

INSPIRING PEOPLE STRATEGY

LOOKING AHEAD STRATEGIC PLAN 2020-2025



THE UNIVERSITY OF
NEWCASTLE
AUSTRALIA



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The University of Newcastle acknowledges the traditional custodians of the lands within our footprint areas: Awabakal Nation, Darkinjung Nation, Biripai Nation, Worimi Nation, Wonnarua Nation and Eora Nation. We also pay respect to the wisdom of our Elders past and present.



Cover Artwork: *Parray Yayirri* (Right across the land) the Wollotuka/Auchmuty Library Collaborative Art Project 2021

The Story: Students and staff came together to learn about Country, and to share bush tucker with the backdrop of our beautiful natural environment at Callaghan campus as inspiration. Artworks were created from personal responses to place, while students and staff listened to song and stories. All these parts came together to make the whole, a communal artwork to beautify the Wollotuka Indigenous learning space at Auchmuty Library.

Artists: Jess Cheer, Lay Bee Choo, Paula Convey, Tegan Betts, Coral Black, Ben Bourke, Rosemary Bull, Koan Cashman-Carter, Felicity Cocuzzoli, Loren Collyer, Amelia Cullinan, Selina Darney, Tamara Fish, Rhyall Gordon, Kyllie Gow, Rebecca Hale, Narelle Hampe, Jacqui Harris, Keely Hine, Harichandana Janardhn, Vivienne Jarrett, Samantha Jay, Mathew Jerrard, Larissa Johnson, Jane King, Madi Lock, Kate McIntosh, Rebecca McLean, Angus Miller, Kylie Moore, David Parsons, Hannah Pipe, Deb Posker, Helen Robertson, Jennie Skulander, Linda Stout, Kua Swan, Ruth Talbot-Stokes, Hollie Tose, Nathan Towney, Rhyann Roberts, Anna Rolfe, Paige Wright.

Designed by: Nicole Chaffey with Anna Rolfe from a bush tucker concept by Joel Grogan

Supported by: Tammy Small – Cultural Convenor, Joel Grogan, Kylie Moore, Anna Rolfe, Madi Lock, Angus Miller

The Collaborative artmaking/placemaking workshops were instigated by Aunty Bronwyn Chambers, Elder in Residence at the Wollotuka Institute, University of Newcastle.

With special thanks to Dr Ray Kelly for the name Parray Yayirri Awabakal translation for right across the land.

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MESSAGE FROM THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

Our outstanding people and their commitment to our vision, purpose and values are what sets our University apart from others.

This *Inspiring People Strategy 2020-2025* is recognition of the important role every staff member plays in achieving our *Looking Ahead* vision of being a world-leading university for our regions. It is a commitment to supporting you, our staff, to grow and to realise your full potential with us so that together we can achieve great things for our students, our communities and the world.

This is a plan to create the right environment to allow talent to shine and opportunities to be seized, so that you can progress in your careers, no matter what field or profession. This strategy seeks to foster wellbeing and deep engagement among our people, with our values at the core of everything we do.

Professor Alex Zelinsky AO
Vice-Chancellor and President



“With our dedication to excellence and equity, our focus on engagement, and our commitment to sustainability, we will build on the passion, commitment and expertise of our people to focus on collaboration, innovation and agility.”

Looking Ahead Strategic Plan 2020-2025



MESSAGE FROM INSPIRING PEOPLE LEADERS

The *Inspiring People* strategy marks an opportunity for us, as a University staff community, to take our impact to the next level. It guides us as individuals to aim for excellence in everything we do and it is a roadmap for the University to support our aspirations and to celebrate our individual and collective achievements.

Your success is our shared success. As a University community we see our efforts play out in the achievements of our students, the impact of our research, in meaningful connections with our communities and in our global standing. Our ability to deliver with excellence relies on us being innovative, flexible, collaborative and driven. It also relies on us having the best systems and processes in place to support your efforts.

Inspiring People is more than a list of tasks. It is a series of interconnected initiatives and improvements that will enhance the experience of every employee of the University and those who are yet to join us. It is a roadmap to guide us through this next important phase, with our sights set on being a community of outstanding inspired, engaged and connected individuals all contributing to something bigger.

