



Charles Sturt
University

A photograph of an outdoor evening event. A woman in a patterned jacket is speaking at a white podium on a small stage. A large crowd of people is gathered around, some seated at tables. The scene is illuminated by string lights and a building in the background. The sky is a mix of blue and orange from the setting sun.

Government Relations
and External Engagement
Annual Report 2023



Acknowledgement of Country

We respectfully acknowledge the traditional owners and custodians of the lands and waters 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.

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Front cover: Founder of Farmers for Climate Action and Charles Sturt University alumnus, Dr Anika Molesworth speaking at the Gulbali Stargazing Dinner, as part of the 2023 Digital Agrifood Summit.

This image: Wiradjuri Elder and Charles Sturt graduate Uncle Pat Connolly.

Welcome

Welcome to a snapshot of 2023 from Government Relations and External Engagement

The year 2023 has been an exciting period for our portfolio, marked by the official amalgamation of the Government Relations and External Engagement functions. This combination has revealed natural synergies between the two and a shared commitment to achieving common objectives. The team has dedicated substantial effort to implementing the 2030 University Strategy while advancing our role as an anchor institution within our regional communities.

The Directors of External Engagement entered the year with a steadfast focus on advancing the interests of the regions and forging connections that build enduring and mutually beneficial partnerships. In a remarkable accomplishment, our team has successfully organised more than 1,000 engagement events across our expansive footprint. These engagements span a wide spectrum, including large conferences, industry forums, VIP visits, openings, expert discussions, community and cultural gatherings, and importantly, initiatives focused on engaging both students and staff.

In March 2023, we were pleased to welcome David Bardos to our team as the Director of External Engagement responsible for the Riverina and Murray region. David continues to add to his extensive knowledge of the region, and since starting has placed a strong emphasis on establishing connections and gaining a deep understanding of the university's internal dynamics.

Our Community Relations Officers remain the cornerstone of our team, consistently rolling up their sleeves to organise first-class events and serving as indispensable support to our Directors of External Engagement.

Sam Beresford
Head of Government Relations
and Regional Engagement

The year also saw the university sector undergoing a strategic review by the Federal Government as part of the Universities Accord process. The Accord has been a substantial and comprehensive effort, with our Public Policy Specialist, Dr Robert O'Connor, developing three extensive submissions that underscore the challenges of providing education in regional, rural, and remote areas. Excitingly, through effective advocacy and collaboration with our peers in the Regional University Network and Universities Australia, the government has shown a keen understanding of these challenges and the significance of regional education. There's a clear commitment to bridging the educational gap and enhancing outcomes for our communities.

A special thank you must be given to Lisa Stout for her support to us all, and in particular, myself. Lisa is an example of what makes Charles Sturt great – in the outstanding people we have who are dedicated to their jobs and outcomes for the community. In 2024, Lisa will continue in the role as Government and Community Coordinator and be the glue that binds the team together.

There has not been a more exciting time to be in regional Australia. The Government Relations and External Engagement teams are all committed to the advancement of the regions and, importantly, ensuring that Charles Sturt continues to be an exemplary organisation for our regions that builds longstanding outcomes to ensure we enrich our already flourishing communities.

Thank you to my team, and we look forward to an exciting 2024 as we strive to embrace opportunities to engage with our external stakeholders and the communities that support us.



Who we engage with



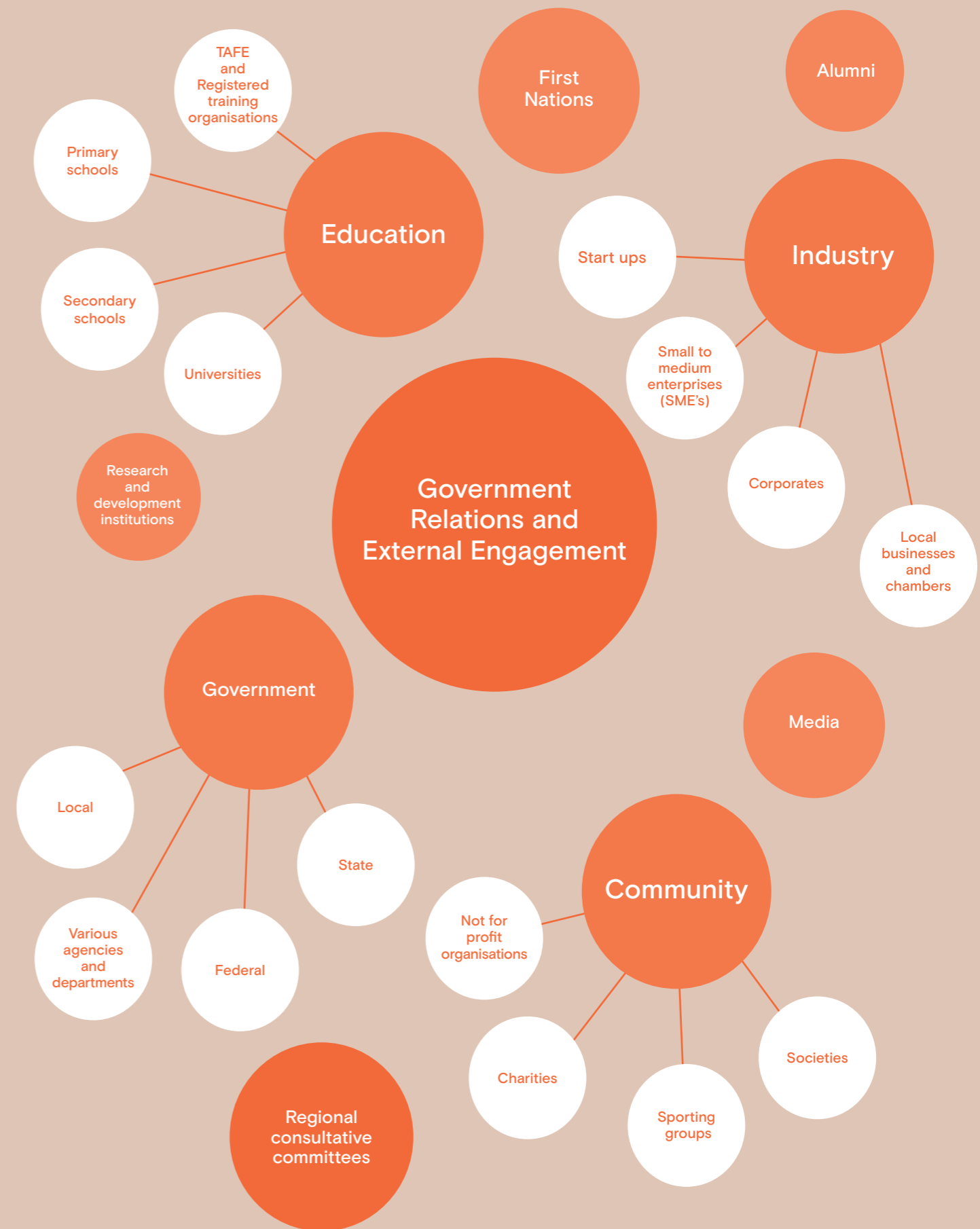
Wagga Wagga
Mardi Gras.

