioner. Based in La Bolivareense, Ecuador, Bibi bridges educational partnerships with authentic community engagement throughout the organisation's global network.



Session 3: Interactive Toolkit Workshop (12 August)

Theme: Practical implementation of community-based global learning frameworks

This session provided practical tools for institutional transformation, moving from individual “coalitions of the willing” to “structurally unavoidable” approaches that embed ethical global learning frameworks into whole-of-degree design, with emphasis on co-creation that transforms institutions from within.

Featured speakers



Eric Hartman

Director of the Executive Doctorate
in Higher Education Management and
Senior Fellow

**University of Pennsylvania Graduate
School of Education**

Eric Hartman co-founded the
Community-Based Global Learning
Collaborative and recently served as
Executive Director of Haverford College’s
Center for Peace and Global Citizenship. With a
PhD in International Development from
University of Pittsburgh, he’s lead author of
“Community-Based Global Learning: The Theory
and Practice of Ethical Engagement” (2018). He
has worked across seven countries advancing
ethical, decolonial global learning practices.



Richard Kiely

Associate Vice Provost for Engagement
and Land Grant Affairs

Cornell University

Richard Kiely co-founded the
Community-Based Global Learning
Collaborative and serves as Associate Vice
Provost for Engagement and Land Grant
Affairs at Cornell University, where he also
directs Academic Initiatives in the Einhorn
Center for Community Engagement. A 2005
John Glenn Scholar in Service-Learning, he
co-authored “Community-Based Global
Learning: The Theory and Practice of Ethical
Engagement” (2018) and earned his Ph.D. from
Cornell.



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Registered attendees



Outcomes

Demonstrated practical approaches to moving from individual
course-based initiatives to systematic institutional transformation,
generating momentum for 10 new toolkit pages by year’s end.



Professor Caroline Rueckert

Dean, Student Experience and
Employability

Griffith University

Professor Caroline Rueckert is Dean of Student
Experience and Employability at Griffith
University, leading institution-wide strategies
for equity, inclusion, and career readiness. With
over 10 years of senior leadership in higher
education, including roles at QUT and
University of British Columbia, she has led
large-scale initiatives focused on student
retention, engagement, and employability
through partnership-driven, socially responsive
education approaches.



Dr. Dino Willox

Director, Student Enrichment & Success

University of Queensland

Dr. Dino Willox is Director of Student
Enrichment & Success at UQ and a Principal
Fellow of AdvanceHE. They develop strategic
frameworks and services to support student
success across professional, academic, and
co-curricular spaces. Dino specialises in
helping students develop self-reflective
practice and articulate their lived experiences
through strengths-based approaches that
empower students to achieve their full potential.

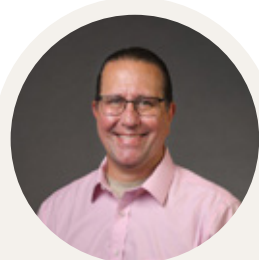


Session 4: Global Engagement Survey (26 August)

Theme: Research-backed alternatives to university rankings focused on student outcomes and community engagement

This closing session challenged university rankings by examining community-based assessment tools and whether meaningful global engagement requires travel abroad when local Indigenous partnerships provide authentic global citizenship opportunities.

Featured speakers

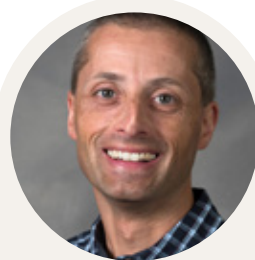


Mike Bishop Ph.D.

Managing Director

Community-Based Global Learning Collaborative

Mike Bishop, Ph.D., is an educator with 25 years of experience facilitating workshops focused on human development, human rights, and human dignity. He spent over 20 years in higher education creating campus-community partnerships and designing social action leadership programs. Based outside Ithaca, NY, Mike uses storytelling to nurture anti-racist allies and organises with White neighbors against White supremacy through activism, research, and teaching.



Mathew H. Gendle, Ph.D.

Director of Project Pericles and
Professor of Psychology

Elon University

Mathew H. Gendle is Director of Project Pericles and Professor of Psychology at Elon University. His research focuses on ethics in higher education-community partnerships in international settings, plus neuropharmacology and consciousness studies. Dr. Gendle has cultivated a multi-year partnership between Elon University and Sarvodaya, Sri Lanka's largest NGO, and earned his PhD in biopsychology from Cornell University.