Jennifer Milam
Pro Vice-Chancellor Academic Excellence

Martin Sainsbury
Chief People and Culture Officer

OUR VISION: ENGAGED AND INSPIRED PEOPLE

We understand and value the important contribution our people make in realising our teaching, research and community engagement objectives. In a rapidly changing and increasingly competitive environment, we need to support and develop our people to adapt and thrive in a changing world.

To be a sector leader in staff engagement, we strive to deliver an employee experience that allows all staff to contribute at their highest levels and to realise their unique potential. To do this, we will achieve the following outcomes:

- enable and drive a high performing institution
- build leadership and capability to provide career growth and development opportunities
- attract, retain and nurture outstanding talent
- foster a values-based, collaborative and inclusive culture

Our staff will be highly engaged with our strategy and exemplify our values. Through our focus on talent and leadership, our reputation will make us the university of choice for prospective staff.



*Staff members: Dr Chethana Illankoon,
Rob Brooks and Rachael Laybutt*



DELIVERING OUR VISION: OUR PRIORITIES

Our journey will be focused around five priority areas that support our people in engaging with our values and mission.

The University's Wellbeing Health and Safety Strategy 2020-2025 was issued in early 2021 and separately addresses the health and safety priority area.

To achieve our vision, we will:

- be grounded in our values of excellence, equity, engagement and sustainability
- recognise the outstanding contributions our people make to our success
- be informed by the many challenges facing the higher education sector, and look beyond this sector for guidance
- support our people to adopt change and leverage opportunities
- adopt an enterprise approach to people management
- think creatively and be open to new ideas
- commit to continuous improvement and high performance

Our Inspiring People Strategy is aligned with the following United Nations Sustainable Development Goals:





A HIGH-PERFORMING INSTITUTION

A contemporary high-performance culture involves inspired leadership, engaged people, a focus on excellence and impact, effective cooperation and collaboration, an enterprising approach and a strong focus on delivering strategic goals. We need to create the right conditions for all our people to achieve excellence and to adapt to changing circumstances throughout their careers.

We will:

- reshape performance expectations models for academic and professional staff based on a continuous improvement model
- enhance performance by reviewing recent performance and coaching to impact, development and growth
- build in-house capability to support change in a timely and adaptable way



KEY INITIATIVES

Dedicated to high performance

We are dedicated to high performance at all levels of the organisation. Leaders and managers need to embed a culture of high performance founded on consistent processes aligned to our organisational strategy.

We will:

- develop and implement the Foundations for Inspiring People for both academic and professional staff as the basis for nurturing and evaluating the achievements of staff
- embed a culture of performance and career development through regular conversations and annual planning and review, demonstrating commitment to career development for all staff
- enhance our processes and support for driving high performance in all our endeavours
- address underperformance with transparency, fairness, and in a timely manner
- manage workloads through guiding principles and agreed criteria

Coaching for enhanced performance

We are committed to creating an environment where our leaders and managers support our staff to achieve their best. This will in turn support our focus on excellence in our teaching, research and operating environment.

We will:

- support leaders and managers to coach for performance and set clear performance goals and expectations, fuelled by data
- upskill leaders and managers to drive high performance in an environment of change through improving their capability for two-way performance conversations
- support staff to have a shared understanding of their performance expectations and career development and planning opportunities as part of our performance planning processes

Enhancing resilience and adaptability

Our sector faces significant global challenges post-COVID, but there are also opportunities to shape the future of higher education. We can support our staff to lead the way through enhanced resilience and adaptability, supporting an enterprising approach.

We will:

- implement the Adaptability Framework to help leaders, managers and staff respond more effectively to the impacts of change
- develop and implement initiatives to support improvements in resilience and psychological well-being of our leaders, managers, and staff
- equip leaders and managers to have constructive conversations with staff on their development, career progression and mobility opportunities

MEASURING SUCCESS

We will see:

- strong engagement of leaders, managers and staff with performance review processes as evidenced by annual performance review completion rates
- improved staff satisfaction with performance evaluation as evidenced by staff survey results
- improved staff satisfaction with organisational change approaches and support as evidenced by staff survey results and feedback



BUILDING LEADERSHIP AND CAPABILITY

Recognising the increasingly dynamic and challenging environment in which universities operate, strong and transformational leadership will be required to maintain our position as a world-leading university for our regions. We will support our staff to develop the leadership skills required to build organisational capability and drive performance. We will prioritise engagement with high-performing students, bringing them into our organisation to nurture the next generation of academic and professional talent through pathways into academia and the higher education sector.