Our purpose

The External Engagement and Government Relations teams serve as vital connectors that bridge the university with our communities and an expansive network of stakeholders. Given that universities can often be complex and bureaucratic institutions, our primary objective is to facilitate cross-collaboration and establish, maintain, and foster mutually beneficial relationships. By doing so, we aim to bring the outside world in, to ensure Charles Sturt meets the needs of our communities and is recognised as an anchor institution in our regions.

Internal engagement

To engage effectively with community, industry and government, we build relationships within the university and engage with colleagues and students across all faculties and divisions.



Engagement and impact at a glance



1,066

Total engagements

Our locations

- Albury-Wodonga
- Bathurst
- Dubbo
- Orange
- Port Macquarie
- Wagga Wagga

735



Business/industry discussions



245

Tier one stakeholder discussions



62

Events

- Thought leadership
- Community and cultural gatherings
- Campus showcases

37



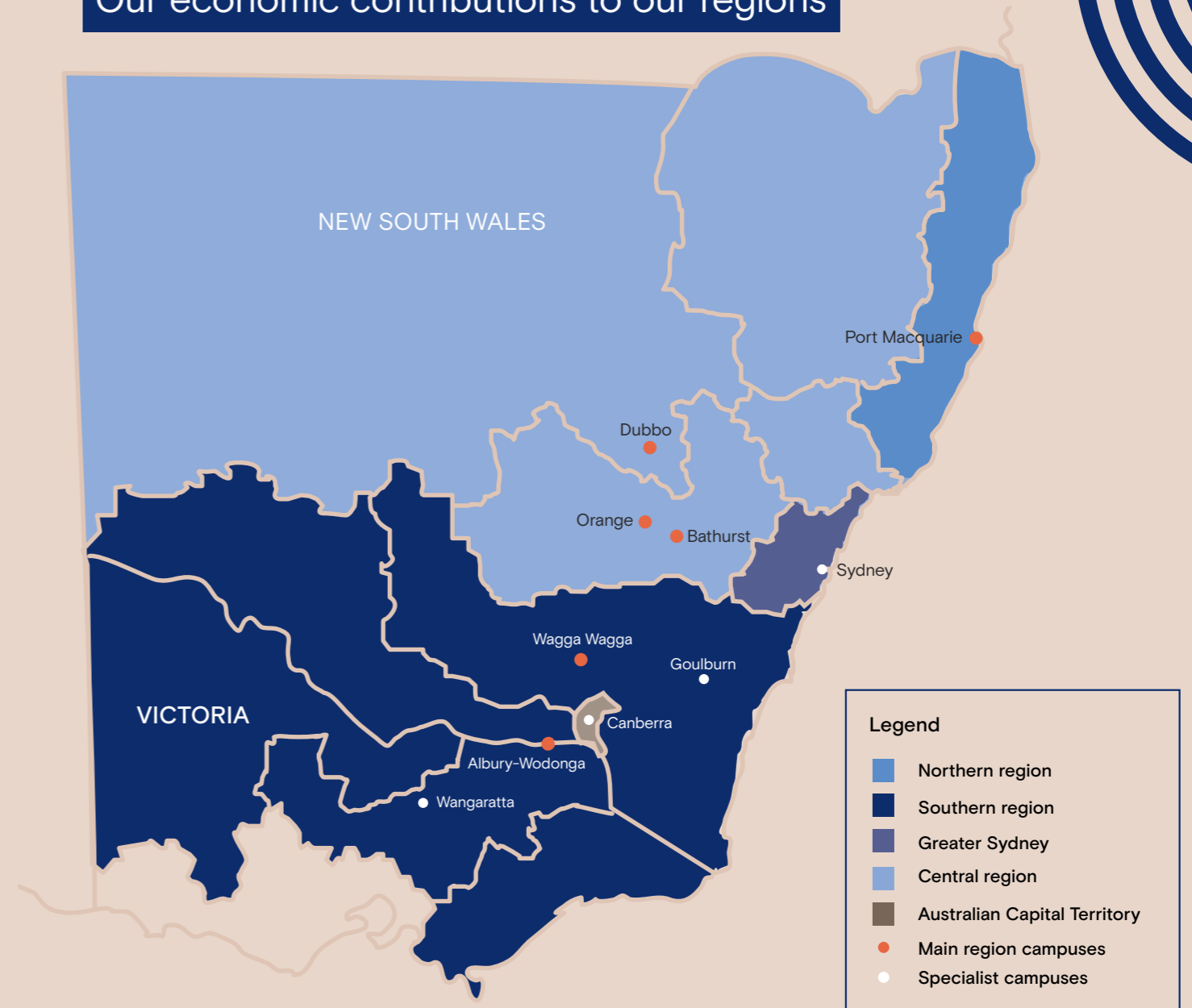
Staff events

27



MP and government visits

Our economic contributions to our regions



Charles Sturt's campus locations and regions

	GRP/GDP (\$million)	Employment (FTE)	Household income (\$million)
Central Region	\$147	759	\$106.3
Northern Region	\$44.1	321	\$49.1
Southern Region	\$315.7	1,732	\$254.4
Australian Capital Territory	\$7.8	42	\$6.3
National	\$469.9	2,264	\$369.3

KMPG Regional Economic Contributions, June 2023.

What our community say about us

Assessing community sentiment can be challenging and often complex. Therefore, we have enlisted the services of an independent expert to conduct a Community Pulse survey. This survey aims to provide us with invaluable insights into our performance, enabling us to make well-informed recommendations for our future direction and opportunities.

The outcomes of our most recent survey are presented on this page, underscoring our ongoing dedication to ensuring that we are meeting the needs and expectations of our community.

“Strong and regular communication. Charles Sturt is very supportive of ideas and future connections. They have also funded opportunities for our students.”

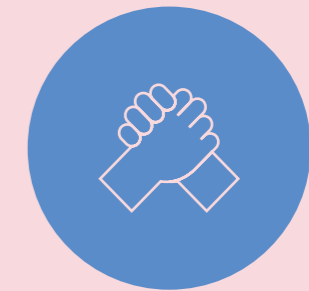
“I find the staff that represent Charles Sturt supportive and collaborative when it comes to community initiatives.”

“Communication from Charles Sturt is always relevant to either myself, my clients, my colleagues or network.”



Forming connections

96% of our community stakeholders have interacted with the university in the last three months.



Strong relationships

70% of our community stakeholders have had a relationship with the university for more than three years.



Ongoing interactions

98% of our community stakeholders would like to continue interacting with the university.



Customer loyalty

68% of our community would be extremely likely to recommend the university.



Customer experiences

95% of the community had a good to very good experience when interacting with the university.



Customer satisfaction

+62 Net Promoter Score (NPS).

Source: DBM Consultants - Community Pulse at Charles Sturt University: Understanding Community Advocacy - 2032 Wave 2 Line Results, November 2023.

