

NEWCASTLE BUSINESS SCHOOL ANNUAL RESEARCH REPORT 2024



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FOREWARD

2024 was a significant year for research at the Newcastle Business School (NBS). We are proud to present our annual research report that highlights the outstanding research achievements and contributions of our faculty and students. Our commitment to academic excellence and industry engagement has driven us to new heights this year.

This year has been particularly significant as we have seen an increase in our research output and impact in support of the school's strategic priority areas of sustainability, digitalisation, data analytics and entrepreneurship and innovation. Our academic staff have published more high-quality research papers in top-tier journals than ever before, and increasing our collaborations with international co-authors whilst maintaining the momentum of our quality Higher Degree Research (HDR) program. Notably, we have also secured more competitive research grants in 2024, which will enable us to continue our important work and make even greater impact to business and society.

We have also placed a strong emphasis on mentoring and supporting early-career researchers and HDR students within the school. By providing them with the resources and guidance they need to succeed, we are fostering a new generation of scholars who are well-equipped to carry forward our mission of excellence. Our commitment to diversity and inclusion within the school has also been a key driver of our success, ensuring that we benefit from a wide range of disciplines, perspectives and experiences.

Our strategic focus for the upcoming year includes expanding our industry connections within the Hunter Region, interdisciplinary research initiatives and enhancing our global collaborations. By leveraging the strengths of our diverse academic community, we aim to address some of the most pressing challenges facing society and our region today. We are also exploring new ways to engage with the broader academic community and share our research findings with a wider audience, ensuring that our work has the maximum possible impact.

