

Best of the best in higher education

Honour roll Finalists have been announced in the 2016 AFR Higher Education Awards.

Tim Dodd

Thirty-two finalists have been named in the 2016 *Australian Financial Review* Higher Education Awards, which recognise excellence in the higher education sector.

This year, for the first time, the awards will also recognise an Emerging Leader in higher education (sponsored by Perrett Laver).

The finalists were selected by a distinguished panel of judges:

Stuart Hamilton AO, former CEO of Open Universities Australia; Adrian McComb, CEO of the Council of Private Higher Education; Chris Madden AO, former pro vice-chancellor (international) of Griffith University; Andrew Norton, higher education program director at the Grattan Institute and member of the expert panel advising the Turnbull government on higher education reform; Lisa Paul OA PSM, former head of the federal Department of Education and Training; Alan Robson AO, former vice-chancellor of the University of WA; Sally Walker AM, former vice-chancellor of Deakin University and member of the expert panel advising the Turnbull government on higher education reform.

Denise Bradley AC, who was previously named as a member of the judging panel, withdrew for family reasons before judging took place.

The panel was chaired by *Financial Review* education editor Tim Dodd.

The winners will be announced at a dinner during the *Australian Financial Review* Higher Education Summit on November 16.

A special Lifetime Achievement award (sponsored by UniSuper) to honour an individual's outstanding leadership, innovation and service will be announced on October 31. The awards are sponsored by UniSuper.

Community Engagement

Macquarie University: National Indigenous Science Education Program (NISEP)

This program helps Indigenous high school students engage with science, gain the confidence, motivation and skills to complete their schooling and encourages them to go to university.

Queensland University of Technology: National Exceptional Teaching for Disadvantaged Schools (NETDS) program

Australia's only mainstream program to offer high-performing trainee teachers preparation for, and experience in, working in disadvantaged schools. At the end of 2017 there will be 468 NETDS graduates nationally.

UNSW Australia: Kingsford Legal Centre & Kooloora Community Centre Partnership

A community legal centre at UNSW Law which provides clinical legal education to law students and embeds them in the Indigenous community.

UTS: UTS Shopfront Community Program

Over 20 years this student volunteer program has involved 4000 students in 51,000 hours of community work, helping produce graduates who understand socially responsible professional practice and active citizenship.

Emerging Leader Sponsored by Perrett Laver

University of Melbourne: Dr Charles Day

Project director of the University of



UNSW Australia's research pro vice chancellor Emma Johnston is a finalist in the Emerging Leader Award. PHOTO: UNSW



INCUBATE accelerator program project manager James Alexander.

Melbourne's Carlton Connect Initiative, an innovation precinct of 21st century technologies in the heart of Melbourne. He has been pivotal in leading the university's embrace of innovation, collaboration and entrepreneurship.

University of Newcastle: Associate Professor Kathleen Butler

A leader in indigenisation of the University of Newcastle curriculum. Community consultation has been a key factor in her success and is embedded into her teaching, research and service activities.

UNSW Australia: Professor Emma Johnston FRSN

A marine ecologist, science presenter on television, pro vice-chancellor (research) at UNSW Australia and vice-president of the peak science professional body, Science and Technology Australia.

University of Sydney: James Alexander
Co-founder of INCUBATE at the University of Sydney, the first student-focused, university-wide start-up development program in Australia. He has raised the profile of student entrepreneurship policy in Australia.

Employability Sponsored by Pearson
Bond University: Graduate-Employability.com - Free, open, international digital repository

A digital repository of tools, resources, videos, case studies and insights designed to address the problem of university graduates being unemployed or underemployed.

Marcus Oldham College: The integration of graduate attributes with work placement sequences to deliver high levels of work readiness and employability

Graduates achieve high rates of employment after an innovative program which puts them in quality work placements and includes paid jobs in the final year of the agriculture degree.

University of Queensland: UQ Student Employability Team: getting students SET for their future

The team runs 10 employability programs, as well as 1800 work placements and 150 workshops reaching 10,000 students in the past year.



The newly completed Student Hub at Flinders University is a finalist in the Facilities Innovation award. PHOTO: PETER E BARNES

University of Sydney: Leadership Development Program at the Faculty of Health Sciences

Students are mentored by peers, senior health and industry leaders, and alumni. The program is growing and had led to an improvement in employability for graduates.

Equity and Opportunity Sponsored by YourTutor

Charles Sturt University: Outreach Team

The team provides support to students studying online by phone, Skype and email, as well as face-to-face at more than 60 venues across Australia. Support is offered on topics including assignment planning, academic writing and time management.

