



Charles Sturt
University

First Nations

First Nations Strategy 2023-2025

First Nations outcomes are everyone's business



LANI



About the artwork

This artwork 'Weaving Together' represents the University's commitment to ensuring that First Nations priorities are woven throughout our strategies, responsibilities and performance measures. Weaving is an important ongoing cultural practice shared across generations, and in the painting it represents First Nations ways of knowing, being and doing. The three key symbols represent First Nations education, engagement and research. The lines coming out of the centre piece represent the many different people, projects and activities that are woven together as First Nations education, engagement and research is everyone's business at Charles Sturt. There are many pieces yet to be woven, representing the work and commitments outlined in the strategy.

The six concentric rings within the centre piece represent the six strategic outcomes, all interrelated. Together they make up the overall strategy holistically.

About the artist

Lani is a proud Aboriginal woman from the Wiradjuri people of the three-river tribe. Her family originates from Mudgee but she grew up all over Australia. Lani has been creating Aboriginal art since 2013. One of her biggest goals and inspirations with creating Aboriginal art is to develop a better connection to her culture and to continue to work towards reconciliation; bringing people and communities together to learn about the amazing culture we have here in Australia.

Acknowledgement of Country

We respectfully acknowledge the traditional owners and custodians of the lands on which we live and work together. Charles Sturt University and its staff pay respect to Elders within First Nations communities and acknowledge the continuity of cultures, languages, leadership and knowledge systems.

We acknowledge First Nations peoples' continuous connection to Country, recognising the unique, diverse identities and cultures of peoples in our communities, regions and nation. As such, we value the collaboration to strongly position First Nations peoples in our university, through languages, leadership, cultures, knowledges, research and ceremonies.

Vice-Chancellor's foreword

I warmly acknowledge that many people have been part of Charles Sturt University's long history of achieving positive outcomes for and alongside First Nations peoples and communities with which we work. At the heart of what we do is an unrelenting desire to improve recognition of and equality for First Nations peoples. Through our First Nations Strategy, we will build on these strong foundations, and achieve even more together.

We have a strong commitment to learn from and work with Australia's First Nations staff, students and stakeholders. Our First Nations Strategy reflects this approach, and the focus areas outlined are a result of extensive collaboration with our First Nations networks and our university community. This strategy has been developed to underpin the University's purpose, Yindyamarra Winhanganha, ensuring our commitments are genuine and meaningful.

Our First Nations Strategy is everyone's business, with commitments and accountabilities across education, engagement and research. It provides a pathway to work respectfully, learn and share, and be a leader of First Nations advocacy, driving positive and meaningful change.

We are determined to create a culture that delivers a genuine voice for First Nations peoples at Charles Sturt, a place that respects and seeks out deep knowledge and connection to air, land, and water. This collaboration will help us create a learning environment that fosters success and cultural safety.

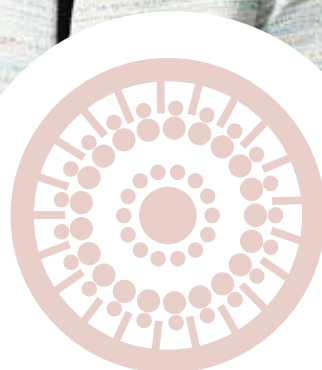
Now is the time to build on the progress we have made, to drive shared ownership and lasting change. I know together, through the power of connection and collaboration, we will achieve a brighter tomorrow.



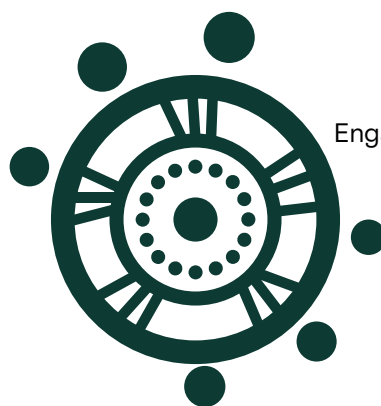
Professor Renée Leon PSM
Vice-Chancellor and President



Education



Engagement



Research



Yindyamarra Winhanganha

Our university purpose

We are privileged to have as our purpose the Wiradjuri phrase Yindyamarra Winhanganha. This phrase means the wisdom of respectfully knowing how to live well in a world worth living in. Together, we will strive to bring this purpose to life through our everyday actions and work. It should underpin everything we do – our commitment to our students, communities and stakeholders, and our interactions with each other. We are still learning about Yindyamarra Winhanganha, and as a university and as individuals we will continually learn, grow and adopt this meaningful and inspiring concept. This applies to being respectful of current and past knowledges and sharing new knowledges for future generations. When we connect our attributes with those of our peers, amazing things start to happen. We start to make a real difference to the lives of many – the colleagues we work with, the students who come to our university to explore their ideas and everyone who works with us to drive innovation and seek a better future.

Our vision

Australia's leading regional university, advancing the careers of our students, inspiring research excellence and driving regional outcomes with global impact.

We are proud of our history in the regions and work together with our students, industry partners, government, and communities for the public good.

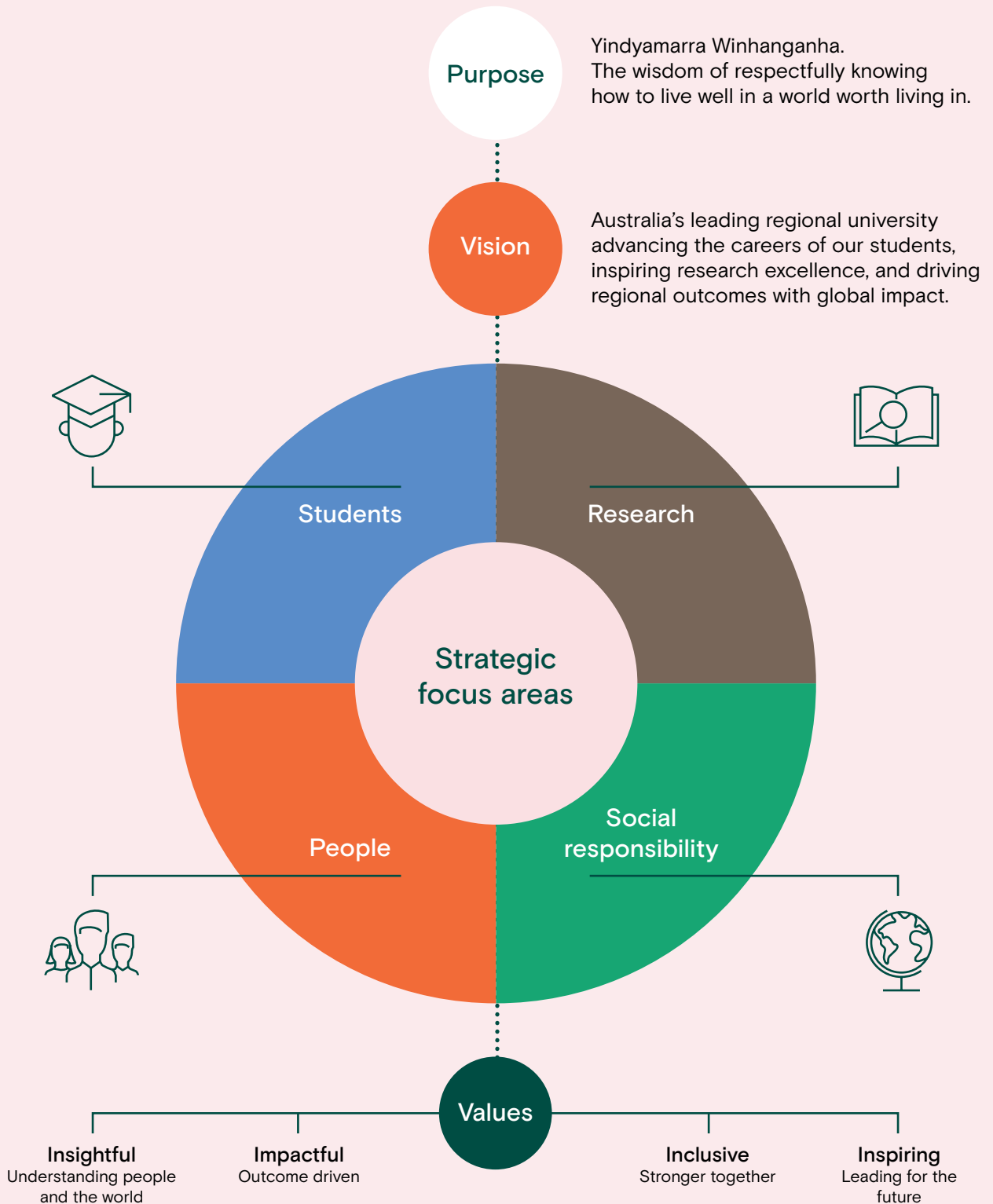
We are a leader in education for graduate outcomes and employment, world-class campuses, and online delivery.