We will:

- focus on growing leadership capability at all levels and prioritise leadership capability when recruiting new staff
- promote succession planning to provide greater structure to leadership development planning
- maximise opportunities for our leaders to learn from the experience of others



KEY INITIATIVES

Developing our leaders

An integrated approach to leadership excellence will enable the University to grow leadership capability and support leaders to drive performance in an increasingly competitive environment.

We will:

- refine our leadership framework, including our leadership behaviours, to support delivering on our Strategy
- ensure that academic and professional leadership roles are assessed against standard criteria, including leadership capability
- enhance our range of leadership development opportunities tailored to individual needs

Recognising our internal talent

Recognising and developing our staff through enhanced opportunities for development and career progression will improve staff engagement and performance.

We will:

- better support our staff on their career journeys through a succession and career planning framework
- explore and enhance opportunities for our staff to access student programs
- improve capability of leaders and managers to engage with staff on career development and progression

Next generation workforce

Our commitment to nurturing our students as our next generation of academic and professional talent will see us recognised for our distinctive approach.

We will:

- introduce cadetship style programs to expand our Work Integrated Learning offerings
- increase work placement opportunities for students within our University
- review the feasibility of programs to support our students to transition to employment opportunities within the sector

MEASURING SUCCESS

We will see:

- a more focused stewardship of the University's strategic directions as evidenced through achievement of strategic KPIs and increased staff satisfaction with leadership as evidenced through surveys
- improved staff satisfaction with career opportunities evidenced by staff survey results
- a greater number of students gaining employability skills and training with our institution