Government Relations

In 2023, Government Relations experienced a year filled with significant activity. At the federal level, the sector underwent a comprehensive review by the Federal Government, a part of the Universities Accord process. Meanwhile, at the state government level, we experienced a change in government leadership. Our team worked diligently to establish enduring relationships and to ensure that all levels of government remain well-informed about the issues and advantages associated with regional education. This commitment to advocacy and relationship-building has been a key focus of our efforts in the past year.



The Hon Wes Fang MLC, the Hon Michael McCormack MP, the Hon David Littleproud MP and students from the Bachelor of Veterinary Biology / Bachelor of Veterinary Science on the Wagga Wagga campus.



The Hon Emma McBride MP, Orange campus tour.



Premier Chris Minns MP visiting the Wagga Wagga campus.

We welcomed and held meetings with multiple Government representatives across our regional footprint including:

Premier of NSW the Hon Chris Minns MP

The Hon Tara Moriarty MLC, Minister for Agriculture, Minister for Regional NSW, and Minister for Western NSW

Senator David Pocock, Senator for the ACT (Charles Sturt graduate)

The Hon Emma McBride MP, Assistant Minister for Mental Health and Suicide Prevention, Assistant Minister Rural and Regional Health

Senator Deborah O'Neill, Senator for NSW

The Hon Sussan Ley MP, Deputy Leader of the Opposition and Member for Farrer (Charles Sturt graduate)

The Hon David Littleproud MP, Leader of the National Party, Shadow Minister for Agriculture

Senator Perin Davey, Deputy Leader of the Nationals, Shadow Minister for Water and Emergency Management, Senator for NSW

The Hon Michael McCormack MP, Shadow Minister for International Development and the Pacific, Member for Riverina

The Hon Mark Coulton MP, Member for Parkes

Pat Conaghan MP, Member for Cowper

Dr Helen Haines MP, Member for Indi

The Hon Andrew Gee MP, Member for Calare

Senator Jonathon Duniam, Shadow Minister for the Environment, Senator for TAS

Justin Clancy MP, NSW Shadow Minister for Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education, Member for Albury

The Hon Tim Crackanthorp MP, Member for Newcastle (Charles Sturt graduate)

Dr Joe McGirr MP, Member for Wagga Wagga (Charles Sturt graduate)

Phil Donato MP, Member for Orange

The Hon Stephen Lawrence MLC, NSW Parliament

Julia Finn MP Member for Granville, Parliamentary Secretary to the Premier, and Parliamentary Secretary for the Arts

The Hon Sam Farraway MLC, Shadow Minister for Regional Transport and Roads

The Hon Paul Toole MP, Shadow Minister for Police, Member for Bathurst

The Hon Sarah Mitchell MLC, Shadow Minister for Agriculture

The Hon Dugald Saunders MP, Shadow Minister for Education and Western NSW, Member for Dubbo

The Hon Wes Fang MLC, Shadow Assistant Minister for Police and Emergency Services

The Hon Leslie Williams MP, Shadow Minister for Women, Shadow Minister for Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, and Shadow Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Member for Port Macquarie

Michael Kemp MP, Member for Oxley

Submission and inquiries

Government Relations has been actively involved in submitting responses to various inquiries. Our primary objective has been to advocate for the educational requirements of our communities and provide the government with well-informed and valuable recommendations. On most issues we make our own submissions, sometimes supplemented by contributions to submissions from the Regional Universities Network (RUN), Universities Australia (UA) and other peak bodies.



Premier Chris Minns MP, Jason Kendall (Transgrid), the Hon Tara Moriarty MLC, Dr Joe McGirr MP and Sam Beresford on the university farm at Wagga Wagga campus.

Senator the Hon Jonathon Duniham and the Hon Sussan Ley MP visiting the Aquatic Research facility on the Albury-Wodonga campus.

Key submissions we've made in 2023

Federal consultations

- Revised National Science and Research Priorities. We made submissions on both a 'conversation starter' and the draft priorities, focusing on the need for science and research capabilities in regional areas.
- The development of a national Early Years Strategy.
- A response to a discussion paper released by the Teacher Education Expert Panel. Charles Sturt University's submission was cited several times in the final report, Strong Beginnings.
- The university contributed to submissions from UA and RUN on the review of Australia's migration system and some related inquiries.
- We made a stand-alone submission to the review of the Australian Research Council Act, raising several issues also covered in our submissions to the draft National Science and Research Priorities and the Australian Universities Accord. The university's submission was quoted in the final report.

Federal Parliamentary inquiries

- The Senate Select Committee on provision of and access to dental services.
- The House Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training inquiry into the use of generative artificial intelligence in the Australian education system.
- The Senate Education and Employment Legislation Committee inquiry on the Education Legislation Amendment (Startup Year and Other Measures) Bill 2023. The university also made a submission in 2022 on the design of this program. Our submission on the legislation was cited several times in the inquiry's final report and in debate on the bill in Parliament.
- We contributed to UA and RUN submissions to the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade inquiry into tourism and Australia's international education sectors and hosted a public hearing of the inquiry on the Orange campus on 26 June.

NSW Government and Parliament

- NSW Legislative Council Portfolio Committee No. 4 – Regional NSW – inquiry into veterinary workforce shortages in NSW.
- The Legislative Assembly Select Committee on Remote, Rural and Regional Health is conducting inquiries into the implementation of recommendations made by an earlier inquiry (to which the university made a submission and gave evidence at a public hearing). We recently made a submission to the first of a series of inquiries, this one is on workforce issues, workplace culture and funding considerations for remote, rural and regional health.



Julia Andrews and Sam Beresford from Charles Sturt meeting with the Regional Education Commissioner the Hon Fiona Nash and Secretary of the Department Education Tony Cook PSM.

The Accord

The Australian Universities Accord is the first whole-of-system review of the higher education sector in almost 15 years. Charles Sturt has been actively engaged with the Accord, with a submission in late 2022 on the Terms of Reference for the Accord Panel.

Since then, we have made submissions on:

- a discussion paper released in February 2023
- the interim report, published in July (this made several mentions of programs and initiatives at the university)
- the legislation to give effect to the 'priority actions' recommended in the interim report (via RUN and UA)
- a consultation paper on new requirements for universities' policies on support for students
- the design of new suburban university study hubs.

In our submissions on the Accord we have proposed:

- a gradual increase in the number of Commonwealth supported places, with funding per place to rise to meet the cost of provision
- regional loading and other funding arrangements that support the higher costs of providing university education in regional areas (and across multiple campuses)
- funding certainty over time, through multi-year allocations, to allow universities to plan ahead
- reforming the funding arrangements (and particularly the higher student contributions) introduced under Job-ready Graduates, as these are adversely affecting many of the university's students

- measurable targets, for every university as well as the whole system, to boost participation and attainment by hitherto underrepresented groups
- appropriate funding for student support services to meet the needs of a more diverse (and larger) student population
- more funding for enabling programs, to help get even more students on the pathway to tertiary education
- more direct funding support for students (such as scholarships and bursaries), especially those who must undertake compulsory long placements as part of their education
- targeted funding for research, research training and research infrastructure at regional universities in recognition of their role in regional innovation and economic development
- the development of a national research strategy that includes recognition of the need for science and research capability in regional areas
- greater collaboration between regional universities, as well as with their counterparts in metropolitan areas
- better system-wide coordination through a Tertiary Education Commission or similar body, which would also be responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Accord and ensuring its goals are achieved.