Macquarie University: LEAP - Macquarie Mentoring (Refugee Mentoring)

University student volunteers mentor high school students from refugee backgrounds to help them succeed in education. The program works with 10 schools in western Sydney with others on a waiting list.

University of Sydney: A multi-layered approach to support young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians considering higher education

Engagement with Indigenous school students to help build academic skills and increase confidence and motivation to enrol in higher education. They experience university life and participate in an educational program linked to degrees and career pathways.

Western Sydney University: Fast Forward

The program is a partnership between the university and high schools in western Sydney which aims to raise the educational aspirations of students from low socio-economic status backgrounds. The program is growing and now includes 64 schools and 3500 school students.

Facilities Innovation

Deakin University: Deakin Smart Campus

An innovative strategy to put a "digital skin" over the university's physical campuses to improve navigation

for users of the campuses, use of physical space, and person-to-person and university-to-person communication.

Flinders University: New Plaza and Student Hub

This \$63 million project has created a dynamic heart for the university's Bedford Park campus, with a one-stop-shop for student services, eating places, retail, study, entertainment, and event spaces.

University of Adelaide: UniSpace development

A platform with an inquiry dashboard which brings together all data relating to physical space and how it is used at the university. It has optimised use of existing space and minimised requests for more space.

University of Wollongong: Early Start Facility

A \$44 million facility for early childhood development which includes a Discovery Space for children, community outreach programs and a comprehensive research program. Since it opened in May 2015, 125,000 people have visited.

Industry Engagement Sponsored by Technology One

Griffith University: Fruition: a world-first biological trap for managing female pest fruit flies in crops

The university partnered with AgNova Technologies Pty Ltd to commercialise a trap targeting female fruit flies that will help growers to minimise crop losses following recent restrictions on the use of insecticide sprays.

Monash University: Monash Industry Team Initiative - MITI

It links multidisciplinary student teams at undergraduate, masters and PhD level to industry, government, not-for-profit and global industry partners to design innovative solutions for real industry and business problems.

University of South Australia: ANZ Business Growth Program

This collaboration between UniSA and ANZ Bank includes one-day clinics, growth modules, face-to-face mentoring, data collection and research designed to help small and medium companies succeed in a globally competitive marketplace.

University of Sydney: Australian Centre for Field Robotics

The centre is one of the world's largest such research institutes. Its projects include helping Qantas fly optimised routes to reduce fuel consumption and helping Rio Tinto to realise its vision of a fully autonomous, remotely operated mine.

International Education

Monash University: The Monash Warwick Alliance: Harnessing joint capabilities to drive innovation and opportunity

The alliance between Monash University and the University of Warwick Alliance has generated international education, research and commercial outcomes on a large scale. It had more than 1000 student participants in the past year, 46 externally funded research projects and several innovative student-led initiatives.

University of Newcastle: The Singapore Teaching Certificate initiative

The Singapore Teaching Certificate is an innovative professional development program designed to provide academic staff at the university's Singapore campuses with practical skills and teaching innovations to enhance learning outcomes.

UNSW Australia: UNSW Professional Development Program (International Students)

An internship and professional skills program open to all UNSW international students for whom English is a second language. It offers professional work placements, networks (local and international) and employment outcomes.

UTS: Beyond UTS International Leadership Development Program (UTS:BUiLD)

The program offers students access to a unique range of short-term international experiences that include: study and research; social impact; work-integrated learning experiences; innovation and entrepreneurship internships; global design studios; and cultural immersion.

Learning Experience

Queensland University of Technology: STIMulate: support-for-learning in maths, science and IT

The program boosts the maths, science and IT achievement of thousands of students each year. They receive peer support from 150 experienced student volunteers, academic support from nine discipline specialists and online resources to develop and reinforce key concepts.

UTS: Higher Education Language and Presentation Support (HELPS)

An academic literacy and learning support centre which holistically supports students to develop their confidence and academic skills. It provides accessible face-to-face consultations, student-focused program and peer-to-peer connections. More than 4000 students a year use the service.

University of Western Australia: Indigenous Studies Essentials (ISE)

An interactive, online learning experience which introduces all new undergraduate students at the university to Indigenous Australia. It was conceived, developed and is maintained by the university's School of Indigenous Studies. It is the first program of its kind in Australia.

Western Sydney University: The Academy

The Academy offers high-achieving students leadership development, academic enrichment and civic engagement opportunities. Launched in 2014, Academy membership is by invitation and many members are first generation university students from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds.