

IMPACT REPORT

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HunterWiSE is dedicated to enhancing gender diversity in STEM in Newcastle and the Hunter region by encouraging the participation of girls and women in STEM education and careers.

HunterWiSE strives to create opportunities for women and girls during pivotal periods in their education and professional journeys, with actions designed to challenge unconscious bias, raise the profile of diverse role models in STEM, enhance understanding of the range and impact of STEM careers, and provide networking and professional development opportunities for women in STEM careers.



DIVERSITY DRIVES INNOVATION

HunterWiSE aims to support and grow the crucial contribution of women in STEM to regional economies through three interlinked actions.

HUNTERWISE OUTREACH

This 10-week program for female students in Year 8 aims to positively influence how school-aged girls perceive STEM and encourage participation in STEM education.

HUNTERWISE ACADEMY

Through scholarships, employment pathways and professional networking, HunterWiSE Academy empowers tertiary students to thrive in STEM - building confidence, leadership capability and strong industry connections.

HUNTERWISE NETWORK

HunterWiSE fosters a strong regional network of women in STEM, providing opportunities for networking and mentorship within the local community.

PARTNERSHIPS MAKE THIS POSSIBLE

HunterWiSE initiatives are made possible through the generous financial and in-kind support received from the University of Newcastle and industry partners, as well as the commitment of the HunterWiSE Network.

HunterWiSE is funded through grants and donations, with all proceeds supporting the development, delivery, and evaluation of our initiatives.

Thank you for your support in 2025.



HUNTERWISE OUTREACH 2025



RELEVANT, REWARDING, AND A WAY TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

HunterWiSE Outreach aims to positively influence girls' perception of STEM.

Each student group identifies a problem in their community and with the support of their mentor, applies STEM skills to design a solution. The students pitch these solutions to industry representatives.

Surveys of students before and after the Outreach Program indicate a significant improvement in attitude towards wanting to be a scientist or engineer, as well as improvement in attitude towards STEM careers.

HunterWiSE Outreach is provided at no cost to students and schools, with a focus on reaching those who might lack access to similar opportunities.



12
SCHOOLS



170+
STUDENTS



45
PROJECTS



30
MENTORS



3
ALUMNI

YOU CAN'T BE WHAT YOU CAN'T SEE

HunterWiSE Mentors play a crucial role in HunterWiSE Outreach. This all-female team of University students role model STEM education and careers, and play an important part in shaping the students' STEM identity. HunterWiSE provides mentors with training and ongoing support. Our 2025 team comprised of 30 mentors representing different STEM degrees and pathways to higher education.

Being surrounded by a team of women who are so successful in their respective studies and careers has greatly empowered me to continue to strive for a successful career in STEM ~ 2024 HunterWiSE Mentor



STEM FOR SOCIAL IMPACT

In 2025, HunterWiSE students tackled community issues that included e-bikes speeds in urban areas, sustainability in the construction industry, access to sporting facilities, public safety, and disability awareness. Students' STEM-based solutions included apps and websites, as well as coded RFID tags, sensor systems, drainage designs, and community spaces.

GIVING BACK

Three former HunterWiSE students have joined our mentor team. Amy (Aerospace Engineering), Lara (Science), and Sharlah (Renewable Energy Engineering) participated as Year 8 students. Together, they have mentored 38 students.

HUNTERWISE ACADEMY 2025

The Academy empowers university students, extending the HunterWiSE journey beyond school and into impactful STEM careers.

HunterWiSE Academy builds confidence, leadership capability and strong industry connections through scholarships, mentoring and professional networking. This vibrant community includes:

- HunterWiSE Mentors - female STEM students who inspire the next generation through the Schools Outreach Program.
- HunterWiSE Alumni - former Outreach participants now studying STEM at the University of Newcastle.
- Scholarship Recipients - women supported with financial assistance and access to professional networks.

These actions help shape STEM professionals who are confident, connected future leaders.

In 2025, the Academy had 30 active student mentors - including three Outreach alumni - totalling 101 since 2017. The community also welcomed 2025 HunterWiSE Women in STEM Scholar, Takara Stolk, and NCIG-HunterWiSE Scholars, Cordelia Field and Victoria Daniela.

HUNTERWISE NETWORK 2025



The HunterWiSE Network comprises of more than 700 members. HunterWiSE strives to deliver events that are relevant, engaging, and provide opportunities to celebrate the achievements of women in STEM in our region.

More than 700 people registered for our Network events in 2025.

- Neurodiversity in the STEM Workplace
- Industry Partner & Mentor Networking event
- International Women in Engineering Day
- Generative AI in the Classroom
- Presentation Night (attracting a record crowd!)



Network events are also an opportunity for University students and industry representatives to establish professional connections, thereby bolstering the STEM pipeline.



5
EVENTS



707
REGISTRATIONS



8
SPEAKERS



800+
MEMBERS

HunterWiSE is amazing! Thanks for a high-quality learning and networking opportunity. This event was super valuable and worthwhile. It felt like a safe collaborative space.

HunterWiSE Network Member

HUNTERWISE CASE STUDY

MENTORING MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN SINGLETON

A powerful mentoring connection between University of Newcastle PhD candidate Elizabeth Torres Arce and Singleton High School student Amber shows how STEM can drive real community change.

As part of the HunterWiSE Schools Outreach Program, Amber set out to solve a household frustration - discovering expired food only after arriving home from the shops. With Elizabeth's guidance, Amber created a prototype using low-cost RFID tags to alert shoppers at checkout when products are expired, reducing waste and saving money.

Amber's innovation earned her an Outstanding Project prize at the HunterWiSE Presentation Night, and her tenacity in pursuing her project solo drew respect from industry and community alike. While the program is designed to benefit Year 8 students, it was Amber's mother Elizabeth who identified its wider impact on families and communities:

"HunterWiSE has been really good for our family. It's helped us to understand other ways that we can help the community, and how STEM is a pathway to do that."



For students without family in STEM careers, role models like Elizabeth build confidence and a sense of belonging. The success of students like Amber - and the feedback from families - demonstrates the importance of HunterWiSE's long-term commitment to the Upper Hunter. With the support of industry partners, HunterWiSE will continue to empower young women to see themselves as future STEM leaders.

HUNTERWISE TRACK RECORD SINCE 2017



**900+ students from
22 high schools**



**95 speakers at 40+
events**



**101 female STEM
mentor roles**

WE GO FURTHER, TOGETHER

HunterWiSE works at the intersection of academia, education, local government and industry to enhance opportunities for women and girls' participation in STEM. HunterWiSE collaborates with the University of Newcastle and industry partners to make a difference in the community. We are proud of our engagement track record, demonstrated by our long-standing relationships with industry and year-on-year growth across all initiatives.

Thank you to our industry partners who contributed to the success and impact of HunterWiSE initiatives in 2025.

We look forward to opportunities for collaboration in 2026.

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