Vice-Chancellor Prof Renée Leon PSM, Minister for Education the Hon Jason Clare MP and the Regional Education Commissioner the Hon Fiona Nash.



Dr Robert O'Connor
Public Policy Specialist

Final report

The final report and recommendations from the Accord Panel will be provided to the Government by the end of 2023 and are likely to lead to rapid and significant reform. Shaping and responding to the implementation of the Accord will be a major focus of the Government Relations team in 2024.



Local Government Policy Labs

A valuable partnership was formed this year between the university and the Central NSW Councils Joint Organisation, designed to help local councils and communities strengthen local democracy and address key policy challenges for local government into the future.

The Central NSW Joint Organisation (CNSWJO) is a local government network comprising 11 regional NSW councils. The CNSWJO covers more than 50,000 square kilometres of regional NSW and a population of more than 177,000 people.

The partnership is the first of its kind and serves as an example of how Charles Sturt can play a critical part in supporting our local communities and governments.

The inaugural Policy Lab was held at the Orange campus on 28 September and was attended by over 50 local leaders, mayors and general managers. Guided by Professor Mark Evans, the lab looked at the policy implications of the Democratic Audit of Australia's assessment of the quality of regional local government and its contribution to Australian democracy.

It also took a deep dive into how social media can be used to foster responsible democratic dialogue and enable quality policy debate. Experienced government communications specialist, Les White, provided valuable insights and advice to attendees on how to manage social media in an environment that is increasingly hostile to elected representatives and local government employees.

The second Local Government Policy Lab will be held early in 2024 and will examine the critical issue of productive water and the Murray Darling Basin Plan.

“It is wonderful to have Charles Sturt University’s involvement in these workshops moving forward as an anchor institution for a large part of NSW, extending into Victoria.”
**Jenny Bennett, Executive Officer,
Central NSW Joint Organisation**



Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) Professor Mark Evans, Executive Director of CNSWJO Jenny Bennett, Chair of CNSWJO and Mayor of Cabonne Shire Council Cr Kevin Beatty, and the University of Technology's Professor Graham Sansom.



“Charles Sturt has a social responsibility to use its expertise to support and enable collaborative problem-solving to address pressing issues facing regional Australia. We are very proud to partner with Central NSW Joint Organisation on this critical project.”
**Prof Mark Evans, Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research,
Charles Sturt University**



Left: First Policy Lab discussion with CNSWJO Mayors and General Managers at Charles Sturt's campus in Canberra.

Orange

Orange proved itself to be the small campus with the big heart when, on 15 November 2022, we opened the campus to 40 people who had been evacuated from Eugowra after a one-in-5000-year flash flood event completely destroyed the township and left residents homeless. With only a few hours' notice, our wonderful staff and students rallied to organise accommodation and necessities for people who arrived wet, injured and traumatised. Over the next 10 days, we worked together with State agencies and community organisations to feed, clothe, and care for our Eugowra residents.

Throughout the year, the External Engagement team has worked with staff and external organisations and stakeholders on a diverse variety of events and engagements. From our beautiful Winhangarra welcome ceremony at the beginning of the year, to hosting events and campus tours with local high school students, international visitors, State and Federal Ministers and even the Governor of NSW. We have collaborated with community on business lunches, innovation networking event, and hosted staff social networking events to help create a friendly and collaborative work culture.

However, it was the flood event of November 2022 that illustrated just how critical our people and campuses are to our regional communities, and how seriously we take our social responsibility as a flagship institution in the region.

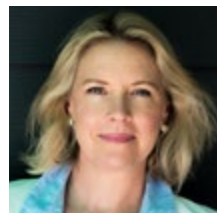
I'd like to thank all the Orange staff and students for making this a world worth living in, and the External Engagement team – Susan Barnes, Craig Murphy, Michelle Tarpenning and Karl Shead – for being completely indispensable!



The annual 'Sky Stories Community Observation Night' on the Orange campus.

Highlights

- Winhangarra welcome and celebration of a new year
- Sky Stories community observation event
- Local Government Policy Labs
- Ten4Ten High School Student Mentoring Program
- Vice Regal Reception to celebrate NSW Education Week with Her Excellency the Honourable Margaret Beasley
- Multiple state and federal Ministerial visits to campus
- Australian National Field Day



Julia Andrews
Director of External Engagement
(Bathurst and Orange)

Above: Charles Sturt Alumni winning award at Orange Business Awards 2023.

Middle: Prof Renée Leon PSM, Elder Uncle Ricky Ah-See and Dr Sid Parissi attending the Winhangarra Welcome, Orange campus.



Her Excellency the Honourable Margaret Beasley with student representatives from James Sheahan Catholic High, Kinross Woleroi School, Orange High School and Canowindra High School attending NSW Education Week celebrations, Orange campus.

Bathurst

2023 in Bathurst started with a formidable challenge – transform the campus into a world-class Athletes’ Village to accommodate over 500 athletes from around the world for the World Athletics Cross Country Championships. Adding to the challenge, we needed to turn the campus around, ready to welcome our new and returning students within 24 hours of the championships ending.

Of course, our amazing staff teams across Facilities, Accommodation, Food and Beverage, IT, Security, Communications and Media, and External Engagement worked incredibly hard and got it done. Furthermore, our students gained valuable experience volunteering in first aid, marketing and communications capacities during the event.

This major international event, which injected around \$2.6 million into the regional community, would not have been able to proceed without the university’s support.

We also hosted many dignitaries and events on and off campus throughout the year, working hard to ensure we nurtured and built connections with community, industry and government. In another highlight, the Bathurst Careers Expo moved from the town centre into our gym, bringing thousands of local high school students onto the campus.

In July, the university was the major sponsor of the Bathurst Winter Festival Brew and Bite. 90,000 people attended the event this year, and Charles Sturt was the second most recognised brand at the festival (after McDonalds!). Winter Festival is one of the most anticipated events in the Bathurst calendar, and it was wonderful to have a significant presence at such a joyful event and to remind locals and visitors that Bathurst is most certainly a university town!



Highlights

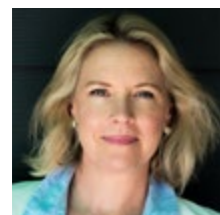
- World Athletics Cross Country Championships
- Winterfest Sponsorship
- Queer Screen Festival
- Bathurst Careers Expo
- Listening to Voices performance supporting mental health advocacy

Bathurst Winter Festival, student volunteers.