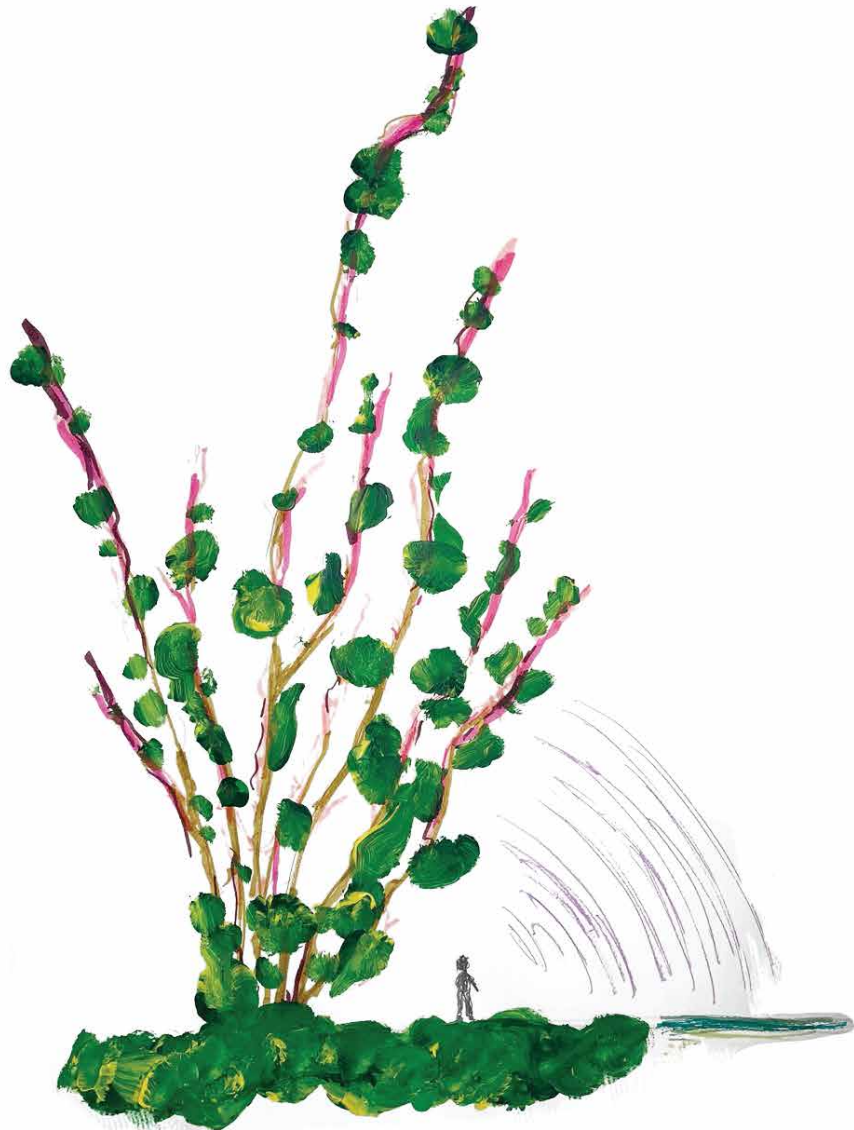


OUTSTANDING TALENT

The ability to attract, nurture and retain high performing staff who are dedicated to upholding our values will be a key factor in our future success in serving our students and communities. We will ensure our Employee Value Proposition is aligned with best practice to:

We will:

- leverage the strength of our brand and cement our reputation as an employer of choice to attract and retain top talent
- realign our recruitment and talent processes to our values and reflect the diversity of our regions and students
- increase staff engagement, motivation and commitment through supporting career development and mobility



KEY INITIATIVES

Top talent

We aim to attract, hire and retain high performing talent. To achieve this, our “offer” as an employer must improve our ability to attract, nurture and retain the best staff.

We will:

- develop and implement a compelling Employee Value Proposition that leverages the strength of our brand and distinguishes us from our competitors globally
- support the development of internal talent and career mobility, as well as the identification of exceptional external talent
- proactively build talent pools and pipelines that focus on identified critical skills

Effective recruitment practices

We need to deliver an outstanding candidate experience that is engaging and attractive to high calibre applicants.

We will:

- redesign our talent policy, procedure and processes and implement new systems to support an enhanced experience for candidates
- develop and implement initiatives to actively engage with talent pool candidates for critical roles within our institution
- develop strategic partnerships with search firms/ recruitment agencies to maximise the effectiveness of external recruitment campaigns

Supporting growth and career development

Our support for the development of staff skills and capabilities is critical to future success.

We will:

- develop tailored career development programs for academic and professional staff to grow and nurture career mobility, pathways and pipelines
- implement initiatives to enhance development opportunities for staff including the “staff as students” model enabling staff to not only benefit from professional development but also gain opportunities to undertake educational programs offered by the University
- develop and implement a strategic workforce planning framework to support alignment of our workforce to the future of work

MEASURING SUCCESS

We will see:

- increased interest from high-performing candidates (internally and externally) for our roles
- increased satisfaction with our recruitment practices evidenced through candidate survey results
- increased staff satisfaction with learning and development evidenced through staff survey results

