

Bold Ideas, Brighter Future

Sustainability Plan
to 2025



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Let's become better stewards of the earth.

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Let's become better stewards of the earth.

From uncovering novel approaches to applying them in innovative ways, we can all be pioneers in creating meaningful, positive change.



Sustainability Plan to 2025 – Our bold plan

In 2018 we released our draft Sustainability Plan for consultation and called on our Flinders community to submit bold ideas for a brighter future. The result? We received almost 500 unique ideas to help us achieve a more sustainable tomorrow.

We've used the results of this feedback to formulate an action plan and map our path to 2025. Our vision and our commitments are detailed here, in our Sustainability Plan. Each year we'll revisit and refresh our priorities, report on our progress, showcase our successes and celebrate our achievements.

As one of the world's leading universities with global reach and impact, we are perfectly placed to make Flinders University a true Living Laboratory. We can experiment, collaborate, ideate, create and innovate – in our research and education, and right across our campus operations.

We'll seize every opportunity to work collaboratively with each other to embed sustainability into everything we do.

We'll set bold targets and aspire to be one of the first carbon positive universities. And we'll continue to work with our communities, partners, governments and industry with the ultimate aim of addressing real-world sustainability challenges.

Importantly, this work aligns with our courageous mission statement – to change lives and change the world. I strongly urge all of our students, staff and broader Flinders community to take every opportunity to embrace sustainability. I know we have the talent, capacity and capability right here to make our world a better place.

I'm truly inspired by your bold ideas, your vision and your passion. I look forward to seeing just how much we can achieve together and to being part of a brighter future.

Professor Colin Stirling
President and Vice-Chancellor



We are on Kurna land and...

recognise that Flinders University operates on Indigenous peoples' traditional lands and waters, and acknowledge their continued responsibility to care for country at the University's various teaching locations, including the lands and waters of the following peoples: Kurna (main campus at Bedford Park), Arrernte, Boandik, Bungarla, Gunditjmara, Jawoyn, Larrakia, Nauo, Ngarrindjeri, Peramangk, Ramindjeri, Wurundjeri, Yolgnu.





Introduction

To me, sustainability is a collection of new opportunities, technologies and behaviours that we can blend together to live in a better, more balanced way.

We are a university with a significant geographic footprint spanning from Adelaide, through central Australia to Darwin. We have tens of thousands of people who attend, work and visit our campuses. Because of this, we consume large volumes of resources and generate waste right across our operations.

As a result, we have both an opportunity and an obligation to do things differently. Our campuses will become places where we embrace new technologies and emerging initiatives to drive sustainable behaviours. We are privileged to be the custodians of vast areas of land and many buildings and therefore we have an important responsibility to make sustainable decisions that will result in great social, environmental and economic outcomes.

We have already taken the first steps on our sustainability journey. We are home to one of South Australia's largest solar arrays, with more planned for the future. We are on board and actively using and promoting new transport technologies including solar, electric and autonomous vehicles.



Our sustainability projects support large and local scale on-campus initiatives that create positive change such as a market and community gardens and new student-led projects to reduce waste. And our researchers and educators are looking for new ways to minimise our greenhouse gas emissions and create a carbon positive future.

Ultimately, we know our people are the key to our success. We need our Flinders community to help us shape, drive and continue to evolve our sustainability journey because our future is up to us.

Mark Gregory
Vice-President (Corporate Services)

What we do locally benefits globally.

Our University community has a powerful part to play in how well our world responds to climate change.



Global Agreement on Climate Change Action

The Paris Agreement entered into force in November 2016 and for the first time brought all nations into a common ambitious effort to combat climate change.

The Agreement seeks to accelerate and intensify the actions and investment needed for a sustainable low carbon future.

Its central aim is to strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change by keeping a global temperature rise this century well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase even further to 1.5 degrees Celsius.

Many organisations including universities are leading the way on climate action by setting science-based targets to limit global warming and by catalysing business leadership to drive policy and accelerate a low carbon economy.

UN Sustainable Development Goals

The United Nations' *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* with 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at its core, is a guide to tackling the world's most pressing challenges – including ending poverty and building economic prosperity, social inclusion, environmental sustainability, peace and good governance.

With a broad remit around the creation and dissemination of knowledge, universities have long been powerful drivers of global, national and local innovation, economic development, and societal wellbeing. As such, we have a critical role in the achievement of the SDGs, including:

- Providing the knowledge, innovation and solutions to underpin implementation
- Creating current and future implementers
- Ensuring the goals are embodied within universities' own operations
- Providing cross-sectoral leadership in local, national and global implementation

University as a Living Laboratory

The concept of a University as a 'Living Lab' encourages collaboration between students, academics and professional staff to use the campus and surrounding community as a test bed for new ideas and innovations to deliver on our mission of 'changing lives and changing the world'.

A Living Lab program draws on the expertise and talent of students and staff to encourage application of knowledge to the real-world context, enhancing skills of those involved and increasing connections that lead to new ideas and new ways of thinking and acting.

The Living Lab is an on-ground, cross-disciplinary approach that aims to generate new discoveries, which can be used to inform the implementation of the University's Sustainability Plan in ways that can be replicated and applied on a local, regional, and global level.



Our values

A shared sense of purpose, together with a common set of values is fundamental to a rewarding culture. Our collective success depends upon the achievements of our people, and it is our culture that will sustain that success into the future.

Integrity

We will champion diversity and equality of opportunity, respecting peoples from all nations, cultures and backgrounds.

Courage

Our success will rely on dynamic staff, ready to embrace the challenges and opportunities presented in a rapidly changing environment. It requires a culture of trust and empowerment, built on the bedrock of common values and a shared sense of purpose.

Innovation

Research and creative endeavour have been core to Flinders University's identity since its inception.

Excellence

The achievements of our staff, students and alumni will be celebrated and communicated to the wider community.

We will

- ➔ Encourage the student voice
- ➔ Celebrate student achievement
- ➔ Focus on student success
- ➔ Provide timely and meaningful feedback
- ➔ Empower students as partners

Student centred

Our underlying ethos of being student centred will be a distinguishing feature of the Flinders experience and will be the measure by which we judge the impact of innovation in teaching and student support.

Our plan to 2025.



We can all make a difference to tackle climate change and now we have the best and brightest ideas to build a more sustainable future.

At Flinders University, we believe in 'changing lives and changing the world' for the better. It is more important than ever for an aspiring global university like Flinders to lead the way in shaping a more sustainable planet. Our new Sustainability Plan to 2025 has harnessed the collective ideas from across our University community and documents a renewed and enhanced focus on sustainability that will support delivery of our 2025 Agenda.

This University-wide plan contains targets, commitments and actions in the key areas of Research, Education and Operations. Inherent in the plan is a commitment to partner and collaborate with business, industry, government and communities to achieve our aspirations.

This plan applies to all Flinders University campuses and business units. Co-location partners, on-site vendors and key suppliers will be encouraged to partner with us - and staff and students - to achieve these goals.

The plan will be web based with a separate action plan focussing on funded projects for delivery in each calendar year. Progress will be reported as the actions are completed showing contribution towards achieving the stated targets and commitments.



Our Key Themes.

Our sustainability initiatives are formed on seven operational themes as well as our actions in research and education.



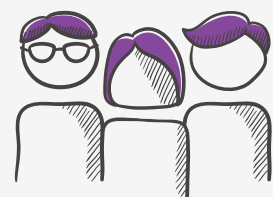
Education

Make a difference in our world as respectful and ethical global citizens



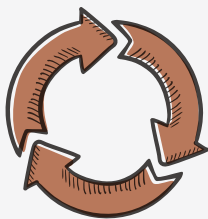
Research

Improve lives and enhance society as a whole



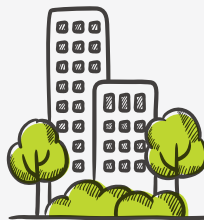
Social & Community

Apply our knowledge and expertise to deliver practical and economic benefits for social good



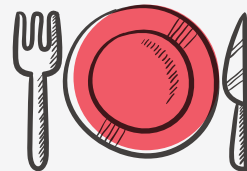
Resource Recovery

Create a circular economy for waste on our campuses



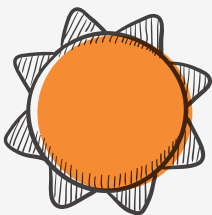
Buildings & Landscapes

Create places and spaces that support smart new ways of living, learning and working



Food

Transform our campuses into urban farms



Energy & Emissions

Go beyond carbon neutral



Water

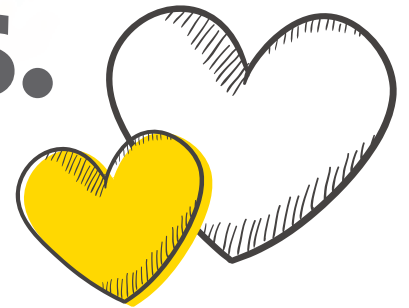
Treat every drop as a precious resource





Transport

Create a safe, healthy and sustainable transport network

We've listened and we love your bold ideas.



The top 10 insights from your feedback and the key themes they address:

- 1** Provide more information on how the university community can make sustainable choices 
- 2** Provide a forum for passionate sustainability advocates to have a say 
- 3** Find a better way to reduce, reuse or recycle more materials on our campuses 
- 4** Support the university community to engage in campus sustainability issues through funding and other support 
- 5** Eliminate single use plastics used for food and beverages 
- 6** Keep investing in renewable energy generation on campus 
- 7** Increase the community gardens on our campuses and grow more edible species 
- 8** Enhance the Lake and turn it into a sustainability demonstration site 
- 9** Continue to capitalise on efficiency opportunities in energy and water management 
- 10** Improve public transport options and support diversity in getting to, from and around campus 

Research & Education



Sustainability is at the core of our thinking and will be embedded in our research and education programs and flow through our everyday campus life.

Key Facts

In 2018 Flinders celebrated its

100,000th

graduate – helping to change lives and change the world



Research

Research is a fundamental cornerstone of the University's mission to change lives and change the world for the better. Through research, and research-led teaching, we build and develop the knowledge and capabilities that improve lives and enhance society as a whole.

Our Vision

- To build and develop the knowledge and capabilities that improves lives and enhances society as a whole
- Utilise our campus environments as Living Laboratories to support research to achieve our mission of changing lives and changing the world

Education

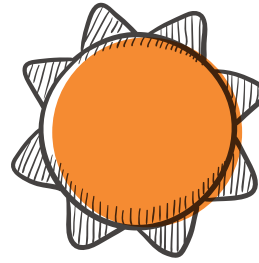
Our aim is to develop creative, enterprising, career-ready graduates prepared to become lifelong contributors to society as respectful and ethical global citizens.

In support of this, the Flinders educational experience includes many study areas with sustainability as a core theme, including business, arts, culture, engineering, health and sciences.

Our Vision

- Sustainability knowledge and values are embedded in all undergraduate degrees

Energy & Emissions



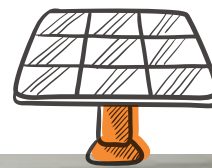
We won't stop at becoming a carbon neutral University. We will work towards a carbon positive environment by taking more carbon out of the atmosphere and developing a range of offset programs, both on campus and with offsite partners.

Key Facts

In 2018, the University was responsible for production of over

24,000

tonnes of carbon emissions (tCO₂-e)



As the University continues to develop, new and innovative ways will be required to generate and store electricity on-campus, while also providing it back to the electricity network in times of need.

Key design principles used in our award winning buildings at Tonsley and the Student Hub will be used in future developments to minimise electricity demand while providing ideal indoor conditions.

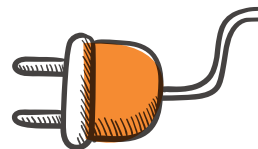
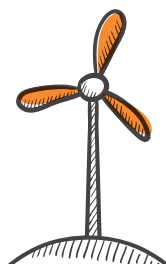
We will also address energy use in existing buildings by consolidating air conditioning equipment in key areas which will reduce maintenance, and eliminate emissions intensive gases used in existing systems.

Our Vision

- Become carbon positive

Current Pathway

- Achieve zero net emissions from electricity by 2021
- Generate 30% of our energy needs from renewable sources



Water



As the frequency and intensity of adverse weather events increases, it is more important than ever to use water efficiently and have multiple sources to manage the diverse needs on our campuses.



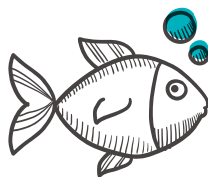
Key Facts

The University consumed over **200,000** kilolitres in 2018 which is equivalent to **80** Olympic swimming pools



With some of our buildings already piped for recycled water, we are well positioned to connect our main campuses to the local recycled water network. This will enable treated water to be used to flush toilets, and water gardens and sports fields, leaving high quality drinking water to be used for its intended purpose. We will also address water use in and around the Flinders Lake by enhancing the Central Park area as a multifunctional space for social interaction, outdoor teaching and research – a true Living Laboratory.

For people who choose different modes of on-campus transport such as walking, riding and scooting, we'll install more water fountains on our primary paths to ensure everyone stays hydrated and brings their own refillable drink bottles.

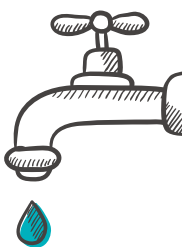


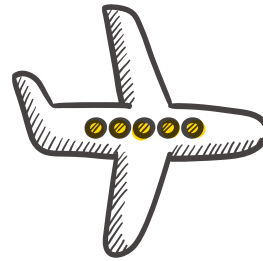
Our Vision

- ➔ All non-drinking water is supplied by harvested rainwater or recycled water sources

Current Pathway

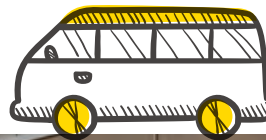
- ➔ Increase the use of recycled water on our campuses
- ➔ Reduce mains water usage by enhancing the Central Lake





Transport

We are prioritising actions to ensure students, staff and the broader community have access to safe, healthy and sustainable transport options, that support connectivity between our campuses.



Key Facts

In a typical year, University staff and students travel

30 million

kilometres by aeroplane



We will transform our fleet including buses, commercial and passenger vehicles to non-fossil fuel based vehicles and utilise our solar panels to charge them with renewable energy. At the same time, we will support emerging personal transport modes such as electric cars, bikes and scooters by providing charging infrastructure around our campuses.

With the completion of the Darlington Road works and Flinders Station due to open in 2021, we will support a range of options to transport staff and students from the station to key nodes of teaching and research.

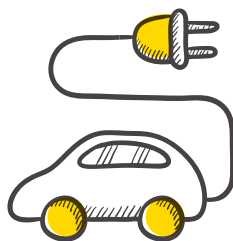
We will also advocate strongly with state government to increase the number and frequency of public transport options provided for our Flinders community to get to our main campuses.

Our Vision

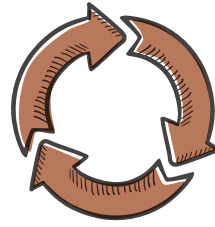
- Provide a mix of safe, healthy and sustainable transport options

Current Pathway

- Decarbonise our transport fleet by 2021
- Increase and support active transport options on campus



Resource Recovery



Waste is now becoming a valuable resource as new methods and economies are developed around recovering utility and value from used materials. We will embrace this circular economy and demonstrate how these new ways of treating waste can be rolled out.



Key Facts

The University diverts around

700

cubic metres of organic waste annually from landfill to be converted into garden mulch



To prevent the production of waste we will implement a range of standards and processes to support the purchase of goods and services from suppliers and campus retailers that avoid waste production, take back used materials and/or use more sustainable alternatives.

Where used materials are not taken back by suppliers, we will determine the ability for them to be retained on site and be reused or broken up into their constituents for repurposing.

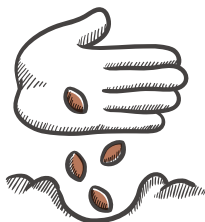
For the balance of materials that can't be treated on campus, we will ensure their final destination is the most sustainable option available in the sector and that regular audits are conducted to support transparency. This will require provision of up to date information and infrastructure in the form of recycling stations and signage to cover all the common sources of material.

Our Vision

- To recover the maximum possible utility and value from materials consumed on campus

Current Pathway

- Eliminate single use plastics by 2021
- Develop a makerspace to support creation of a campus circular economy to minimise waste and make the most of our resources



Buildings & Landscapes

With campuses across diverse environments in South Australia and the Northern Territory, we take pride in creating integrated, vibrant mixed use spaces that engender a sense of community for all.

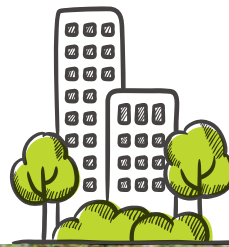


Key Facts

Our building at Tonsley is

50%

more efficient than a standard building



Our structures and landscapes are the building blocks of our campus environment and are responsible for consuming the most amount of resources in their construction, operation and maintenance. However, they can also give back, in the case of smart buildings through integrated energy production and in landscapes through their ecological services and amenity they provide to our community.

Our most recent award-winning buildings at Bedford Park and Tonsley demonstrate our commitment to the design and construction of environmentally sustainable buildings. We will apply similar principles to the portfolio of older buildings we have as plant and equipment reaches its end of life, and as we continually renew our facilities.

Our Vision

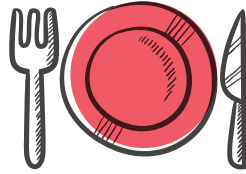
- Our campuses become places for our community to experience, learn from, and enjoy nature and sustainable development

Current Pathway

- Improve campus biodiversity and increase native vegetation
- Flinders Village becomes the urban heart of best practice, leading edge sustainable development



Food



Our campuses will become 'urban farms', supporting the production of food to enhance wellbeing, campus activation and community development.



Key Facts

The Bedford Park campus is

168

hectares in size
with a population of over

20,000

staff and students



We are off to a great start with the community garden at Sturt having already provided great organic produce for over a decade.

And with a crop already harvested from our new market garden, our plans are well advanced to expand this site to satisfy the community's demand for fresh fruit and vegetables.

We're making good progress at Bedford Park, and will look to our other campuses and determine their interest for similar food programs to support their local community.

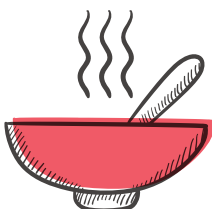
To close the loop, where possible organic waste will be gathered from food providers and student kitchens and will be recycled via composting and worm farms to provide nutrients for the next crop of produce.

Our Vision

- Transform our campuses into urban farms

Current Pathway

- Food grown on campus is consumed by our community
- Our food gardens support wellbeing and community participation



Social & Community



By providing thought leadership on matters of local, national and international significance, Flinders University will grow in profile and reputation, with an increased ability to speak to the world and make a positive difference.



Key Facts

The University's international student community is comprised of over

4,500

students from over

90

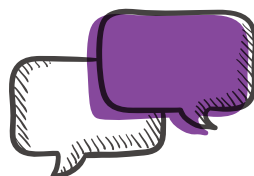
countries



Our community has spoken and are seeking more knowledge and information on how they can make sustainable choices while at University. Our Flinders community also want to be engaged on how programs are developed and are keen to participate to ensure success.

They see our campuses as Living Labs that can encourage collaboration between students, academics, professional staff and the surrounding community as a test bed for new ideas and innovations. We will provide direct support to encourage this collaboration and assist in replicating results that can be applied on a local, regional or global scale.

Also, as more organisations take on UN Sustainable Development Goals, the University will take a leadership role within the community to build common understanding and continue momentum.



Our Vision

- Continue to collaborate with business, industry, government and communities to find solutions to sustainability challenges on local and global scales

Current Pathway

- Knowledge campaigns are developed and delivered
- Communities of interest are developed to share information and prioritise action



Get involved

There are a number of opportunities for our Flinders community to be involved in sustainability on campus.

Stay tuned to:

-  flinders.edu.au/sustainability
-  sustainability@flinders.edu.au