Tom Burton, Julia Andrews, Julia Fairley (IBM), Prof Jason Smith, Steve Davies (IBM) and Prof Graham Brown.

Right: Over 500 athletes from around the world stayed at our Bathurst campus in February for the 2023 World Cross Country Athletics Championships.



Julia Andrews
Director, External Engagement
(Bathurst and Orange)

Wagga Wagga

As we reflect upon the past year, it's impossible not to be overwhelmed with gratitude for the remarkable journey we've experienced together. My time at Charles Sturt has been fantastic, filled with invaluable experiences and significant achievements.

One of the highlights of this year was the opportunity to connect and collaborate with our dedicated university colleagues. Our interactions and partnerships have created a vibrant atmosphere where innovative ideas and perspectives have thrived, enriching our academic environment.

Furthermore, we are proud of our deep engagement with the community. Facilitating the Community University Partnerships Grant Program was outstanding, seeing first-hand how the program empowers and enriches community organisations. Our efforts have extended beyond the campus borders, fostering a sense of unity and shared purpose.

Being part of the conversations surrounding the First Nations Strategy has been a profound honour. This ongoing dialogue has allowed us to contribute to a vital cause and showcase our commitment to inclusivity, diversity, and respect.

Our mission to provide value and impact to students, industry partners, and the wider community remains at our core. The positive change and knowledge we've imparted testify to our commitment and dedication to regional communities. The university's commitment to stakeholder engagement is evident through its involvement in multiple strategic projects to enhance the region's economic and cultural landscape.

Last, I want to express my heartfelt thanks to the incredible team that made it all happen – Joanna, Taryn, Lisa, Emma, and Sam. Your dedication, passion, and hard work are the driving force behind our success.



David Bardos
Director, External Engagement
(Albury-Wodonga and Wagga Wagga)



Above: Sam Beresford, Jonathon Medway and Vicki Brady, CEO of Telstra, visiting the Global Digital Farm on the Wagga Wagga campus.

Top right: David Bardos with Wiradjuri elder Aunty Cheryl Penrith OAM.

Right: Henty Machinery Field Days Stakeholder Networking event.



Hon Michael McCormack MP and Kay Hull AO at the Regional Archives opening on the Wagga Wagga campus.



Highlights

- Hosting the CEO of Telstra and their Executive Leadership Team
- Regional Archives and Art Collection opening
- 2023 Digital Agrifood Summit
- NSW Farmers and National Farmers Federation Innovation in Ag Regional Forums
- Beyond 2050 Committee4Wagga event
- Henty Machinery Field Days Stakeholder Networking event
- TedX Wagga Wagga
- Christmas at the Con – Riverina Conservatorium of Music event
- Various state and federal government visits to the campus

Albury-Wodonga

I wanted to reflect on the fantastic journey we've had at our remarkable campus. It has been an exceptional year in many ways, and we have much to be proud of.

One of the standout achievements of our campus is our commitment to sustainability. The Albury-Wodonga campus proudly cemented its place as one of Australia's most sustainable university campuses. Our efforts to reduce our environmental impact and promote eco-friendly practices inspire and set an example for others.

Another noteworthy highlight has been our engagement with the community. Hosting the Thurgoona Wirlinga Precinct forum was a significant milestone, as it demonstrated our pivotal role in advancing regional development. The forum allowed us to contribute to the precinct's structural planning, paving the way for a brighter future.

Our strong partnerships with local institutions and businesses, like the recent Memorandum of Understanding with Trinity Anglican College, reinforce our commitment to excellence in education and community engagement. These collaborations testify to our mission to foster innovation and provide growth opportunities.

We've enjoyed welcoming university partners and special guests throughout the year and organising various events. These interactions have enriched our academic and cultural landscape, making our campus a hub of learning and discovery.

The combined efforts of our dedicated staff, students, and the broader community have made this year genuinely fantastic. As we progress, let's continue building on our successes and make our campus an even more remarkable place for learning, innovation, and sustainable development.



Top: David Bardos and Justin Clancy MP at the 2023 Open Day.

Right: Katie Doyle, Adam Fennessey PSM, recently appointed Secretary of the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Prof Renée Leon PSM and Dr Lee Baumgartner.



David Bardos
Director, External Engagement
(Albury-Wodonga and Wagga Wagga)



John Rafferty with Dr Helen Haines MP, touring the Albury-Wodonga campus.

Highlights

- Hosting Thurgoona Wirlinga Precinct Forum with Albury City Council
- Charles Sturt and Trinity Anglican College MoU signing
- NSW Smart Sensing Network event
- Charles Sturt University Council visit and tour of campus
- Charles Sturt Albury-Wodonga campus strategic planning workshop
- Multiple state and federal government visit to campus
- David Bardos beating Justin Clancy MP in a rowing competition at the 2023 Open Day

2023 campus report

Dubbo

The 2023 year at Dubbo campus was highlighted by the launch of the Bachelor of International Nursing, scheduled to commence in 2024. In August, we hosted key industry and government stakeholders for the official announcement. The introduction of international students into this program is anticipated to bolster enrolment numbers in our current Dubbo nursing degree. This initiative is geared towards addressing workforce shortages that are presently affecting Western NSW.

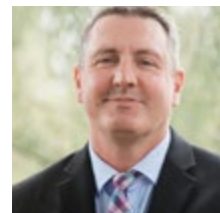
The campus hosted the Dubbo Social Work Industry Workshop and follow up industry meeting, the latter held in September. We also addressed the Alliance of Western Council's meeting and gained universal support for our application to expand our Rural Medicine Program into Western NSW.

May saw the campus host the very first Experience Day which was a unique event showcasing the campus and the wider university to local schools. Attracting more than 150 students, the Experience Day was a great success.

Construction plans have been finalised for the Dubbo Sports Hub and an official sod-turning ceremony was conducted. We also showcased the Dubbo campus to our local school principals and gave them a taste of the dentistry clinic and the nursing labs, ending in a formal dinner.

The Collaborative Teacher Aide Pathway program remains a key offering, with the Dubbo stakeholders actively participating in its ongoing success. Enrolment numbers have surpassed 400, demonstrating the program's expanding impact and its ability to meet the needs of a growing number of individuals seeking to enhance their career prospects in education.

A massive thank you to the Dubbo Campus staff for contributing to all these activities, and especially the broader external engagement team and Kendell Lawson on the Dubbo campus.



James McKechnie
Director, External Engagement
(Dubbo)

Current CTAP students on the Dubbo campus. Dr Elizabeth Murray, Ms Sharon Andrews, Ms Vanessa Clark, Ms Justine Foley and James McKechnie.



Above: CTAP Launch Dubbo campus. Alec Webb (Regional Universities Network), Murray Wood (Dubbo Regional Council) and Vice-Chancellor Prof Renée Leon PSM.

Middle: Mr Domic Teagle (PCYC NSW), Hon Dugald Saunders MP, Hon Paul Toole MP, Ms Kirsten Locke and James McKechnie at the sod turning for the Indoor Multi Sports Facility

Top right: Ms Emily Ross and Ms Lisa Goodwin (PCYC Dubbo) Local School Students experience the Dubbo campus with current students.