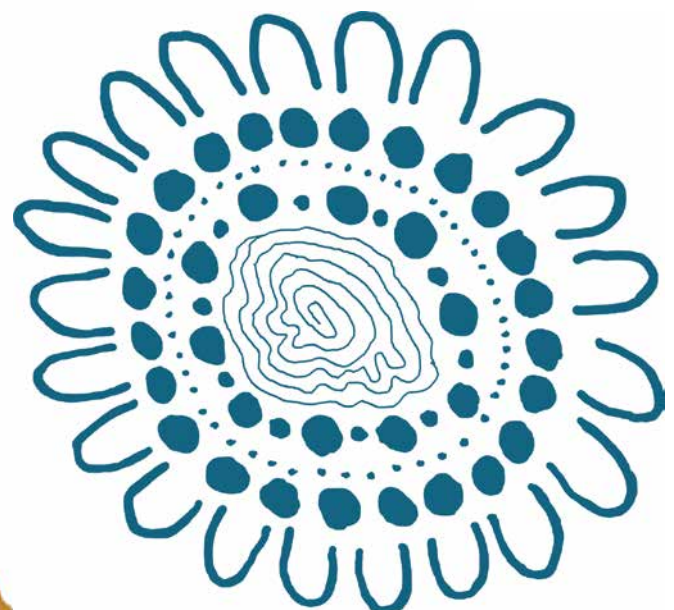
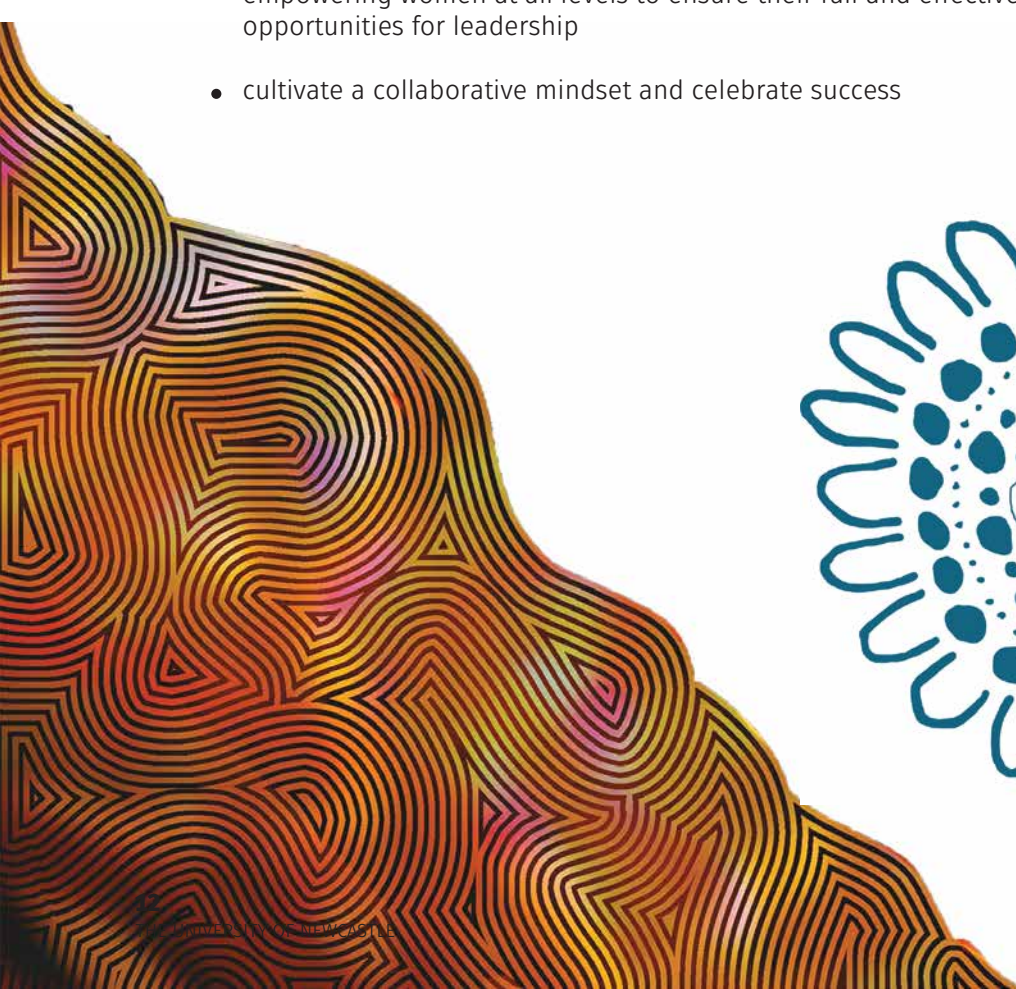


A VALUES-BASED CULTURE

We will build a culture grounded in our values of excellence, equity, engagement, and sustainability, bringing a range of perspectives, disciplines and expertise to our community. Valuing diversity and inclusion, fostering collaboration and celebrating achievements will be essential to shaping our values-based-culture.

We will:

- ensure our strong culture is grounded in our values and reinforced consistently across our institution to support and enhance staff engagement, motivation and commitment
- embed equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) principles to create opportunities at all levels
- foster leadership practices that maximise EDI outcomes
- support the achievement of our Athena SWAN and UN SDG 5: Gender Equity aspirations through empowering women at all levels to ensure their full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership
- cultivate a collaborative mindset and celebrate success



KEY INITIATIVES

Enhancing staff engagement

Our staff should feel valued and have a sense of belonging. Our values ground and drive staff engagement and commitment.

We will:

- regularly assess staff opinion and continue to survey our staff to understand their concerns, with action plans developed to address issues being raised
- enhance our organisational culture through stronger promotion of a values-based organisational culture
- review our orientation and induction programs as well as our recognition and reward programs to ensure they foster enhanced staff engagement and a values-based culture

Fostering equity, diversity and inclusion

We are deeply committed to equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) as well as promoting Indigenous employment opportunities.