We are a leader in applied research outcomes and will grow our key focus areas through strategic partnering and investment.

We are a leader in supporting student pathways for equity and diversity and will engage First Nations Peoples in our education and research programs.



Our strategic direction



First Nations Strategy, 2023–2025

The Charles Sturt University First Nations Strategy, 2023–2025 has been co-created to advance a suite of agreed initiatives aligned to six strategic outcomes over the next three years.

Each identified initiative will be assigned a strategy lead from the appropriate portfolio area and will be embedded in the respective portfolio operational plan.

As with other strategic plans, this strategy will be reviewed and refined every 12 months to ensure ongoing relevance and reflect changing priorities over time.

The following pages describe the agreed initiatives in each of the six strategic outcomes.



2.

Create a culturally safe university environment and implement measures to ensure continuous improvement

1.

Increase First Nations people's success in higher education as students, graduates, researchers, and staff

3.

Commit to appropriate and diverse involvement of First Nations people in decision making



6.

Integrate Indigenous Australian studies and content into all courses

4.

Promote university-wide understanding and engagement with First Nations ways of knowing, being and doing

5.

Develop sustainable frameworks for First Nations research, engagement, and ethical conduct

1. Increase First Nations people's success in higher education as students, graduates, researchers, and staff

We are committed to providing meaningful opportunities in higher education to First Nations peoples in ways that support self-determination and the achievement of ambitions and goals.



To achieve this commitment, we will:

Implement a suite of First Nations Pathways activities to engage with future students, with a focus on schools, vocational education and training (VET), and mature aged people through community festivals, direct entry, enabling and transition programs.

Establish a suite of holistic end-to-end First Nations Pathways initiatives to increase participation of First Nations students in undergraduate, post-graduate, and higher degrees by research (HDR) with supported transition into academic and other employment opportunities in fields that include health, agriculture, water, environment, information technology and cybersecurity.

Improve cultural safety, retention, and completion for current students through First Nations Student Connect and other programs.

Determine institutional factors impacting retention and completion rates of First Nations students and implement targeted strategies to increase success rates.

Establish an integrated approach to the administration and promotion of targeted First Nations scholarships and a First Nations Futures Fund to support student success, research, and other related initiatives.

Establish and support the First Nations Alumni Connect and First Nations Research Connect networks by hosting networking opportunities, professional development, and postgraduate and HDR entry programs.

Implement a comprehensive First Nations Employment Strategy.

2. Create a culturally safe university environment and implement measures to ensure continuous improvement

We are committed to providing a university community that is safe in every way for all First Nations peoples. We understand that a university community that is culturally safe requires university-level strategies to create systemic change.



To achieve this commitment, we will:

Develop a Cultural Safety framework co-designed with First Nations staff and students, that is contextually relevant to Charles Sturt University, including the development of a cultural safety risk register.

Benchmark and monitor cultural safety through an annual survey of First Nations students and staff, an identified student and employee cultural safety measure, and a cultural risk register.