Professor James Skinner
Dean and Head of School




Professor Jamie Carlson
Deputy Head of School Research




Dr Heidi Wechtler
Deputy Head of School
Research Training




NBS BY NUMBERS

85

Engaged School
Researchers

100

HDR Students
Enrolled

8

Areas of Critical
Research Mass

143

Journal
Articles

published in 2024

77%

of Publications
Ranked A*/A

26%

Increase in
Research Income

from 2023

Top 175

in the world -
Business and Economics

Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2024

Top 250

in the world -
Accounting and Finance

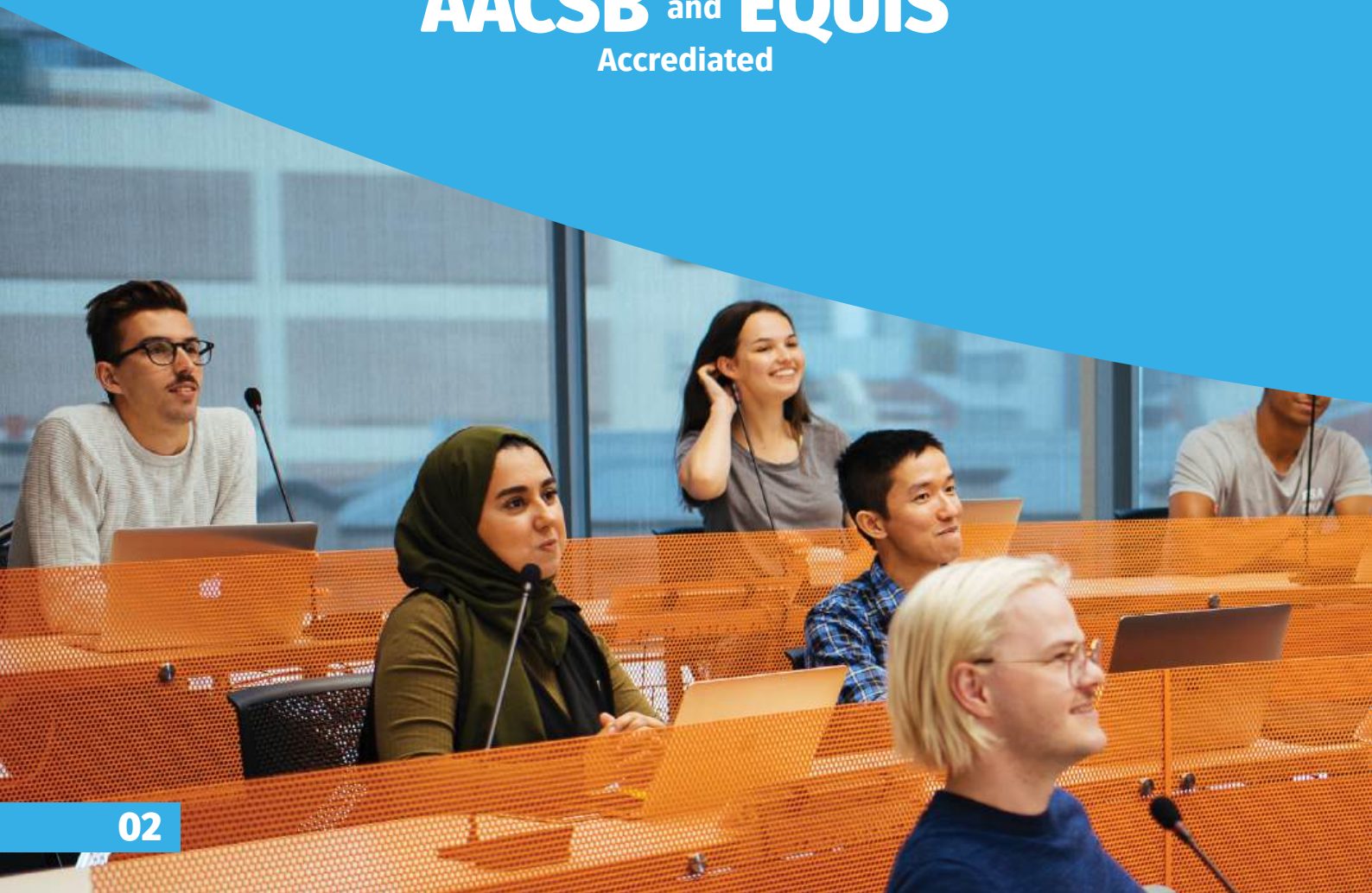
QS World University Rankings 2024

2,980

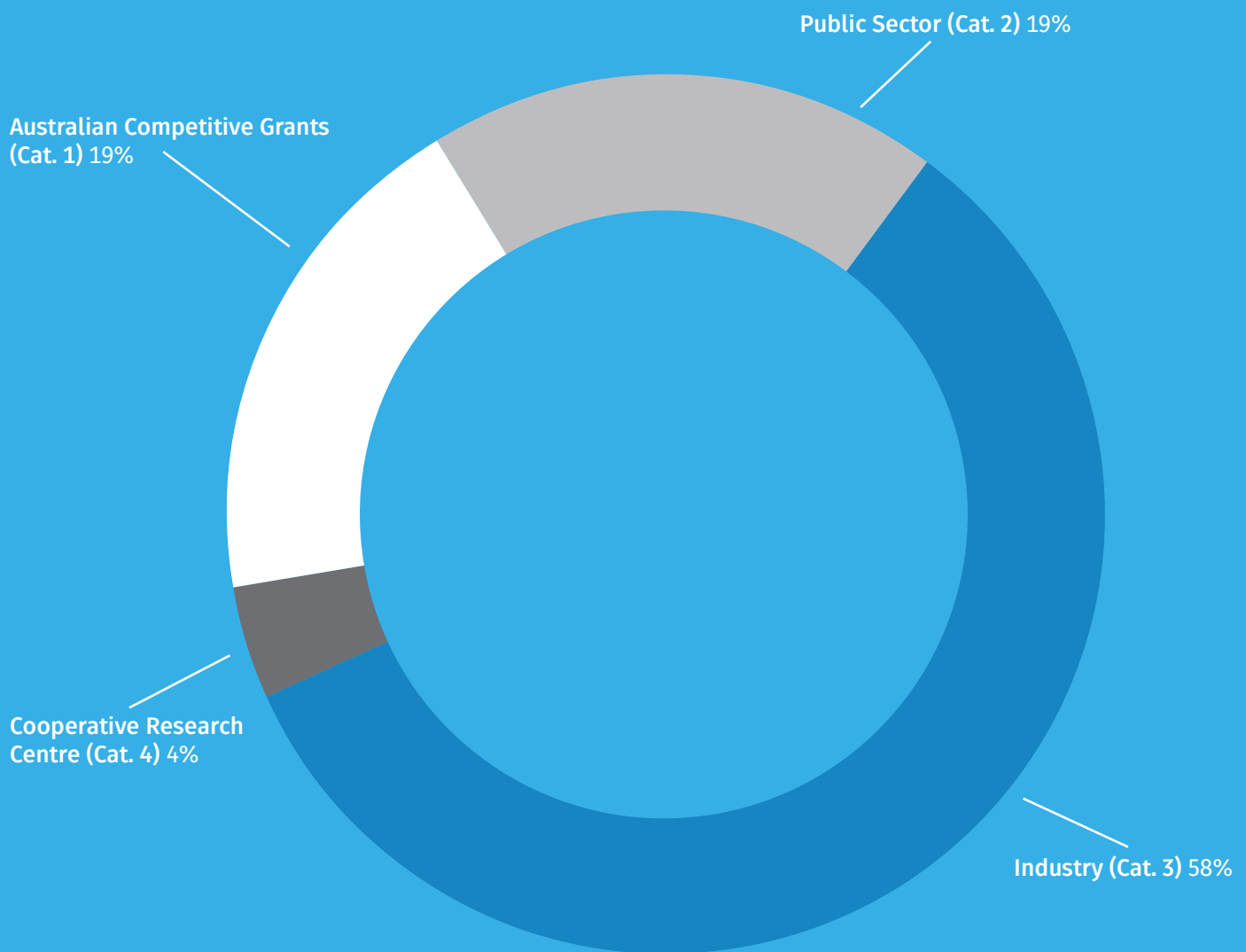
Citations

in 2024

AACSB and EQUIS
Accredited



NUMBER OF GRANTS BY FUNDING CATEGORY



WORLD-CLASS RESEARCH

NBS's research is helping find innovative solutions to global and regional challenges in business and society across a range of profit and non-profit sectors. NBS facilitates research activity that enables the University to drive impact in the strategic priority areas of:



DIGITALISATION

Explore how individuals, organisations and societies embrace technological and digital advances underpinned by the principles of responsible management.



ADVANCED DATA ANALYTICS

Explore frameworks and methodologies that empower organisations to harness the full potential of data in driving decision making and competitive advantage.



SUSTAINABILITY

Explore the development of responsible and resilient organisational practices and a deeper understanding of the role organisations play in addressing global sustainability challenges.



ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND INNOVATION

Explore how individuals and organisations create new value in existing organisations or through new ventures by exploring and shaping opportunities.

ACCREDITATIONS

NBS's commitment to excellence in research is exemplified by our accreditations from leading international bodies. Our EQUIS accreditation reflects our adherence to rigorous international standards, validating the high quality and professional relevance of our education programs and research. Our AACSB accreditation signifies our dedication to strategic management, learner success, thought leadership and societal impact. As an advanced signatory of the Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME), we are committed to integrating responsible management principles into our research, education and community engagement. These accreditations underscore our focus on student-centred, research-driven teaching, aiming to advance responsible and impactful business knowledge.





FACILITIES

MARKETING TECHNOLOGY LAB

The Marketing Technology Lab drives industry-relevant research at the intersection of consumer behaviour and technology, supporting academic staff and HDR students in collaboration with industry partners. By leveraging cutting-edge digital and immersive technologies—including virtual and augmented reality, omnichannel platforms, and AI-driven analytics—the lab provides actionable insights that help businesses enhance customer experiences and engagement strategies. It also facilitates real-world experimentation through flexible research spaces, integrating qualitative and quantitative methodologies such as surveys, focus groups, and behavioural analysis.

Recent projects have directly addressed industry and societal needs, such as developing new measurement frameworks for digital customer experiences across the metaverse, retail, and social media. The lab's research informs omnichannel marketing strategies that drive customer engagement, examines avatar-based identity in virtual spaces, and evaluates digital interventions for mental health and substance use. Additionally,

it explores the impact of connected packaging in the wine industry, helping brands optimize consumer trust and retail engagement.

Spanning retail (wine, omnichannel commerce), digital platforms (social media, e-commerce, metaverse), and technology-driven health and community services, the lab's work generates practical insights for businesses and policymakers. By working with global and local partners, research from the lab supports industry transformation and helps organizations adapt to rapidly evolving digital landscapes.

In the Hunter Region, the lab strengthens industry capabilities by enhancing wine and retail sector engagement strategies, supporting regional innovation, and advancing digital health service delivery. Its work aligns with the University's strategic priorities, delivering impact through partnerships that benefit both commercial enterprises and non-profit organizations. Research from the lab is consistently published in top-tier marketing journals, reinforcing its role as a thought leader in the field.

[More information](#)



GREATER BANK FINANCE LAB

The Greater Bank Finance Lab is a cutting-edge research and learning facility designed to enhance the Newcastle Business School's capacity for finance research, data analytics, and financial literacy studies. Established through a partnership between the University of Newcastle and Greater Bank, the lab provides an advanced environment for investigating financial markets, investment strategies, and the role of financial literacy in economic well-being.

Researchers and students have access to FactSet, a real-time financial database used globally by analysts and fund managers, as well as Rotman Interactive Trader (RIT), a market simulator that supports empirical research in trading behaviours and financial decision-making. These resources facilitate rigorous quantitative and behavioural finance studies, enhancing the Business School's research impact.

The lab also serves as the Business Analytics Co-Design Lab, fostering interdisciplinary research in financial technology, big data, and business intelligence. Scholars can leverage state-of-the-art tools such as Python, R, Tableau, and TensorFlow to conduct advanced analytics,

predictive modelling, and natural language processing research. This aligns with the School's commitment to digitalisation and data-driven decision-making in business research.

The lab's strong emphasis on financial data analysis also supports research into taxation and regulatory compliance. Dr. Vien Chu, received funding from the Accounting & Finance Association of Australia and New Zealand to investigate income tax non-compliance in small and micro enterprises owned by socially or economically disadvantaged individuals. Through observations and interviews at the Newcastle Tax Clinic, Dr. Chu identified key barriers to tax compliance among those with limited capacity to manage taxation responsibilities. This research, informed by real-world financial data and behavioural insights, aims to assist Australian tax authorities in developing targeted enforcement strategies for vulnerable taxpayers—an area of increasing significance given the persistent challenges in tax compliance and the financial pressures faced by small businesses in recent years.

[More information](#)

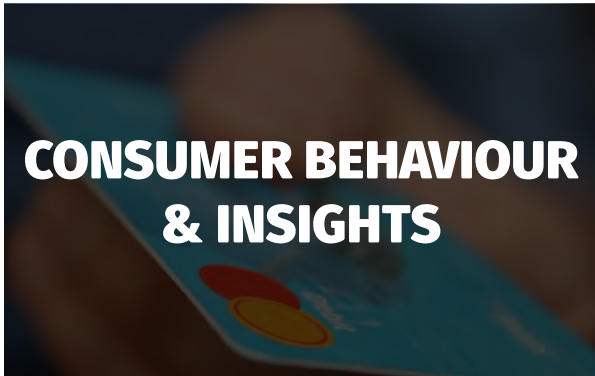
AREAS OF CRITICAL RESEARCH MASS

Informed by the four transversal themes on innovation and entrepreneurship, digitalisation, data and sustainability, NBS in 2024 has developed focused areas of research mass to tackle these issues which will be used to build upon in 2025 and beyond. These areas include:



ACCOUNTING FOR ENVIRONMENT & SOCIETY

Explores the nexus of accounting practices with environmental and societal impacts, emphasising the critical role of accounting in promoting sustainable development, climate change, responsible business practices, and financial literacy.



CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR & INSIGHTS

Explores consumer psychology and behaviour to provide insights that guide effective socially responsible strategies for organisations to engage consumers in digital and physical environments.



HEALTH & ECONOMIC WELLBEING

Integrates development, environmental, monetary and health economics to create sustainable solutions for economic and healthcare challenges.



INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION & DEVELOPMENT

Examines the dynamics of knowledge sharing, supply chain collaboration and the political and economic forces shaping global markets and communities. This research explores how governance, policy, and international relations influence trade, development and cross-border cooperation.



SUSTAINABLE & INNOVATIVE BUSINESS IN THE DIGITAL AGE

Explores sustainable and innovative business practices in the digital age, driving responsible growth through technology and principles of responsible management.



SUSTAINABLE FINANCE

Explores sustainable finance and governance to enhance financial systems' efficiency, inclusivity and impact in addressing global challenges.



TOURISM, HOSPITALITY & EVENTS

Undertake research that provides actionable insights to tourism stakeholders and policy makers on how to design, implement and promote sustainable tourism projects and experiences.



WORKFORCE RESILIENCE AND TRANSFORMATION

Explores workforce changes, diversity, work nature, and transformation through collaboration, technology and economic shifts.



RESEARCH OUTPUT

Academic Contributions

In academia, research recognition and prestige are built on several key scholarly activities. Critical metrics include the publication of peer-reviewed journal articles, service as editorial board members in leading journals, the citation impact of academic publications, and the supervision of PhD scholars. A widely recognized benchmark for journal quality in Australia is the Australian Business Deans Council (ABDC) Journal Quality List. In its most recent review (2022), journals were categorized into four tiers: A* (the top 16%), A (61%), B (18%), and C (2%). This classification system helps assess research impact and guide publishing strategies within the academic community.

Research output in 2024 reflects a continued trajectory of growth and excellence at Newcastle Business School. The total number of journal publications increased by 30%, rising from 110 in 2023 to 143 in 2024. This growth is particularly significant in high-impact journals, with A* publications increasing by 71.4% and A-ranked publications growing by 23.9%. These results highlight the school's commitment to producing high-quality research that meets rigorous academic standards.

Beyond publication volume, the influence of our research is expanding, as evidenced by



a 14.6% rise in citations, from 2,600 in 2023 to 2,980 in 2024. This growing citation impact highlights the increasing recognition of our work across academic and professional communities.

International collaboration remains a cornerstone of our research strategy. The number of A* publications featuring international co-authors increased by 50%, demonstrating the value of global partnerships in advancing research quality and expanding its impact.



RESEARCH INCOME

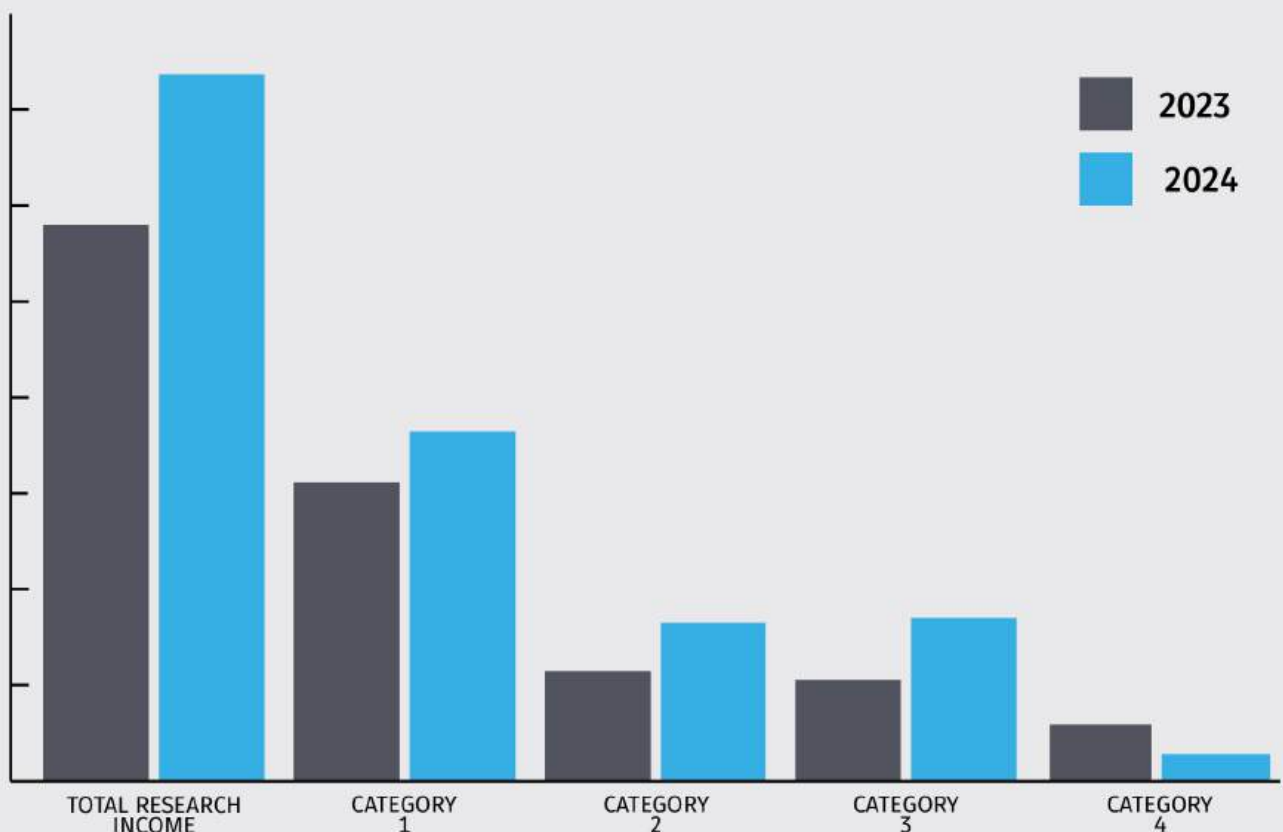
The research income of Newcastle Business School in 2024 reflects strong growth and increasing external recognition. Total funding rose by 26.4%, from \$580,820 in 2023 to \$733,940, driven by significant gains across multiple funding categories.