To support our commitment, we will:

- establish an Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee to guide the University's EDI progress
- ensure EDI objectives are firmly embedded in our recruitment and career development processes
- enhance a culture of inclusion through implementation of inclusive leadership training for leaders and managers to support and drive our EDI commitments

Cultivating collaboration and celebrating success

Cultivating a collaborative mindset and celebrating achievements have been recognised as essential to shaping our values-based culture.

We will:

- actively pursue opportunities for people to collaborate through sharing their talents and experiences and facilitating cross-unit collaboration
- enhance our recognition and reward programs to celebrate staff achievements and better reward collaborative efforts across our institution
- embed coaching and mentoring frameworks and initiatives to promote greater self-awareness and cross-organisational collaboration

MEASURING SUCCESS

We will see:

- higher levels of staff engagement as measured through staff survey results
- improvements in our EDI outcomes across our institution
- improved staff collaboration evidenced through staff survey results

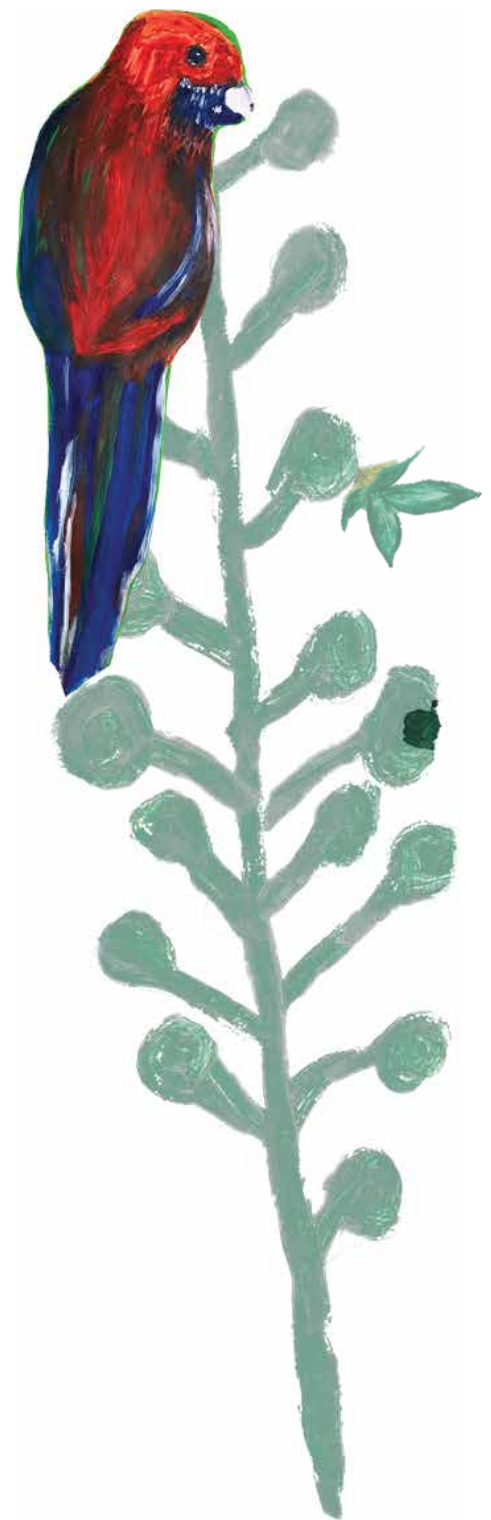


CONTEMPORARY PROCESSES AND SYSTEMS

Effective people management is underpinned by clear policy, high performing HR services and fit-for-purpose systems. There are also opportunities to use data, analytics and management information more effectively to inform decisions and understand trends. Ongoing progress is required in all these areas to lift capability to the standard required in a high performing organisation.

We will:

- ensure that the policy framework is simple and user-friendly and that people management is evidence-based and aligned with organisational objectives
- deliver HR services that are fit-for-purpose, responsive and supportive
- progressively redesign our processes and upgrade systems to supports organisational people management objectives
- improve communications to staff, managers and leaders on all elements of HR activity



KEY INITIATIVES

Transforming HR service delivery

Our staff and managers will be provided with a range of contemporary HR services, advice and support to reduce the administrative burden of day-to-day tasks.