Highlights

- International nursing degree launch
- Social Work Industry Workshop
- Vice-Chancellor and stakeholder dinner and networking events
- Dubbo Experience Day with hundreds of students in attendance
- Announcement of the Sports Hub
- Multiple state and federal government visits to campus

Port Macquarie

In 2023 the Port Macquarie campus ignited with activity delivering hundreds of high impact engagements to include 70 strategically aligned events that enabled the University to connect, support and showcase the University to the incredible community who champion Charles Sturt in the region.

Securing and strengthening regionally significant industry, education and community connections were pivotal in the development of a series of new strategically aligned and impactful projects and partnerships. Charles Sturt joined Business NSW Regional Leaders Mid North Coast supporting two regional summits on campus for over 150 community, industry and education leaders, addressing key themes of health, aged care, skills, education and workforce. Additionally, Charles Sturt hosted the Chief Economist Business NSW complimented by a campus and research showcase.

Excitingly, two international academic conferences were secured for the region, the first time each has been hosted outside a major capital city. The DICTA 2023 Conference brought 100 Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning experts from around the globe to Port Macquarie. The GEA 2024 Conference is set to attract 200 global experts in gender equity and education with a Foundation Partnership secured with national body SAGE to assist facilitate this internationally significant forum on campus.

The Sunrise Campus Markets launched in partnership with the Rotary Club of Port Macquarie Sunrise, bringing 9000 visitors annually to the campus, featuring 60 micro businesses with site proceeds injected back into community projects and an annual scholarship.

I extend sincere thanks to Hali Kramel in my team, and the many valued industry, education and community organisations whose collaborative spirit have enabled us to enrich our connection and impact in our region. We look forward to working together in 2024 towards the vibrance and success of the Mid North Coast.

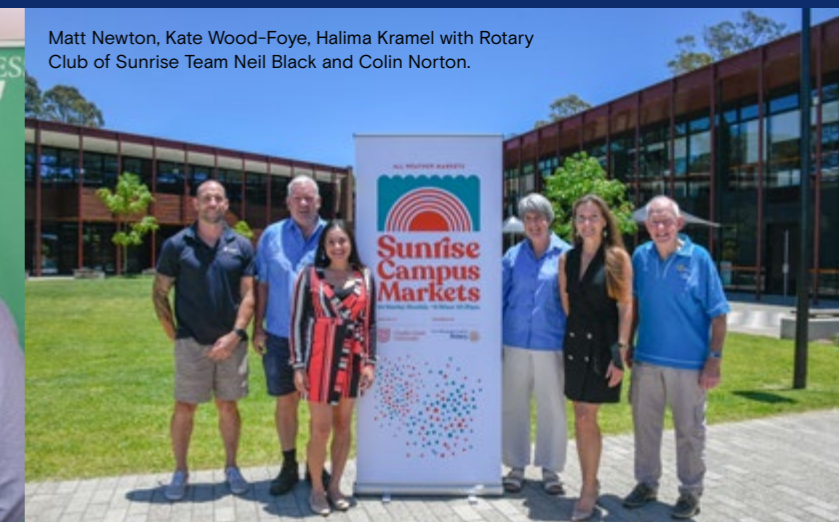


Kate Wood-Foye
Director, External Engagement
(Port Macquarie)

Above: Business
Mid North Coast
- Education
Training and
Skills Summit.



Matt Newton, Kate Wood-Foye, Halima Kramel with Rotary Club of Sunrise Team Neil Black and Colin Norton.



Beyond Superhuman - Technology for Humanity



Go Red for Dyslexia Campus Light Up and Community Event.

Highlights

- Luminosity Youth Summit 2023 – Courage and Curiosity
- DICTA 2023 International AI and Machine Learning Conference
- NSW Smart Sensing Network Event Series Mid North Coast
- IFTAR Breaking of the Feast Celebration
- Business NSW Regional Leaders Health and Aged Care Summit
- Business NSW Regional Leaders Skills, Training and Education Summit
- Sunrise Campus Markets and Partnership
- Beyond Superhuman - Technology for Humanity Dr Jordan Nguyen
- Go Red for Dyslexia Campus Light Up and Community Celebration
- Clive Hamilton – Defiant Earth: The Fate of Human in the Anthropocene
- Queer Screen Festival: Best of the Fest Screening

Courage and Curiosity

Luminosity Youth Summit

Over 450 future regional leaders from across the nation participated in the dynamic two-day national forum in Port Macquarie, featuring mainstage keynotes and hands-on masterclasses to uplift and encourage young people to explore dangerous ideas for success.

A partner of the summit since its inception in 2012, Charles Sturt is committed to developing and supporting unique events that assist young people across the country to create a world worth living in. Over 3,500 young people have been the beneficiaries of this unique experience across the last 11 years, enabling access to leadership and development opportunities not usually afforded to young people outside metropolitan areas.

Charles Sturt was honoured to work alongside the Luminosity team of 20 dedicated volunteers and more than 70 outstanding regional partner organisations to bring this high energy and impact event to life. The Summit Presenting Partner, Mid North Coast Local

Health District, joined forces with Foundation Partners Rydges Port Macquarie and Regional Australia Bank. Key scholarship partners included Business NSW, Mid Coast Council, Telstra, Axiom Connected, Legacy, Rotary Taree North, Rotary Club of Sunrise Port Macquarie, Kempsey CUC, Belle Property University of Newcastle, Hastings Business Women's Network, Business Port Macquarie, and Charles Sturt First Nations.

The university continues to support this unique opportunity to link regional communities to the talents of students, lecturers, researchers and industry partners who appeared as guest speakers and facilitators at the event, among 25 other thought leaders from various fields of excellence from around the globe. We look forward to working with the Luminosity Youth Inc team and our community and industry partners towards developing the 2024 summit.



Director of External Engagement / Co-Founder of Luminosity, Kate Wood-Foye with Tanya Hennessey, Comedian, Writer and Media Personality, Charles Sturt Theatre/Media graduate.



The Luminosity Youth Summit Voluntary Crew.

Charles Sturt keynotes and masterclasses

Tanya Hennessey, Charles Sturt alumna and comedian.

Teresa Cochrane, award-winning Charles Sturt First Nations alumna, Oxford Scholar, Honours, Environmental Science Researcher.

Taylah Debreceny, emerging National Weightlifting Champion, third-year physiotherapy student, Charles Sturt Elite Sport and Performer Program.

Paramedicine Lecturers Jacob Grevell, Samantha Sheridan and Hannah Stack.

Andrew Rohde Global IT Partner Axiom Connected Australia collaborated on hands on workshop with Mid North Coast Local Health District on an ultimate speed challenge to create better future.

Luminosity Youth Summit guest speaker, Sophie Delezio.

Creating community

Luminosity is a flagship event for our coastal region and an exciting space for young leaders to look to the future and grow. This vibrant event is brought to life by a dedicated team and strong regional community, who not only provide key financial funding but strategic support and encouragement ensuring that the program is as diverse and dynamic as those seen in our capital cities.