- Category 1 funding (competitive grants) grew by 18.2%, highlighting the school's success in securing prestigious research funding.
- Category 2 funding (industry collaboration) increased by 55.4%, underscoring the school's strong engagement with industry partners and commitment to producing research with real-world applications.

• Category 3 funding (consultancy and contract research) experienced the most substantial growth, rising by 67.8%, reflecting high industry demand for the school's expertise in addressing complex business challenges.

This overall growth in research income demonstrates the school's ability to align its research strengths with funding opportunities, reinforcing its role as a key contributor to academic and industry advancements. Major funding sources, including the Department of Health and Aged Care and the Australian Centre for Student Equity and Success, further highlight the school's impact on critical societal issues and its growing research reputation.

Research income in 2023 and 2024



RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

Understanding Retail Trading Trends in Volatile Markets

Retail trading behaviours on the Australian Stock Exchange during COVID-19 lockdowns highlighted the risks associated with market speculation. During this period, the rise of ‘finfluencers’—social media personalities offering financial advice—coincided with an increase in retail investors treating the stock market as an alternative to gambling.

Associate Professor Mardy Chiah explored these trends on the *Money Rules* podcast, discussing how investor preferences during lockdowns often led to poor-performing stocks, mirroring the negative expected returns of gambling. His insights contribute to a broader understanding of financial decision-making and market behaviour.

Australians’ Attitudes to Work and Workplace Regulation

Dr Josh Healy has been published in ‘New Technology, Work and Employment’, an esteemed journal in the field. This publication is the culmination of a multi-institutional project launched in 2022, strategically supported by Newcastle Business School under the leadership of Professor Abul Shamsuddin.

The research, timed to coincide with the Australian Federal Election in May 2022, involved a comprehensive national survey capturing Australians’ perspectives on work and workplace regulation. These insights contribute significantly to contemporary debates on employment conditions, workplace rights, and regulatory frameworks in Australia.

Supporting Migrant Employment in Newcastle

Newly arrived migrants in the Newcastle and Hunter region are receiving targeted support to enhance their employability through a specialised training initiative. Designed to address the socio-cultural and professional skills essential for workforce integration, this

program aligns with the Australian Government’s Core Skills for Work Developmental Framework.

Held at NuSpace in June 2024, the event provided 30 participants from diverse backgrounds—including international students, temporary workers, skilled migrants, and refugees—with half-day workshops, one-on-one coaching, and follow-up Zoom sessions to support their employment journey. The initiative has drawn interest from local government, with Lake Macquarie City Council exploring future collaborations to expand its reach.

Newcastle Business School’s Dr. Jeannie Lee is actively engaged in this effort as part of the Advancing Refugee Employment Project, ensuring research-driven solutions that contribute to sustainable employment pathways for migrants. Her leadership in this initiative was recognised with the Outstanding Engagement for Research Impact Award at the 2024 Engagement Awards.



Major Industry Grant Awarded for Research Translation Pilot Program

A major industry grant from ACARP has been awarded to Associate Professor Brendan Boyle and his collaborators at *Macquarie University’s Health and Wellbeing Research Unit* to launch the “Resilience at Work” pilot program. This initiative aims to translate the findings from their previous mixed-method study into a practical intervention to enhance psychological resilience and mental health in the Australian mining industry. As part of the project, Brendan is receiving funds

to partner with a local industry collaborator in the Hunter Valley, focusing on improving workforce wellbeing and applying research insights directly to organisational practices. This translational project represents the next step in bridging academic research with real-world impact.

Fostering Decolonial Feminist Dialogues through Southern Solidarities Markets

Associate Professor Sara Motta and Professor Bina Fernandez (University of Melbourne) secured funding to host the Southern Solidarities and Kinships workshop in Spring 2024. This event brought together First Nations peoples, people of colour and scholars from the Global South to explore new ways of building feminist solidarity and support networks.

The workshop created a welcoming space where participants could share experiences, knowledge and strategies to challenge systems of inequality. By drawing on both modern and traditional wisdom, the event encouraged fresh perspectives on strengthening community ties and overcoming social and political divisions.

Through this initiative, Associate Professor Motta played a key role in advancing global discussions on solidarity and justice, helping to shape new approaches to equity and inclusion that challenge outdated power structures.

Innovative Research Advancing Digital Currency Security

The Newcastle Business School has entered into a strategic partnership with AUDC, Melbourne, a leading fintech innovator in the blockchain space and issuer of the Australian Digital Dollar (AUDD). This collaboration, led by Prof Shah Miah, is supported by industry funding over the next 3.5 years.