We will:

- develop and publish a service catalogue to outline our offerings and associated service standards
- work with Colleges, Schools, Divisions to redesign our services and service delivery models for our core services
- enhance the strategic capability of the HR function to better support the University's strategic direction

Refreshing our HR systems

Many HR systems are out-of-date and not user-friendly. This reduces efficiency, creates manual workarounds and discourages effective use of systems.

We will:

- review business processes to determine the need for updated systems functionality
- implement new solutions progressively to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of HR processes
- train staff to use new technology

Enhancing HR data and analytics capability

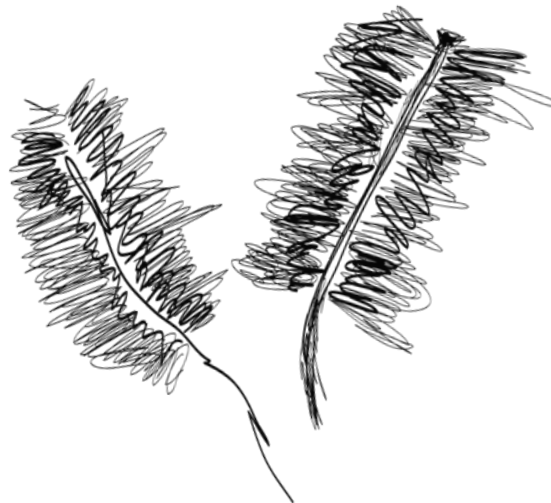
Enhancing HR data and analytics capability is essential to support a high performing institution. This will be supported by improved communications and awareness about our people.

We will:

- improve availability of HR core data within our enterprise systems
- develop and implement a suite of HR operational and strategic metrics to support evidence-based decision making
- build our internal analytics capability to support managers and leaders to make better informed decisions impacting our people

MEASURING SUCCESS

- we will see improved staff satisfaction with HR services as evidenced by staff survey results and direct feedback





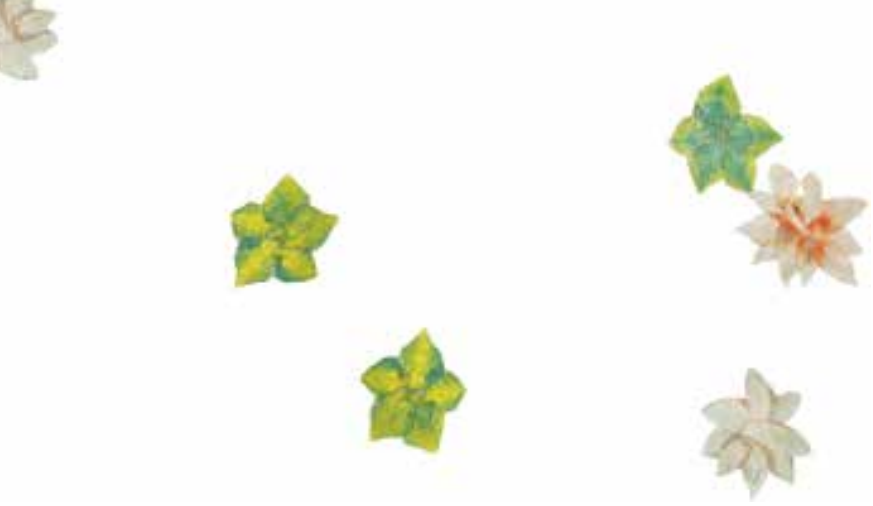
IMPLEMENTING OUR STRATEGY

Annual operational plans will be developed to support the achievement of this Strategy.