The Luminosity Breakfast Launch.



2023 Digital Agrifood Summit

PANEL RESPONSE Eyes on Export



Peter Carter
GS1 Australia

Su McCluskey
DAFF

Josie Angus
Angus Pastoral Co

Moderator
Nick Pagett
Charles Sturt University
AgriPark



Below: Digital Agrifood Summit, Panel Session: Laura Kilcrease, Alberta Innovates, Michael Whitehead, ANZ, and Dr Penny Schulz, SA Drought Hub.

Paddock to Profit

The Digital Agrifood Summit has established itself as one of the leading regional events on the agricultural calendar, welcoming over 450 producers, industry, government, students and research partners to Charles Sturt's Wagga Wagga campus, including 22 sponsors, 28 exhibitors and more than 50 world-class speakers. The Summit also attracted international guests from New Zealand, Canada, Kenya and the United Kingdom, cementing the university as a global leader in agriculture and innovation thought leadership.

Hosted by Charles Sturt and Food Agility CRC, this year's theme, Paddock to Profit, explored how digitally driven insights, systems and tools are helping producers improve sustainability and increase profits.

In addition to showcasing our world-leading agri-tech facilities, the event also established new partnership and research opportunities

for our Gulbali Institute and Global Digital Farm project, exposed hundreds of school students to a career in agriculture, and fostered multiple networking and collaboration opportunities for our delegates and AgriPark partners.

Events across the three days included:

- Speaker and Sponsor Welcome Event
- Gulbali Stargazing Dinner
- growAG Networking Breakfast
- Innovation Showcases
- Trade exhibition hall
- Global Digital Farm tours
- ABC Country Hour livestream
- Numerous organisational board meetings.



Global Digital Farm tours.



growAG Networking Breakfast held at the Wagga Wagga Art Gallery.

Regional leaders

Strategic business events and forums

Charles Sturt is proud to have collaborated with Business NSW in the rollout of their Regional Leaders program throughout NSW. Within this program, our Directors of External Engagement have harnessed the platform to engage with businesses and industries, working collectively to advance the economic vision of regional NSW and advocate for solutions to challenges that hinder growth in our regions.

This initiative has brought together some of the brightest business minds, all driven by a common goal of making a meaningful difference in NSW. Our participation has extended to thought leadership event series, exclusive VIP gatherings featuring senior government and corporate leaders, and business roundtables, all aimed at generating concrete solutions to regional challenges.

During the year, we actively participated in several noteworthy events and forums.

- **The Future of Health and Aged Care – Creating the narrative for regional success at Port Macquarie:** The forum provided a platform for professionals from various industries and sectors to collaborate, explore, and drive the future success of health and aged care on the Mid North Coast.
- **Business NSW lunch with the Hon Dr Jim Chalmers MP, Treasurer:** At this event, Treasurer Chalmers detailed the 2023 Federal budget, and Regional Leaders from across NSW were in attendance to gain insights into this important fiscal document.
- **Tour of the Wagga Wagga campus by the Premier of NSW, the Hon Chris Minns MP, and the Minister for Agriculture and Regional NSW, The Hon Tara Moriarty MP:** The Premier and Minister visited our campus, engaged with students and staff, and gained hands-on experience by touring our Global Digital Farm, as well as exploring our partnership with Transgrid.
- **Business Sydney breakfast with the Premier of NSW, the Hon Chris Minns MP:** The Premier shared his plans for the 2023 State Budget, with a particular focus on regional development. He also spoke about the growth in our regions, referencing his time in Wagga Wagga and highlighting some of the wonderful businesses and people he had met.
- **Regional Leader Breakfast and Roundtable with the Minister for Agriculture and Regional NSW, The Hon Tara Moriarty MP in Orange:** This event provided the Minister with the opportunity to engage directly with the regional leaders and hear first hand some of the issues that the community is facing.
- **The Evolving Future of Skills, Training, and Education Summit at Port Macquarie:** This summit tackled crucial areas in need of improvement and support and how we can adapt the way we approach employment, education, and training.



Business NSW, Mid North Coast Health and Aged Care Forum.

Advocacy for our regions

In the Riverina Murray region, the university has actively participated in the development of Business NSW's advocacy report, "Down to the Wire". This report comprehensively outlines the extensive list of crucial infrastructure projects slated for implementation in the Riverina Murray over the upcoming years. These projects, while promising substantial economic benefits in terms of job creation and business opportunities, also exert considerable pressure on the region's infrastructure supply chain and labor market. This dual impact highlights the need for careful planning and management to ensure that the region can efficiently accommodate these projects and their associated growth.



Right: Riverina Murray Business Awards, Sam Beresford and winner of Excellence in Innovation award Trent Dean from Mercy Connect Business NSW.

Far right: The Hon Tara Moriarty MLC, Phil Donato MP, David Harding (Business NSW) and Julia Andrews (Charles Sturt).

Community University Partnership Grants

Supporting community development in our regions

The Community University Partnerships (CUP) Grants program is a modest grant initiative with a maximum project value of \$1,000. Its purpose is to bolster the growth of our regional areas by contributing to cultural, economic, sporting, and related activities. Additionally, it aims to cultivate higher education aspirations and awareness, especially among the youth in rural and regional communities.

Our CUP Grants program remains a crucial source of tangible, grassroots assistance to our local communities. We deeply appreciate the dedication of numerous individuals who devote their time and effort to not-for-profit organisations, schools, and sports groups, all of which are fundamental to the communities where Charles Sturt operates.

Congratulations to the 66 organisations that we've had the privilege of supporting in 2023! We look forward to continuing to work with you as you champion a diverse array of initiatives that serve as the backbone of our communities. Your dedication and contributions are invaluable.

Funding enabled Circartus to perform at the Wingham Music Festival.



Funding allowed the Central West Leadership Academy to purchase science equipment for new chemistry labs.

 <p>2023 CUP Grants</p>	<p>150 </p> <p>Applications</p>	<p> 5</p> <p>Grant categories</p>
<p> 66</p> <p>Projects funded</p>	<p>\$64,650</p> <p>Distributed</p> 	<p>7 </p> <p>Regional locations and communities supported</p>

Funding provided gym equipment for The Orchard in Orange, a safe haven for women and children escaping domestic violence.