Develop and implement an anti-racism strategy which includes monitoring and improving university responses to reports regarding cultural safety and experiences of racism and racial discrimination.

Develop a professional development program that will provide training to all staff on cultural safety and to address impacts of dominant culture on First Nations peoples and all forms of racism.

Investigate ways to appropriately acknowledge the cultural load of First Nations staff and students with equitable adjustments in relevant HR policies and practices.

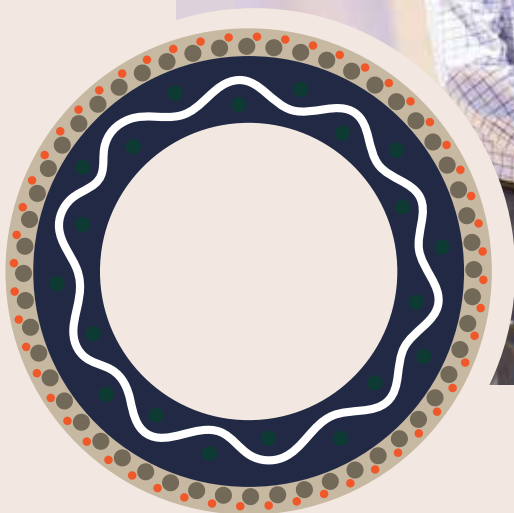
Update and implement the Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country policy, including the development of associated support resources.

Ensure ongoing consideration of First Nations cultural representation in the built and physical environments of the University, including cultural signage, with First Nations engagement in the naming of buildings, internal roads, and walkways.

Ensure ongoing consideration of First Nations cultural representation in online and digital environments, including websites, social media channels, student communications, the student portal and learning management platforms.

3. Commit to appropriate and diverse involvement of First Nations people in decision making

We are committed to ensuring that First Nations peoples have a genuine voice in key decisions affecting them. Our aim is to ensure that input of First Nations peoples across the spectrum of staff, students, and community representatives is included in relevant decision-making.



To achieve this commitment, we will:

Implement a framework to guide the inclusion of First Nations peoples in decision-making, ensuring respect and reciprocity and capability development to assist First Nations people to actively participate in a range of decision-making processes.

Promote and report on representation of First Nations staff and students at key decision-making groups.

Develop and implement culturally responsive principles and terms of reference for all committees dealing with First Nations matters.

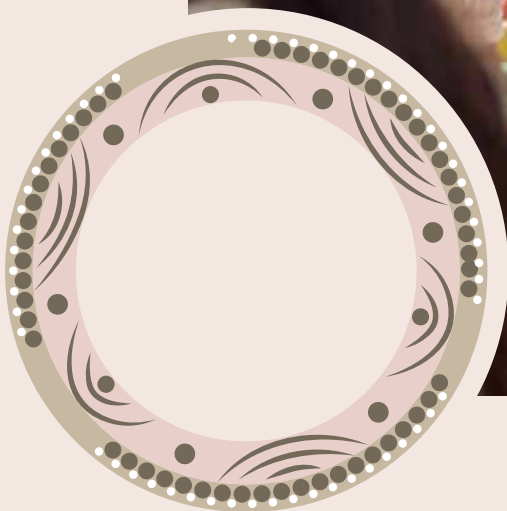
Promote First Nations representation with all Regional Consultative Committees in the Charles Sturt University footprint.

Seek to formalise partnership arrangements with key First Nations stakeholders, aligned to Charles Sturt strategic priorities.

Promote First Nations involvement and content in our research work and research bids.

4. Promote university-wide understanding and engagement with First Nations ways of knowing, being and doing

We recognise and respect the deep knowledge and connection to air, land, and water that First Nations people have. We will strive to deepen our understanding and learn from this wisdom. We understand that recognition and respect require action.



To achieve this commitment, we will:

Develop a First Nations ways of knowing, being and doing framework, co-designed with First Nations staff and students.

Develop overall principles relevant to University-wide contexts and principles customised to respond to local cultural protocols of First Nations Communities in our campus locations, in consultation and collaboration with key stakeholders.

Develop and endorse a suite of capability development options for staff that include self-serve material, local immersion opportunities, training and workshops designed by role type, including mandatory online training.

Provide avenues for staff to seek advice on First Nations matters, including a platform to ask questions that are responded to within agreed timeframes.

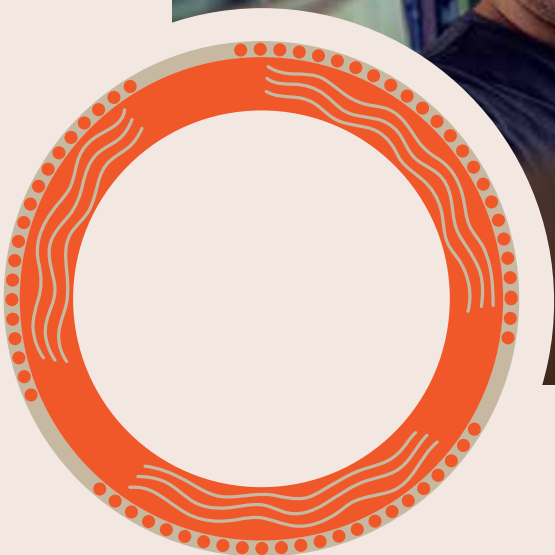
Advocate for First Nations matters of interest through our engagement with external partners and stakeholders.

Develop and implement processes to report and address barriers to engaging with First Nations ways of knowing, being and doing.

Invest in capability development that includes First Nations approaches to problem solving, collaboration, leadership, and business relationships.

5. Develop sustainable frameworks for First Nations research, engagement, and ethical conduct

We are committed to implementing sustainable frameworks for research, engagement, and ethical conduct that will promote lasting, positive change.



To achieve this commitment, we will:

Develop a First Nations engagement framework with clear principles for engaging with students, communities, external stakeholders, and staff, including appropriate remuneration for relevant cultural services.

Develop and implement a First Nations Research Strategy, including a commitment to the promotion of Indigenous-led research.

Develop and implement an Indigenous Intellectual and Cultural Property policy to ensure protection of the rights of First Nations peoples to ownership of traditional knowledges, cultural heritage, and intellectual resources.

Establish a consistent endorsement process to ensure inclusion of cultural knowledge, imagery, artworks, languages, and cultural practices in areas across the University is contextually relevant, and aligned to policy, permissions, and protocols.

Design and deliver training for researchers, research supervisors, HDR students, and professional staff to increase knowledge of Indigenist and Indigenous research methodologies, culturally responsive supervision, and appropriate recruitment and selection strategies for First Nations HDR students.

Form partnerships to contribute to the growth of the First Nations community-controlled sector, seeking to leverage high quality services to meet the needs of First Nations people across our campus footprint.

Develop an Indigenous Procurement policy to promote First Nations business and economic development which include annual targets for procurement of First Nations businesses as suppliers.

6. Integrate Indigenous Australian studies and content into all courses

We are committed to integrating Indigenous Australian studies and content in all courses to prepare culturally responsive graduates who understand their professional responsibility for addressing systemic barriers to social justice for First Nations peoples. We aim to ensure all students and staff engage with reflexive and culturally responsive Indigenous Australian studies.



To achieve this commitment, we will:

Integrate Indigenous Australian studies and content into post-graduate coursework programs.

Recruit, support, and train First Nations academics to contribute to the delivery of Indigenous Australian studies.

Develop and implement formal professional development for curriculum design and teaching in Indigenous Australian studies.

Recruit and support First Nations academic staff to work with academics, First Nations staff and students to co-design culturally responsive teaching and learning strategies for First Nations students.

Investigate global partnership opportunities to broaden First Nations perspectives in subjects and course content.

Support First Nations professional and academic staff to engage in international development opportunities and research experiences to foster a collaborative global network of First Nations peoples.



Charles Sturt
University



First Nations

To keep up to date with the latest strategy information, please visit our website

→ staff.csu.edu.au/universitystrategy-2030

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