IMPLEMENTATION TIMEFRAME

STRATEGIC PRIORITY	INITIATIVE	2020	2021
HIGH-PERFORMING INSTITUTION	Dedicated to high performance		
	Coaching for enhanced performance		
	Enhancing resilience and adaptability		
BUILDING LEADERSHIP AND CAPABILITY	Developing our leaders		
	Recognising our internal talent		
	Next generation workforce		
OUTSTANDING TALENT	Top talent		
	Effective recruitment practices		
	Supporting growth and career development		
VALUES-BASED CULTURE	Enhancing staff engagement		
	Fostering equity, diversity and inclusion		
	Cultivating collaboration and celebrating success		
CONTEMPORARY PROCESSES AND SYSTEMS	Transforming HR service delivery		
	Refreshing our HR systems		
	Enhancing HR data and analytics capability		

SCALE UP/TRANSITION



2022	2023	2024	2025
MAXIMUM EFFORT	LOWER INTENSITY OF EFFORT	LOWER INTENSITY OF EFFORT	MAXIMUM EFFORT
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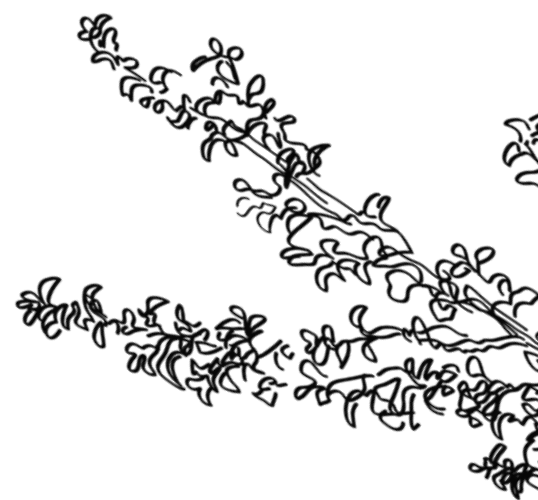


MEASURING OUR SUCCESS



PRIORITY	2025 GOAL
HIGH-PERFORMING INSTITUTION	Dedicated to high performance
	Coaching for enhanced performance
	Enhancing resilience and adaptability
BUILDING LEADERSHIP AND CAPABILITY	Growing leadership capability
	Recognising our internal talent
	Next generation workforce
OUTSTANDING TALENT	Top talent
	Effective recruitment practices
	Supporting growth and career development
VALUES-BASED CULTURE	Enhancing staff engagement
	Fostering equity, diversity and inclusion
	Enhancing staff engagement
CONTEMPORARY PROCESSES AND SYSTEMS	

These measures are our headline expression of success and will be supported by more detailed reporting to Executive and Council.



KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR

Performance Measure	Baseline		2025 Target	
	Year	Result		
Performance Review and Development (PRD) completion rates	2020	30%	100%	
Performance appraisal scale (Your Voice Survey scale)	2021	52%	70%	
Satisfaction with how change is handled (Your Voice Survey)	2021	28%	50%	
Composite of confidence in Head of Division/College, Director/HOS/Supervisor (Your Voice Survey))	2021	73%	85%	
Career opportunities scale (Your Voice Survey)	2021	35%	60%	
Number of students entering the University through WIL placements, cadetships, Graduate programs, and general recruitment)	2021	TBA	TBA	
Employee recommendation (Your Voice survey)	2021	65%	80%	
Post candidate survey results	2021	TBA	TBA	
Learning and Development scale (Your Voice survey)	2021	51%	70%	
Engagement scale (Your voice survey)	2021	73%	80%	
Proportion of Senior Roles held by women)	Professional	2019	47.9%	50%
	Academic	2019	30.3%	37.5%
Communication and Cooperation scale (Your Voice survey)	2021	42%	60%	
Customer satisfaction with HR Services from internal Customer Satisfaction Survey results	2021	TBA	TBA	

OUR TALENT MATURITY LEVEL

Our previous Workforce of the Future initiatives have set the foundations to enhance our strategic capabilities in talent management and staff development.

The Bersin High Impact Talent Maturity Model provides a five-tier model that plots the journey from:

1. DEVELOPING
(significant gaps, reactive)

2. BASIC
(some functional skills, poor documentation / processes)

3. PROGRESSING
(clearly defined critical skills and capabilities, informal)

4. ADVANCED
(formal, aligned/integrated to strategy)

5. MARKET LEADING
(strategic, sustainable, sophisticated and evolving)

An independent review of the strategic maturity of the University's Human Resources function completed in 2019 determined that we are currently positioned mainly within the Basic and Progressing tiers. Supporting systems were also found to be outdated or inadequate to support contemporary people management processes.

This *Inspiring People Strategy 2020-2025* recognises our current capability needs significant uplift and supports the journey to a Market Leading state.







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