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Registered attendees



Outcomes

Provided critical analysis of assessment frameworks while centering Indigenous perspectives on local community engagement as a meaningful global experience.



Amy Somchanhmavong

Associate Director, Global Community
Engaged Learning Programs

Cornell University

Amy works at Cornell's David M. Einhorn Center for Community Engagement, where she develops programs connecting students with local and international communities. She co-developed the Global Citizenship and Sustainability course with partners in Malaysia and co-founded the Public Service Scholars program. A co-founder of the Ithaca Asian American Association and Dragon Boat Club, Amy holds degrees from SUNY Binghamton and Cornell, with publications on community-based research and Indigenous collaboration.



Dr Julie Ficarra

Senior Lecturer, Brooks School of
Public Policy

Cornell University

Dr. Julie Ficarra is a Senior Lecturer at Cornell University's Brooks School of Public Policy, studying the politics and ethics of cross-border movement. Her research examines how higher education, forced displacement, and tourism policies shape power and equity. She leads exchange programs using collaborative online international learning and has conducted field research across five countries. She holds a Ph.D. from Syracuse and Ed.M from Harvard.

Direct alignment with Graduate Learning Outcomes

Global citizenship

The Hub directly develops students' capacity to work across social, cultural, economic, geopolitical and environmental contexts by:

- Centering diverse knowledge systems and Indigenous ways of knowing
- Providing frameworks for ethical international partnerships
- Emphasising reciprocity and genuine community collaboration
- Challenging traditional extractive models of global engagement

Sustainable and ethical practice

The initiative advances ethical decision-making by:

- Balancing social, cultural, economic, and environmental factors in global learning
- Prioritising community voice and sovereignty in partnership decisions
- Developing assessment tools that measure community benefit, not just student outcomes
- Promoting indigenising rather than merely decolonising approaches to education

Key outcomes and impact

- ✓ **Regional network development:** Successfully established the Asia Pacific Action Team with strong engagement across the region and multiple partnership enquiries.
- ✓ **Knowledge contribution:** Committed to creating 10 new toolkit pages by year's end, with momentum building among regional colleagues to contribute Asia Pacific perspectives to global resources.
- ✓ **Institutional leadership:** Charles Sturt now recognised as the regional hub host, enhancing our profile in ethical international education while advancing our Education Strategy priorities of being exceptional educators who empower communities.
- ✓ **Practical implementation:** Sessions provided immediately implementable frameworks for transforming traditional study abroad models toward community-centered approaches that align with our Graduate Learning Outcomes.
- ✓ **Indigenous leadership integration:** Professor Dreise and Uncle Lloyd Dolan's contributions provided essential grounding in First Nations perspectives, directly supporting our Education Strategy commitment to integrating Indigenous Australian studies and promoting culturally safe educational environments.

Strategic value and future positioning

The Hub positions Charles Sturt University at the forefront of a global transformation in international education while directly advancing our Education Vision Strategy 2030. By hosting this regional hub, we demonstrate leadership in:



Empowering communities

Leading identification of regional issues and creating sustainable educational systems that respond to Asia Pacific needs



Inspiring students

Providing inclusive, adaptive learning experiences that prepare students for meaningful global citizenship



Being exceptional

Positioning our educators as thought leaders in ethical global engagement while meeting students where they are in their learning journey

Next steps and sustainability

1. **Continued hub development:** Expand the Asia Pacific Action Team and regional network
2. **Resource creation:** Deliver on commitment to create 10 new toolkit pages incorporating Asia Pacific perspectives
3. **Institutional integration:** Align Hub activities with ongoing Education Strategy implementation
4. **Community partnership:** Develop deeper relationships with regional and Indigenous communities and Asia Pacific education partners
5. **Assessment innovation:** Explore the implementation of Global Engagement Survey approaches adapted for regional contexts

The Asia Pacific Hub launch represents a successful strategic initiative that advances Charles Sturt's Education Vision Strategy 2030 while directly supporting our Graduate Learning Outcomes in Global Citizenship and Sustainable and Ethical Practice. The overwhelming positive response and ongoing engagement demonstrate both the need for this work and Charles Sturt's capacity to lead transformational change in international education across our region.



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