2023 CUP Awards

Name	Project title	Region	Campus	Requested amount
Forbes Town and District Band	Signage project to promote the activities of the Forbes town band	Central West and Orana	Orange	\$1,000
Orange United Sports Club	Community wellbeing African drums program	Central West and Orana	Orange	\$1,000
Lachlan Arts Council	Community Art Exhibition at Condobolin Community Centre	Central West and Orana	Orange	\$1,000
Marathon Health	Art Therapy Program	Central West and Orana	Orange	\$1,000
Orange High School	Outdoor garden for sensory opportunities to regulate emotions	Central West and Orana	Orange	\$1,000
Orange Roundnet	Promote and expand the roundnet game in the community	Central West and Orana	Orange	\$1,000
Orange United Sports Club	Circle of understanding weaving workshop	Central West and Orana	Orange	\$1,000
Parkes Early Childhood Centre Inc	STEM related learning program for preschoolers	Central West and Orana	Orange	\$1,000
Stuart Town Public School	Social and emotional learning program using drums	Central West and Orana	Orange	\$996
The Orchid at Housing Plus	New health and wellbeing activity equipment	Central West and Orana	Orange	\$1,000
Oberon High School	Student excursion to see Romeo and Juliet performance	Central West and Orana	Bathurst	\$1,000
Bathurst Neighbourhood Center	The Art of Thinking workshop for young people	Central West and Orana	Bathurst	\$950
Bathurst Poets	Bathurst schools' poetry anthology project for primary and secondary schools	Central West and Orana	Bathurst	\$1,000
Bathurst Public School P & C Association	Live performance of "Musica Viva"	Central West and Orana	Bathurst	\$1,000
Central West Women's Health Centre	Series of workshops and activities to develop healthy relationships	Central West and Orana	Bathurst	\$1,000
Oberon High School	Sport and physical activities for year 11 and 12 students	Central West and Orana	Bathurst	\$1,000
Peel Recreation Reserve Land Manager	Peel Jam event featuring local music and stall holders	Central West and Orana	Bathurst	\$1,000
Raglan Public School	NAIDOC celebration activities	Central West and Orana	Bathurst	\$1,000
Rockley Public School	Swimming lessons for students	Central West and Orana	Bathurst	\$1,000
Veritas House	Sports program for disadvantaged kids	Central West and Orana	Bathurst	\$740
Central West Leadership Academy	Purchase of science equipment for new chemistry laboratories	Central West and Orana	Dubbo	\$1,000
Dubbo Touch Association	All Abilities touch football event	Central West and Orana	Dubbo	\$1,000
LeaderLife Ltd	School holiday arts, crafts and sports activities	Central West and Orana	Dubbo	\$1,000
Narromine Jets Rugby League Football Club	"Narromine Cares Day" to encourage conversations around mental health	Central West and Orana	Dubbo	\$1,000
Orana Education and Training Co-operative	Refurbishment of community garden	Central West and Orana	Dubbo	\$1,000
Parkes East Public School	The purchase of concrete numeracy resources	Central West and Orana	Dubbo	\$1,000
Wellington High School	Activities for mental health and wellbeing week	Central West and Orana	Dubbo	\$1,000
The Rotary Club of Orange Inc	Orange sustainable living week and expo	Central West and Orana	Orange	\$1,000
Cobram Secondary College	Outreach program to support disengaged youth with an education coach	Hume	Wangaratta	\$1,000
Digital Technology Advisory Committee Wangaratta	Engaging in STEM through VEX robotics competition	Hume	Wangaratta	\$1,000
Galen Catholic College	Purchase of portable VEX competition field perimeter	Hume	Wangaratta	\$1,000
The Beechworth Chain Gang	Bike safety riding course for local girls	Hume	Wangaratta	\$1,000
Wangaratta Primary School	The purchase of VEX Kits and competition equipment	Hume	Wangaratta	\$1,000

Name	Project title	Region	Campus	Requested amount
Beechworth Montessori School	Sustainable and water-wise sensory garden	Hume	Wangaratta	\$1,000
Gloucester High School	Providing calculators to financially disadvantaged students	Mid North Coast	Port Macquarie	\$750
National Council of Women of New South Wales Inc.	Women's health workshop	Mid North Coast	Port Macquarie	\$1,000
Nautilus College	The purchase of wobble chairs and wobble cushions to promote student focus	Mid North Coast	Port Macquarie	\$1,000
Port Combined Netball Club	Netball coaching clinic for local players	Mid North Coast	Port Macquarie	\$1,000
Port Macquarie Basketball Association	July holiday camp program	Mid North Coast	Port Macquarie	\$1,000
Port Macquarie Hastings Hockey Association	Purchase of safety equipment for junior members	Mid North Coast	Port Macquarie	\$900
St Agnes Primary School	School cultural workshops	Mid North Coast	Port Macquarie	\$1,000
The Mid North Coast Islamic Society Incorporated	Islamic storytelling and craft workshop for kids	Mid North Coast	Port Macquarie	\$1,000
Wingham Music Festival	Circartus performance	Mid North Coast	Port Macquarie	\$1,000
Hastings Landcare Inc	Tree planting and weed removal in the Hastings area	Mid North Coast	Port Macquarie	\$914
Coolamon Preschool	Positive mental wellbeing program	Riverina	Wagga Wagga	\$1,000
CWA NSW - Uranquinty Evening Branch	Development of a community event kit	Riverina	Wagga Wagga	\$1,000
Cycling Without Age Australia Wagga Wagga Chapter	A-frame safety signs for trishaw riders	Riverina	Wagga Wagga	\$1,000
Kapooka Public School	Purchase of creative industries and theatre performance equipment	Riverina	Wagga Wagga	\$1,000
Nova Health Co	Walk and talk group for postpartum mothers	Riverina	Wagga Wagga	\$1,000
Riverina Conservatorium of Music	Celebrating 100 years of Disney music performance	Riverina	Wagga Wagga	\$750
Turvey Park Junior Football Netball Club	Equipment and apparel for girls AFLW program	Riverina	Wagga Wagga	\$1,000
Up2Date Art Exhibition	Replacement of art hanging system to display art	Riverina	Wagga Wagga	\$1,000
Wagga Wagga Community Media Ltd	Disability car park shade sails	Riverina	Wagga Wagga	\$1,000
Wagga Wagga Lake Run and Ride	Community bike and fun run event	Riverina	Wagga Wagga	\$1,000
Marrar Public School P&C Association	School garden composting and biodiversity education program	Riverina	Wagga Wagga	\$1,000
Albury Cricket Club	New PA system for club and community events	Murray	Albury	\$1,000
Border Music Camp	Supporting students in financial need to attend music camp	Murray	Albury	\$1,000
Catholic College Wodonga	Physical comedy workshop for year 7 students	Murray	Albury	\$1,000
Corowa High School	2K23 Vaping health education program	Murray	Albury	\$1,000
Corowa Public School	A vibrant and stimulating sensory path in the Sunshine Gardens	Murray	Albury	\$1,000
Falcons Hockey Club	Playing and compulsory safety equipment for junior members	Murray	Albury	\$1,000
Melrose Primary School	Victorian State School Spectacular 2023	Murray	Albury	\$850
Mount Beauty Secondary College	Upgrade of school science equipment and purchase of new technology	Murray	Albury	\$1,000
Table Top Public School P&C Association	A ten week sequential music program for students	Murray	Albury	\$1,000
Tallangatta Secondary College	The purchase of sound equipment for music performance	Murray	Albury	\$1,000
Albury Wodonga Regional Foodshare	The purchase of two new sets of food measuring scales	Murray	Albury	\$1,000

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