The project will focus on groundbreaking design research to enhance the efficiency and security of AUDD through the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and advanced cybersecurity solutions tailored to digital finance services. The research will develop innovative AI-driven solutions to improve blockchain security, threat detection, and decision-making capabilities for AUDD.

Starting with a comprehensive review of the current technological landscape, the project will develop a robust system architecture, smart contracts, and

AI algorithms to address emerging cybersecurity challenges in the stablecoin ecosystem. This initiative marks the first digital currency academic research conducted at an Australian university to develop a fully functional research ecosystem in this domain.

Fostering Global Innovation: Newcastle Business School Partners with ESCP Berlin

On 12 November 2024, Dr. Timothy Hor and Mr. Bert Verhoeven visited ESCP Berlin, one of the world's oldest business schools, where they engaged in discussions with Professor René Mauer and Professor Christoph Seckler from the Center for Design Science in Entrepreneurship (DS). The centre focuses on integrating design science with entrepreneurship to tackle complex, real-world challenges.

The visit highlighted ESCP Business School's recent achievements, including the Executive MBA's #2 global ranking in the *Financial Times* 2024 evaluation. The discussions culminated in the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Newcastle Business School and the ESCP Center for Design Science in Entrepreneurship.



This collaboration will explore new multidisciplinary approaches to innovation, leveraging the University of Newcastle's Innovation & Entrepreneurship Academy. The partnership will focus on:

- Design Science as a framework for problem-solving
- Entrepreneurial competencies to drive transformation
- Generative AI (GenAI) to improve efficiency and impact

This partnership reflects Newcastle Business School's commitment to advancing global innovation through interdisciplinary collaboration.



Workplace Law Reform and Public Discourse

In collaboration with Dr. Andi Pekarek from the University of Melbourne, Dr. Josh Healy from Newcastle Business School has contributed to an opinion piece published in the Newcastle Herald titled Closing Loopholes: Navigating Australia's New Workplace Landscape. The article examined the complexities of recently implemented national workplace laws, particularly their implications for jobs in the gig economy.

Furthering this engagement, insights from this research were featured on ABC Radio's Friday afternoon drive-time segment, where the discussion focused on the article and the broader impact of these workplace reforms. These contributions highlighted the real-world relevance of this research and reinforced its role in public discourse on pressing labour market issues.

Shaping Australia's Health Reform Agenda

Equity and sustainability remain at the forefront of discussions on Australia's healthcare system, with ongoing fiscal challenges driving the need for meaningful reform. As the nation grapples with rising debts post-pandemic, policy responses—such as increased health levies and shifts in private health insurance incentives—highlight deeper structural issues within the system.

In an article for Croakey Health Media, Newcastle Business School researchers Josefa Henriquez and Francesco Paolucci examined these critical pressures and propose actionable pathways for reform. Their insights contributed to broader policy discussions aimed at strengthening Australia's healthcare landscape.

Australia-Korea Superannuation and Pension Symposium

A/Prof Bobae Choi secured funding from the Australia-Korea Foundation, supported by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, to support the organisation of the Australia-Korea Superannuation and Pension Symposium. In November 2024 at the University of Newcastle's Sydney Campus, the symposium brought together academics, policymakers, and industry experts to explore trends, challenges, and opportunities in the superannuation and pension systems of Australia and Korea.

This initiative enhances international collaboration and informs policy development in financial security and retirement planning.



Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA) Grant

A research team from Newcastle Business School including Professor Christina Boedker, Dr Zhongtian Li, Dr Jing Jia and Dr Karen Handley were awarded a competitive research grant from the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA). The project aims to explore how management accountants leverage their expertise in risk management and internal information systems to effectively mitigate cyber risks within organisations.

This research will contribute to a better understanding of the evolving role of management accountants in digital security and corporate risk governance.

NSW Revenue Grant for Payroll Tax Study

Professor Boedker and Associate Professor Choi secured a research grant from NSW Revenue for a feasibility study on streamlining payroll tax submission processes. The study, titled Feasibility

Study on Streamlining the Submission Process for Payroll Tax Information to Revenue NSW by Utilising Data Already Furnished to the ATO, aims to reduce duplication in payroll tax reporting, thereby lowering compliance burdens for businesses and improving operational efficiency across government agencies.

The research team will prepared a 15-page report for Revenue NSW, outlining benefits, opportunities, and strategic recommendations for simplifying tax submission processes.



This project builds upon previous research in tax policy and compliance, reinforcing Newcastle Business School's role in shaping policy and improving regulatory frameworks.

Digital Innovation and Cybersecurity in Supply Chains

Professor Shah Miah was been awarded funding from the Australian Research Council (ARC) Linkage Program for a project on digital innovation and cybersecurity in global supply chains. This project, in collaboration with key industry partners, developed new frameworks for managing digital security risks in international trade and logistics. The research enhances the resilience of supply chains against cyber threats while improving operational efficiency.

Enhancing Digital Tourism Experiences: Collaborative Research on the Coffs Coast Mobile App

As part of a collaborative, multistakeholder project, Dr Paul Stolk and Dr Alex Taylor engaged with the Coffs Harbour City Council (CHCC) Destination Development team to focus on the digital user experience of the newly developed Coffs Coast tourism mobile app for the region. The collaboration was first established in 2022, focusing on the evaluation and co-design of the mobile app which launch in 2024. Since the launch of the Coffs Coast app, which includes geo-location, augmented reality and storytelling elements

unique to the Coffs region, Dr Stolk and Dr Taylor visited the CHCC destination development team to conduct a focus group and a series of interviews with key industry stakeholders from the local business community (including tour operators, accommodation providers, and local attraction marketing managers) as well as CHCC staff involved in the development and rollout of the app. This data was collected and will be supplemented in 2025 by a further round of interviews with University of Newcastle students to analyse the design, layout and usability of the app itself.



Together with the CHCC Destination Development team, the UON research team led by Dr Stolk and Dr Taylor worked to provide insight into the role that mobile apps can play in facilitating key tourism outcomes (dispersal, engagement, patronage, advocacy) throughout the Coffs Coast region and the value of digital experiences to destination level marketing strategies.



AWARDS AND RECOGNITION ACHIEVED BY COLLEAGUES

The faculty and HDR students of Newcastle Business School have received significant external and internal awards and recognition in 2024, highlighting their commitment to research excellence and societal impact. These include:



Associate Professor Alicia Kulczynski
appointed as Associate Editor for the
Journal of Consumer Behaviour.



Professor Marianna Sigala
recognised among the Top 2%
Cited of Scientists List.



Associate Professor Mardy Chiah
appointed as Deputy Editor for
Accounting and Finance journal.



Dr Jeannie Eun Su Lee
outstanding Engagement for
Research Impact Award at the 2024
Engagement Awards.



Associate Professor David Shao
recognised among the Top 2%
Cited of Scientists List.



Dr Timothy Hor
appointed as as Fellow of the
Center for Design Science in
Entrepreneurship.



Associate Professor Sara Motta
awarded Inaugural Equity Advance
Research Fellowship and elected Chair of ISA
Feminist Theory and Gender Section.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION ACHIEVED BY HIGHER DEGREE RESEARCH STUDENTS

Business School HDR students have excelled, with notable achievements including the HDR Award for significant contributions to health economics and the Highly Commended HDR Award for impactful research in Indigenous tourism. These accolades reflect the school's strong support for student researchers and its commitment to advancing research that addresses critical societal issues, such as health disparities and sustainable tourism. Furthermore, the success of HDR students in competitions like the Three-Minute Thesis and various colloquium awards highlights their ability to effectively communicate complex ideas and engage diverse audiences. Overall, these recognitions underscore Newcastle Business School's standing as a hub for innovative, impactful, and globally relevant research.

HDR Student Recipients of NBS Awards:

- **Chiara Berardi**
HDR Award for research on health systems and inequalities.
- **Shea Calvin**
Highly Commended HDR Award for research on Indigenous tourism.
- **Farhana Ahmed**
Best Thesis Award for research on migration and remittances.
- **Aisha Muthaffar**
Best Publication Award for work on omnichannel journey satisfaction.
- **Stefano Bruzzo**
First prize in the Three-Minute Thesis competition.
- **Salini Khuraijam**
Second prize in the Three-Minute Thesis competition.
- **Samia Afrin Shetu**
Third prize in the Three-Minute Thesis competition.
- **Md Rezaul Karim**
Best video presentation award in HDR Colloquium.
- **Amine Lekmiti**
Best Research Poster award in HDR Colloquium.
- **Alexandra Gibson**
Best Research Art award in HDR Colloquium.
- **Nathan Farrall**
Commendation for Best Art award in HDR Colloquium.

HIGHER DEGREE RESEARCH ACTIVITY

Higher Degree Research (HDR) activity at Newcastle Business School in 2024 reflected both progress and challenges. HDR completions increased from 11 in 2023 to 17 in 2024, showcasing the school's commitment to supporting students through to successful outcomes. This reflects the strength and dedication of our HDR program in fostering research excellence.

The achievements of HDR students in 2024, including award-winning research and impactful publications, demonstrate the program's ability to contribute meaningfully to both academic and societal progress. These successes highlight the school's focus on cultivating high-quality research talent in critical areas such as sustainability, data analytics, innovation and digital transformation, supported by robust scholarships, industry partnerships, and mentorship programs. The continued growth of HDR activity also reinforces Newcastle Business School's position as a hub for innovative, socially impactful research that addresses global and industry challenges.





The 2024 HDR Festival at the University of Newcastle successfully highlighted the intersection of research, creativity, and community engagement. This event brought together researchers, students, and thought leaders, fostering collaboration and showcasing innovative research initiatives. Key highlights included the 'Visualise Your Thesis' exhibition, where one-minute videos and research posters showcased the diverse work of HDR students. Additionally, team-building challenges, such as the Lego experiment, provided participants with hands-on opportunities to explore complex research concepts. The '3 Minute Thesis' competition featured impressive presentations, with NBS HDR student Stefano Bruzzo-Gallardo securing a podium finish and a \$1,000 prize.



The festival also included workshops and expert insights. Professor Bo Nielsen from the University of Sydney led a comprehensive session on Structural Equation Modelling, supporting both new and experienced researchers in refining their skills. Dr. Nici Sweaney contributed valuable perspectives on the responsible use of AI in research, initiating thought-provoking discussions about its evolving role in HDR projects. Overall, the HDR Festival underscored the school's commitment to fostering a dynamic and collaborative research environment.



PHD EDUCATION

NBS is committed to the delivery of rigorous education, training and development. We equip the next generation of PhD graduates with the most up-to-date knowledge, technical abilities, and a skillset to solve problems facing industry. Here we meet three candidates at different milestones on their Higher Degree by Research pathways.



IRMA DUPUIS DAY PhD Completion

Dr Irma Dupuis Day completed her PhD at the University of Newcastle in March 2025. Her research examined the role of blockchain-enabled

smart wine packaging in shaping customer trust, value expectations, and engagement behaviours. With counterfeiting a major challenge in global wine markets, her work explored how blockchain technology enhances transparency, helping consumers verify product authenticity and origin. By investigating how consumers perceive and interact with blockchain-enabled wine labels, she provided new insights into how this technology can build trust and influence purchasing decisions.

“The technology already exists, but there is little evidence on how consumers engage with it. I wanted to answer questions like ‘Do consumers value this information?’ and ‘How do marketers encourage adoption of smart labels?’”

- Dr Irma Dupuis Day

Irma’s research was supported by industry partners Tamburlaine Organic Wines, First Creek Wines, MCC Label, and Laava Inc., as well as a prestigious Wine Australia Research Scholarship. Under the supervision of Professor Jamie Carlson and Dr Alex Taylor at Newcastle Business School, she combined marketing, consumer behaviour, and emerging technology to develop practical applications for blockchain in the wine sector.

Beyond its industry implications, Irma’s research contributes to the broader understanding of digital trust and smart packaging adoption across different markets. Her findings offer valuable guidance for wineries, policymakers, and technology providers looking to integrate blockchain solutions into the supply chain.

Following her PhD, Irma joined the Adelaide Business School, University of Adelaide, as a Lecturer in Wine Business and Marketing. In this role, she continues to advance research into smart packaging, consumer engagement, and digital innovation in the wine industry and beyond.



YANJUN SUI
Recently
Commenced PhD

Yanjun (Michelle) Sui is a 2nd-year PhD candidate in accounting and finance.

Her research,

co-supervised by Associate Professor Mardy Chiah and Dr Cathy Wu, explores the relationship between green innovation and venture capital (VC) funding. Her project examines how green innovation affects a firm's attractiveness to venture capitalists, particularly the role of green patents as credible indicators of innovative capacity.

Michelle's work critically assesses how VC enhances the development and commercialisation of green innovations by providing financial resources as well as strategic and managerial insights. Her research underscores VC's essential role in overcoming green startups' key financing challenges, such as high initial costs and prolonged development timelines, which increase the likelihood of success in Initial Public Offerings (IPOs) and future performance.

By analysing how VC influences the success of green IPOs, Michelle's research contributes valuable insights to environmental sustainability. Committed to bridging theory and practice, her work informs investors and policymakers on optimising VC strategies for sustainability. Her research will help articulate clearer pathways for green firms transitioning from private innovation to public markets, supporting broader sustainability and economic objectives.



SALINI KHURAIJAM
PhD Candidate
Near Completion

Salini is an Economics PhD candidate at Newcastle Business School, researching

farmer soil behaviour and climate adaptation in Australian agriculture. Her research, initiated by Professor Frank Agbola and funded by the Soil CRC, is supervised by Dr. Heidi Wechtler, Professor Vaughan Higgins (University of Tasmania), and Dr. Balaji Seshadri (University of Newcastle).

Australia has some of the most ancient, highly weathered soils, making sustainable management a critical challenge. Despite clear benefits, many farmers hesitate to adopt soil conservation practices. Salini's research takes an interdisciplinary approach, combining economics, behavioural insights, and climate yield forecasting to aid conservation efforts. Her work goes beyond economic incentives, exploring how farmers' values, identity, and risk perceptions influence decisions. She also models and forecasts crop yields under different climate scenarios, equipping farmers with data-driven tools to navigate environmental and economic uncertainties. Using large-scale Australian survey data and advanced econometric techniques, her work ensures rigorous analysis of farmer behaviour and policy effectiveness.

After her PhD, Salini aims to continue economic research that informs policy across sectors. She is particularly interested in using data-driven insights to shape evidence-based policies addressing real-world economic and social challenges.

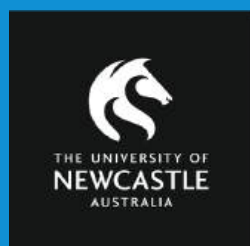
CONCLUSION

Newcastle Business School's 2024 research achievements highlight our commitment to delivering real-world impact through innovation, collaboration, and thought leadership. This year's successes—ranging from breakthroughs in sustainability, digitalisation, data analytics, and entrepreneurship to stronger industry partnerships and increased research funding—demonstrate our ability to bridge the gap between academic excellence and societal progress.

As we look ahead to 2025, we will expand interdisciplinary research, deepen industry engagement, and secure competitive funding to drive transformative solutions for business and society. Our focus remains on tackling global challenges, influencing policy, and empowering communities through evidence-based insights. Additionally, we will enhance the visibility of our research impact by sharing our findings more broadly through public events, media, and community outreach programs. By harnessing our diverse expertise and strengthening our commitment to research excellence, Newcastle Business School is positioned to shape the future of business, industry, and society—both locally and globally.







**NEWCASTLE
BUSINESS
SCHOOL**

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