

Encounter

THE ANNUAL MAGAZINE FOR FLINDERS UNIVERSITY ALUMNI AND FRIENDS / 2023

Making space

Meet the space archaeologist
dissecting what astronauts
leave behind



Flinders
University

Acknowledgement of Country

Flinders University acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the lands on which its campuses are located, these are the Traditional Lands of the Arrernte, Dagoman, First Nations of the South East, First Peoples of the River Murray and Mallee region, Jawoyn, Kurna, Larrakia, Ngadjuri, Ngarrindjeri, Ramindjeri, Warumungu, Wardaman and Yolngu people. We honour their Elders past, present and emerging.

Uncle Mickey Kumatpi Marrutya O'Brien at Yungkurrinthe Inparrila – an outdoor cultural gathering space on Kurna Yarta (Bedford Park campus).
Photo by Ben Searcy

Flinders University forges ahead

2023 is shaping up to be another extraordinary year for Flinders University on almost any measure. Our performance has seen us forge ahead with unparalleled momentum in research growth, combined with outstanding results in education and student experience.

One such major prospect for growth is the AUKUS nuclear-powered submarine program. It is unparalleled in terms of advanced manufacturing and will be Australia's biggest defence investment for decades – and Flinders is ready to play its part.

An unprecedented focus on industry collaboration has culminated in Flinders establishing some of the most significant strategic partnerships of our time. In an Australian first, Flinders has forged AUKUS agreements with The University of Manchester and the University of Rhode Island, to bring some of the world's strongest nuclear expertise to Australia.

These landmark partnerships enable Flinders to offer the world's best nuclear undergraduate and postgraduate studies to students, as well as unique nuclear research collaborations, in support of the nation's largest ever infrastructure program.

Enabling our students to learn the world's best curricula is underpinned by our \$50 million investment in Australia's first industrial-scale advanced manufacturing accelerator, known as The Factory of the Future. Co-located at our Tonsley innovation campus with the South Australian Government's Technical College, this will be a world-first and place Flinders at the global forefront of developing vibrant industry linked research, education and training facilities.

At the same time, construction is well underway for Flinders' brand new, cutting-edge vertical campus in Festival Plaza, in the heart of Adelaide's CBD. Expanding to Festival Plaza will provide our students with new and innovative ways to study with us, and we look forward to welcoming students to our city campus in semester one, 2024.

Building on our proud history as a pioneer in innovative health, the construction of Flinders' new 10-storey Health and Medical Research Building (HMRB) is advancing well and will be the flagship building in the wider Flinders Village development in Bedford Park. Once complete, the building will be home to more than 600 medical researchers, clinicians and professional staff, translating world-class research into better health and wellbeing outcomes for the community.

Investment in HMRB is underpinned by significant growth in our research capabilities, demonstrative of Flinders' growing reputation as a research powerhouse. Building on a bumper Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF) round in 2022, seven new MRFF projects led by Flinders University researchers were awarded earlier this year with almost \$8.8 million in funding announced in the latest round.



Flinders ranked first in South Australia for the awarded MRFF funding. It is an important part of our significant overall research income growth, which has increased by more than 140% in just five years, reinforcing the quantity and quality of our research outputs.

Our academics have also continued to drive our reputation as a trailblazer in contemporary education, with students placing Flinders #1 in South Australia for student experience, #1 for learning engagement, and #1 for student support, testament to our unwavering student-centred culture.*

I would personally like to congratulate all those who graduated in both our December 2022 and April 2023 graduation ceremonies. Celebrating the achievements of our Flinders alumni gives me great joy and I encourage every one of you to keep in touch, utilise our alumni resources and make your mark on the world.

Colin J. Stirling

Professor Colin J. Stirling
President and Vice-Chancellor

Flinders University
2023 Investigator Lecture

6PM TUESDAY 24 OCTOBER
ADELAIDE TOWN HALL

[FLINDERS.EDU.AU/INVESTIGATOR](https://flinders.edu.au/investigator)

*The Good Universities Guide 2023

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Feeding your pursuit of knowledge



Meet Ted Wynn, a champion of advancement and lifelong learning.

You may be wondering who's this, and where is Kim Pryor, Alumni Relations Manager? Don't worry, she hasn't gone anywhere! Kim has kindly relinquished the Editor's note to let me introduce myself and some highlights of this year's *Encounter* Magazine.

I'm Ted, and I'm genuinely excited to have joined Flinders University as Director, Alumni and Advancement. Although fairly new to my role, I have already witnessed Flinders University's upwards trajectory on several fronts: student experience, modernising higher education, and world-class research. We look forward to bringing you along on the journey.

I'm looking forward to finding out more about the Flinders University community and connecting with our many alumni and friends over the coming months. I'm also eager to venture out with my family and discover what Adelaide has to offer, after six years of living in Brisbane since relocating from the USA in 2017.

I welcome your feedback on what we can offer to make the Flinders alumni experience unique and maximise benefits for you. To that end, you may receive a survey in the coming months and I encourage you to tell us how your university can best support you. Now to what you can expect on the pages ahead...

Flinders Education graduate Sarah Sutter made the discovery that many kids aren't experiencing the outdoors in the same way other generations have. By launching Nature Play SA, a not-for-profit committed to engaging community with nature, she has reintroduced thousands of families to creative activities which go a long way in building motor skills, promoting wellbeing, and fostering positive mental and physical health. Uncover how it all began for Sarah on page 12.

Join us for our 2023 milestone celebrations

30 Years of Engineering Gala Dinner

Saturday 9 September
6pm to 11pm | Eos by Skycity

Join us in celebrating 30 years of Engineering at Flinders for an opportunity to reconnect, network, and forge new connections within the thriving engineering community.

Disability Studies 40 Year Celebration

Friday 22 September | 5.30pm to 7.30pm
Alere Function Centre, Flinders University

Graduates, students, staff, and educators will celebrate 40 years of the Disability Studies program at Flinders University.

Medicine and Surgery 10 Year Celebration

Friday 13 October | Torrens Arms Hotel
Saturday 14 October | Beach Road Wines

Medicine and Surgery alumni from the Class of 2013 will come together for their 10 year reunion over two days in October.

[FLINDERS.EDU.AU/ALUMNI-REUNIONS](https://flinders.edu.au/alumni-reunions)

The research of Associate Professor Alice Gorman, or 'Dr Space Junk' to her followers, on page 10 is fascinating for the history buffs like me. We tend to associate space with all things futuristic, so to read about our very own space archaeologist uncovering the past to better influence the future of space exploration is inspiring for students and graduates alike.

We also hear from Flinders Electrical Engineering student Jamie Jackson on page 27 about the Flinders Automotive Solar Team's 3000km trek from Darwin to Adelaide as part of the 2023 Bridgestone World Solar Challenge. He believes being part of the engineering club has been the best way to put into practice the skills he's learning in the classroom while at university.

The connection between these three profiles, and all of the stories inside *Encounter* for that matter, is that each and every person featured is still exploring and learning about themselves and their passions, regardless of what point in their career journey they find themselves. I encourage you to do the same and never give up the pursuit of knowledge.

Ted Wynn
Director, Alumni and Advancement



Student representatives at Alberton Oval.



Diploma students during a game-day placement.

Giving students the power to succeed

This year Flinders University and the Port Adelaide Football Club launched a first-of-its-kind education pathway in South Australia, providing students with AFL industry experience for careers in sports management.

The newly created Port Adelaide Institute of Sport will be the exclusive home for Flinders' new Diploma in Sports Management. Students will have access to elite-performance facilities, industry experts with decades of knowledge across the club's men's and women's programs, and work experience opportunities within the club's daily operations.

The Diploma is underpinned by the quality pedigree of the Flinders curriculum. Students in the year-long course will gain practical insights into the operations of an AFL club, with two candidates guaranteed graduate roles at Port Adelaide Football Club on completion of the course.

Students planning further study will also have pathway options to undergraduate programs by enrolling in the second year of the Bachelor of Business (Sports Management), Bachelor of Business or the Bachelor of Sport, Health and Physical Activity at Flinders.

[Flinders.edu.au/study/diploma-sports-management](https://flinders.edu.au/study/diploma-sports-management)

A focus on veteran wellbeing

As a proud veteran, Flinders University Sociology graduate Professor Ben Wadham is passionate about helping other veterans and their families as they transition to civilian life.

BY REBECCA ESTEVE



At Flinders University, Professor Ben Wadham (BA(Hons) '98, PhD(SS) '02, GradCertPubPol '08) leads projects on veterans in correctional services, education to employment pathways, male veteran suicide, and institutional abuse within the military.

His research is focused on contributing to better governance in the Australian Defence Force (ADF), and generating new opportunities for veterans and their families, including civil-military relations and veteran health and wellbeing.

In 2018, he established the Open Door: Veteran Transition Integration and Wellbeing Research Initiative at the University's Institute for Mental Health and Wellbeing.

"In the military, I served as a rifleman and as a military police corporal. It left me with questions about men and masculinity, the way men operate in groups, and men's place in society," says Professor Wadham.

"It also built my interest in the military justice system. The sum of all these experiences has been the pathway to my position now as the Director of Open Door, and an international contributor on defence and veteran issues."

Professor Wadham has also led a successful ARC Discovery project after many years of building the case for military sexual assault becoming a public policy issue.

"There was significant resistance from the ADF in the first decade, but now that the lid has been lifted on the issue, I feel confident that more work can be undertaken in this important area."

PROFESSOR BEN WADHAM

In 2019 Professor Wadham helped to establish the Military Academic Pathway Program at Flinders, with the support of the South Australian Government. The program enables veterans to use their prior service and qualifications with the ADF as a pathway to a Flinders University degree.

As part of the recent Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide, his contribution as co-author of the article '*Commanding men, governing masculinities: Military institutional abuse and organisational reform in the Australian armed forces*' was discussed and applauded during the hearings.

Proud of his capacity to persevere, Professor Wadham says, "My approach is to face life and challenges fearlessly with a positive and productive mindset towards myself and others."

Forging a positive path for young clinicians

BY LEONARD ROWE

A world-leader of laboratory and clinically based research in ophthalmology and vision science, Professor Justine Smith AM (PhD(Med) '99) has won a host of international ophthalmology awards and launched a global registry to improve eye cancer outcomes.

But to her peers and students, Professor Smith is recognised as a tireless mentor and role model for young clinician-scientists, especially women. This is evidenced through her work in establishing international mentoring programs for young ophthalmologists, publicising areas of under-representation, and initiating working groups to address gender inequities.

“The ophthalmology department at Flinders was known to be one of the most successful academic research units in Australia and across the world,” Professor Smith says.

“I was really fortunate to complete my PhD with the researchers in this department, especially to have a PhD supervisor like Keryn (Emeritus Professor Keryn A Williams AC FAHMS). They all helped me in different ways and opened many doors – guiding me in my first international meetings and collaborations.”

Professor Smith’s formative years in research shaped her development and she subsequently became a renowned expert on the potentially blinding group of conditions known as uveitis or inflammation in the eye. She was instrumental in identifying a new class of drugs, the so-called “TNF inhibitors”, as biologic treatments for these diseases, and successfully translated her research (first generated in her PhD candidature at Flinders) into world-first clinical trials in the United States.

With the opportunity of opening a lab and research group in her home state where her medical career first began, Professor Smith launched her research program at Flinders in early 2013.

“I’m really proud of our team, we’ve achieved some amazing research.” PROFESSOR JUSTINE SMITH

“It’s fulfilling to have built up such an outstanding team and be able to train many different students to be researchers. I’m in their debt for the great program we have created,” Professor Smith says.

The extra time and dedication Professor Smith gives to improving her field and the wider research community at Flinders is quite extraordinary.

“One thing that I’m really proud of, professionally, is that I’m the only Australian to be President of ARVO, the largest global society for eye and vision research,” Professor Smith says.

As Editor-in-Chief of *Clinical and Experimental Ophthalmology*, Professor Smith is also the first woman to lead a top-tier ophthalmology journal. In one year, she achieved gender balance across the Editorial Board, established a social media presence, and redefined policy to ensure ethics compliance.

Whether she’s discussing a rare cancer in a world-class laboratory amongst top researchers, or communicating results of a minor examination in her rooms at Flinders Medical Centre, there is a common goal that shines through all of Professor Smith’s efforts – making a real difference to a person’s situation and finding the best possible outcome for them, regardless of how difficult or hidden it may be.



Photo by Maja Baska

A local advocate can change the world

BY DAVID SLY

Being a founding member of the team that received Australia’s first Nobel Peace Prize – the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) – represents only part of the energetic advocacy work performed by Dr Ruth Mitchell (BM, BS(GradEntry) '07).

The Sydney-based neurosurgeon, currently working in the Sydney Children’s Hospitals Network, has been a passionate advocate for social justice since her childhood. Growing up in Peru amid civil war, a conflict fuelled by political and economic injustice, she learned from her parents that strong people do not turn away from difficult situations.

“If there is injustice, you have to do something about it,” says Dr Mitchell, who acknowledges that coming to Flinders University as an international student in 2004 to study medicine lit the fuse that set her on the path to be a strident advocate. “Conflict is a deep structural problem, and if you want it to end, then everyone must become involved and commit to change,” she adds.

Dr Mitchell credits Emeritus Professor Ian Maddocks, the inaugural Chair of Palliative Care at Flinders University, for prodding her towards nuclear disarmament activism during her first year of medical studies at Flinders in 2004. As Chair of International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW), Professor Maddocks compelled her to sign up as an Australian medical student representative for a global IPPNW congress in Beijing, which brings together international doctors and medical students calling for the prevention of nuclear war.

Alarmed and energised by what she learned at the congress, Dr Mitchell joined the foundation group of ICAN in Melbourne during 2006, a small group of committed doctors, medical students and nuclear disarmament activists who commenced international lobbying. Initially speaking through the medical

fraternity, ICAN’s influence soon spread to also connect with government bodies around the world. This advocacy saw ICAN spread to more than 100 countries and 468 partner organisations, leading to it win the Nobel Peace Prize in 2017.

Dr Mitchell only learned of the Nobel Prize nomination by chance, while watching a news broadcast in a café in Italy. While elated by the honour, she says the real victory was that ICAN had influenced a global treaty to ban nuclear weapons, signed by the United Nations in July 2017. “It signalled the beginning of the end of nuclear weapons, and it was a powerful moment because it meant everyone’s hard work finally got traction,” she says.

“I’m so proud to have been part of a global campaign that influenced that announcement.” DR RUTH MITCHELL

Beyond her work with ICAN, Dr Mitchell is currently the first woman chair of the Board of the IPPNW – taking over the role previously held by her mentor, Professor Maddocks.

Her own advocacy work also extends deep into the medical profession, especially to support women in surgical careers. Dr Mitchell was the inaugural Australian Medical Association Doctor in Training of the Year in 2016, earning recognition for her work as chair of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons Trainees’ Association and her tireless pursuit of doctors’ wellbeing and high-quality medical care, through advocacy, education and research.

She also received the 2019 John Corboy Medal from the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons for her advocacy for diversity and inclusion in surgery.

Making space

Space archaeologist Associate Professor Alice Gorman is charting our journey towards the final frontier.

BY BILL CONDIE

Ever since humans began brushing the edges of space in the 1940s, we have been leaving artefacts that chart the Space Age as surely as pottery shards in Çatalhöyük map life in a neolithic city.

Since the early 2000s, Flinders University Associate Professor Alice Gorman has been sifting through these latter-day shards – space junk, rocket launch pads and antennas – in her pioneering work as a space archaeologist.

“Some archaeologists say what we do isn’t archaeology, and some space people just can’t get their heads around the fact that something they think of as being about the past has relevance for them,” she says.

“One of our big battles has been convincing them that archaeological methods can give them new information that you literally cannot get any other way.”

In her latest project, Associate Professor Gorman and her colleague Dr Justin Walsh, an archaeologist at Chapman University in California, are building the first record of life aboard humankind’s first off-Earth proto-settlement – the International Space Station (ISS).

“It’s the longest permanently occupied space habitat that humans have ever had,” Associate Professor Gorman says.

“So it’s a perfect laboratory to look at how humans use material culture to adapt to space. The problem, of course, is that we can’t go there.”

Instead she and Dr Walsh hit on the idea of using NASA’s image archive of the ISS as a “vicarious excavation”. In one experiment they are sampling the space station in the way archaeologists would a terrestrial dig, by dividing it into a grid and selecting six one metre by one metre squares for detailed study.

“We had two months. For the first, the crew took photographs of the six squares at the same time every day. In the second month they took photographs at random times of day to rule out the fact that there might be certain routines or patterns of behaviour that would obscure others. Now we have this massive archive of photographs to analyse.”

So far the most closely observed is in the galley area, where people gather for meals.

“In one particular square there are little mesh bags that they use for personal food and condiments, and that raises interesting issues around things that are there the longest. Some objects like bottles of hot sauce were there for the whole two months. Now what does that mean? Does that mean that they’re highly used or in fact not highly used?”

Associate Professor Gorman is also intrigued by the many little velcro squares on the wall throughout the ISS, some used continuously over the past 20 years as “little patches of gravity”.

“Lots of them are really filthy, which might seem trivial, but from an archaeological perspective it could mean either that the patches are really old or have been used a lot. Then there’s where crew themselves have placed velcro, so there is the evolution of hypotheses about what crew need.”

While the work will give future generations an intimate picture of how the early days of space habitation unfolded, Associate Professor Gorman also hopes it will provide useful insights for future design.

“Unlike most archaeologists, we have the opportunity to contribute to things in the future. And one of the things we’re working on is results to guide the manufacture of new space habitats.”

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR ALICE GORMAN

“Often the needs of the crew are the last thing to be taken into account. To NASA and other space agencies ‘human factors’ generally mean psychological or biomedical. They don’t include sociological or personal and this is where we come in,” says Associate Professor Gorman.

“We have insights to offer that will lead to the design of better space habitats in the future.”

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR ALICE GORMAN





“My own childhood was so much about being outdoors... and those experiences were so important for our wellbeing, our gross motor skills, and our physical and mental health.” SARAH SUTTER

Plugging kids back into nature

Nine years after establishing Nature Play SA, Education graduate and Commonwealth Games gold medallist Sarah Sutter is still passionate about turning children’s screen-time into green-time.

BY SUSIE BUCHECKER

“Of all the paths you take in life, make sure a few of them are dirt.” – John Muir.

This is a sentiment Sarah Sutter (BEd '93) would heartily agree with.

An educator, CEO, mentor and passionate advocate of connecting children and families with nature and the outdoors, Sarah heads up Nature Play SA, an independent, not-for-profit organisation with a vision “to empower the South Australian community to engage their children in nature through outdoor learning and play”.

Sarah was initially inspired to work in education by her mother, a PE teacher. But with an extraordinary talent for netball, her first stop was the Australian Institute of Sport in Canberra. Returning to Adelaide, Sarah commenced her Bachelor of Education at Flinders University.

“Flinders played a big part in my professional and sporting life. I had some wonderful mentors at Uni,” Sarah says.

“In particular, two lecturers – Russell Brown and Barry Squire – were a big influence and had such a positive impact on me wanting to teach. I was starting to represent Australia in netball at that time, and they really supported me with both my studies and my netball career.”

That netball career led Sarah to dual gold medals at the 1995 World Championships and the 1998 Commonwealth Games. She was an inaugural Adelaide Thunderbirds player and Vice-Captain of the 1998 and 1999 championship-winning teams, and is recognised today as one of SA’s most elite netball figures.

Sarah’s passion to lead Nature Play SA was forged in her work as a Physical Education teacher, where she noticed that many young students’ gross motor skills were under-developed.

“I saw very quickly how they weren’t connected. They weren’t landing properly when they jumped, skipped or hopped, or even in throwing a tennis ball – the physicality and coordination wasn’t there. They were also risk-averse,” Sarah says.

“When one of the mums thanked me for taking their child to the national park, I was really surprised. I thought ‘isn’t that just what you do?’ The adventurous outside play we had as kids didn’t happen anymore.”

The challenge was in finding the balance between the modern world, where digital technology and screen-time is an increasing distraction, versus the natural outdoors where free play is so important for a child’s imagination, creativity and wellbeing.

Sarah wanted to make a difference. She started Nature Play SA with just two people in 2014. Their first child-friendly activity was cubbyhouse building in the Adelaide Botanic Gardens. It attracted 100 people. Cut to three years later, when 8000 attendees turned up at Kuitpo Forest for a child-led program, including kite flying, nature walks and rope courses. The appetite was clearly there for families wanting to spend time outdoors in nature. Sarah now heads a team of seven full-time staff as well as casuals.

“I have a great team of educators and a great events team. We organise programs and big forest fests to give parents and children that experience of ‘outside’, and show them how they can do it themselves.”

Lobbying state and local governments on policy change, Sarah has advocated for programs and initiatives that assist educators and families to engage more in outdoor play and form a connection to nature.

Wellbeing and Be Well Co

Throughout her professional and sporting career, Sarah has gained lifelong wellbeing skills. In a natural segue, she is about to transition out of Nature Play SA to concentrate on being a professional wellbeing trainer/leadership consultant.

She has trained with Be Well Co, which delivers evidence-based mental health wellbeing programs and strategies to individuals and groups. Be Well Co’s programs and solutions have a direct research link with both Flinders University and the South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute.

Sarah says, “Its wellbeing program is one I truly believe in – and it still all connects with nature. My next dream is to take the learning from Nature Play and deliver the Be Well Co program while advocating for everyone’s mental wellbeing. I’m such a believer that you can’t perform at your best if your wellbeing also isn’t working at its best.”

Sarah believes that the thinking skills and transfer of knowledge approach she learned in her degree at Flinders are at the core of her success.

BEWELLCO.IO

Providing a solid foundation for future engineers

Flinders University is celebrating 30 years of Engineering

BY NIKI HASLER

It was early in the '90s when Professor Rocco Zito, Head of Engineering at Flinders University, first got a taste for engineering.

Growing up surrounded by his Italian family, he worked with his uncle concreting and laying house foundations in his school holidays.

“Because that’s what boys did in the holidays,” laughs Professor Zito.

“I remember the civil engineers would come out and inspect our work. They had an air of power and integrity about them. I liked that.”

Being the first in his family to go to university, Professor Zito had little guidance in choosing what to study, however he eventually went with what was familiar to him and chose civil engineering.

In the early days of studying his civil engineering degree, Professor Zito demonstrated great proficiency in creating graphs using the colour plotter, leading him to secure a research assistant role within the School of Civil Engineering at the University of South Australia. It was here that Professor Zito found his niche, and over the next decade would fine tune his craft, including completing a PhD in his early 30s.

In 2014, Professor Zito was lured to Flinders with the opportunity to lead Civil Engineering, which was part of the Engineering branch of the then School of Engineering, Maths and Computing.

Appointed Head of Engineering in 2021, Professor Zito has overseen great growth and advancements within the Engineering program: a significant rise in degree offerings, the launch of masters degrees, and the surge in popularity of the Work Integrated Learning (WIL) program, just to name a few.

“The industry placement is world class, it really is,” says Professor Zito.

“Many of our engineering students are offered ongoing roles following their placement. Our employability rate directly from WIL is close to 80 per cent.” PROFESSOR ROCCO ZITO

“Students are involved in a five-month (or 20-week) placement where they’re required to competitively apply for a placement like a graduate applies for their first job, choosing to either stay locally in South Australia or extend their WIL experience nationally or internationally.



Professor Zito is proud to be part of the celebrations marking 30 years of Engineering at Flinders in 2023. The commitment to provide a comprehensive and world-class education has made Flinders a leading institution in the field.

Professor Zito credits much of the success of Engineering at Flinders to the dedicated academics he works alongside, who play a vital role in teaching and guiding students through their studies in a rapidly evolving world.

Flinders has academics who have been with the University for more than 25 years, including alumni who have gone on to become staff, teaching the very degree they studied.

The opening of the Tonsley Campus in 2015 was a critical moment for the University and stands out for Professor Zito as another significant highlight.

“Our location at Tonsley enables us to establish a high level of engagement with some of the State’s biggest businesses and key industry partners,” he says.

Keen to utilise his skill set in transportation and the opportunity to further showcase the Tonsley Campus and its future developments, Professor Zito played a pivotal role in the three-stage, \$4 million driverless shuttle project FLEX (Flinders Express) – a French-designed driverless public electric shuttle operating around the Tonsley Innovation District.

Professor Zito is excited by what lays ahead for Engineering at Flinders, with the opening of Flinders’ new Adelaide city campus in 2024, and the exclusive nuclear education partnerships with The University of Manchester and the University of Rhode Island that will see Flinders bring the world’s best nuclear education to Australia.

Engineering a successful career

From climate change to water quality, efficient autonomous vehicles, renewable energy, plastic pollution, life-saving medical devices, secure communications or exploring space, Flinders engineers are combining science and a creative spirit to design and build solutions for real-world problems.

To mark our 30 year milestone, our alumni sat down to talk all things engineering.



Alyssa Telfer

Patent Attorney and Principal, Phillips Ormonde Fitzpatrick
BSc '98, BEng(Biomed) '99

“I was really drawn to the biomedical engineering course because I’d never seen anything like it. I was enticed by the opportunity to satisfy my love of learning how things worked with the potential to have a positive impact on peoples’ health and quality of life.”



Dr David Hobbs

Senior Lecturer, College of Science and Engineering, Flinders University
PhD(BiomedEng) '18, BEng(Biomed) '01, BSc (Physics) '95

“I was in the fourth biomedical engineering class that came through Flinders, and in those days, you could only go along the electronics pathway. If I did my degree now, I’d choose the mechanical pathway that’s open to students – the choices and pathways Flinders Engineering students have now is amazing.”



Kosta Manning

Project Engineer, Robotics and Automation, Australian Industrial Transformation Institute
BEng(Robotics)(Hons) '20

“My job gives me lots of variety and I get to learn a lot about new and upcoming robotics and virtual reality technologies. As a technology enthusiast, I find great joy in trying and using new and exciting technologies in these streams before they become more widely adopted.”



Emily Reed

Undergraduate Engineer, BMD Group
Current Civil Engineering student

“My favourite Flinders memories are creating and testing concrete in the lab at Tonsley, completing geotechnical engineering tests, and using lab equipment to replicate real-world scenarios. Engineering opens the door to a never-ending list of career opportunities.”

30 years

Engineering Gala Dinner

6–11pm | Sat 9 Sept 2023

Ballroom, Eos by Skycity, Adelaide



Gold Sponsor



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The Centre for Social Impact team at Flinders University (Photo supplied)

Social impact research aspires to reach higher

Working closely with the most vulnerable people in our community, the Aspire program has provided lasting tangible results in eliminating homelessness and reducing the associated negative impacts on individuals.

BY DAVID SLY

Aspiring to improve society is not enough. Effective change demands the introduction of social equity programs that deliver measurable results – and the Centre for Social Impact (CSI) at Flinders University is proving the effectiveness of support programs that make a measurable difference.

A key success has been the Aspire program, a diverse collaborative partnership that connects people experiencing homelessness to housing through South Australia’s first social impact bond to target homelessness.

CSI Flinders worked alongside multiple South Australian Government agencies, Hutt St Centre, Social Ventures Australia

and private investors to better understand the benefits of effective intervention, which has enabled many of the Aspire participants with a history of chronic homelessness to now enjoy stable housing and to help them on the way to a better life.

Professor Ian Goodwin-Smith, Director of CSI Flinders, says this work provides conclusive research evidence that is vital to improve outcomes for the most vulnerable people in our community.

“The research on Aspire that we conducted proved that if you work with people in an intensive way to improve their lives and get good outcomes, it simultaneously delivers significant savings across several government departments,” says Professor Goodwin-Smith.

“Aspire provides evidence that if you stick with people experiencing chronic homelessness and work with them closely, you get great results to help those people overcome barriers and great results for the community.”

PROFESSOR IAN GOODWIN-SMITH

The final report compiled by CSI Flinders identified that, through a three-year program, 369 Aspire participants secured a tenancy, mostly in public housing, and 93 per cent had maintained their tenancies.

The program also improved Aspire participants’ trauma symptoms, disabilities, and combinations of co-existing physical, mental health, drug and alcohol issues. Their hospital emergency department visits decreased 27 per cent, and inpatient stays went down by 26 per cent. Court system interactions by Aspire participants went down 70 per cent.

Aspire participants’ overall wellbeing scores increased by 15 per cent and they reported improvements in their interpersonal relationships and community connections, plus significant reductions in their access to hospital services for mental health and alcohol or drug-related issues.

This equates to \$8.9 million in service costs saved by the South Australian Government.

“Research conducted with such a broad collaboration of different stakeholders is providing essential assurance to State Treasury that the Aspire model is successful and worth funding,” says Professor Goodwin-Smith.

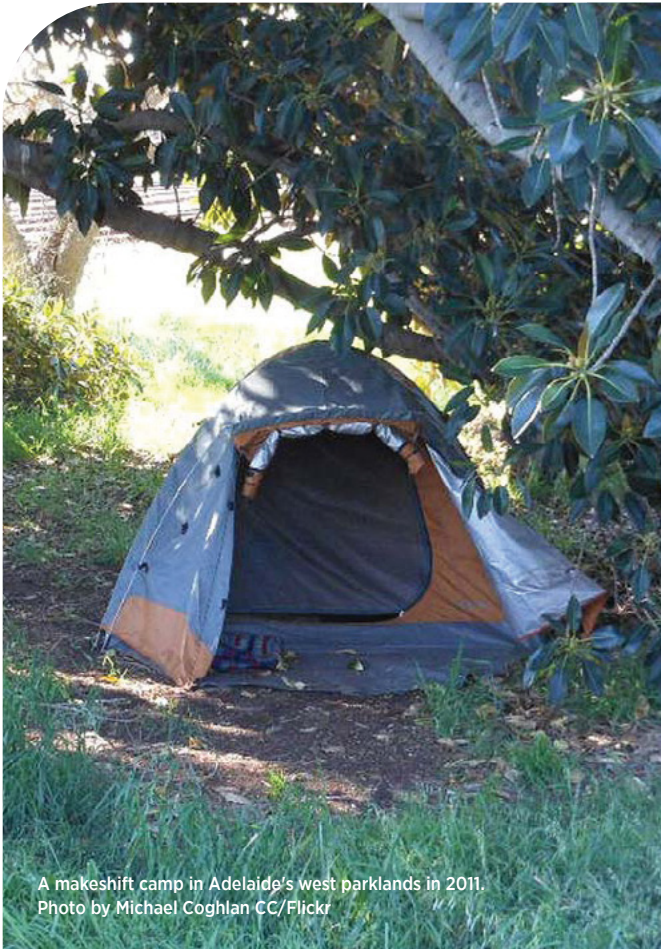
“The Aspire program was not only great in theory, but funding conditions attached to a social impact bond demand evidence of outcomes, so CSI’s analysis of Aspire demonstrates exactly where outcomes are being achieved.”

Understanding the positive results from such complex, multi-stakeholder collaborations represents an important success for CSI Flinders, which has worked on 30 research contracts since the Centre was established in 2022. It reflects strong demand for evidence to identify success in social impact projects.

“CSI is identifying an evidence base to ensure our social investment is geared towards getting bang for buck and outcomes for people in our communities.”

PROFESSOR IAN GOODWIN-SMITH

CSI Flinders has now launched the state’s first tertiary offering for social impact education, to empower more South Australians to work in an evidence-informed way when tackling the most pressing social issues. Professor Goodwin-Smith says these new courses are vital for improving further outcomes for our community’s most vulnerable people.



A makeshift camp in Adelaide’s west parklands in 2011. Photo by Michael Coghlan CC/Flickr

Promoting positive social change

Established in 2008, the Centre for Social Impact (CSI) is a national education and research collaboration which catalyses positive social change through transformational research and education. Flinders University is the fourth CSI university partner, joining UNSW, The University of Western Australia and Swinburne University of Technology in the national network.

CSI Flinders sits within the College of Business, Government and Law at Flinders University, tackling social equity challenges around technology, health and social impact. This crucial work that stimulates positive social change through research, education and leadership development is being further enhanced by new course offerings from Flinders University – a Graduate Certificate in Social Impact and Master in Business Administration (Social Impact) commencing in 2024.

[FLINDERS.EDU.AU/CSI](https://flinders.edu.au/csi)

Congratulations to our 2022 Alumni Awardees

Tireless activism to avert the threat of nuclear weapons and efforts to improve the lives of people around the world are amongst the achievements of the remarkable individuals recognised in the 2022 Flinders University Alumni Awards.

Fourteen outstanding alumni were awarded by Flinders University Chancellor Stephen Gerlach AM and Deputy Chancellor and Chair of the Alumni Awards Selection Committee, Elizabeth Perry AM, at a gala dinner celebrating the awardees.

In front of an audience of family, friends, former mentors and past awardees, the Flinders University graduates were formally recognised and celebrated for their extraordinary contributions to their fields and society as a whole.

The Convocation Medal, the highest of the University’s alumni honours, was awarded to Dr Ruth Mitchell and Professor Justine Smith, for their substantial and outstanding contributions to their respective fields on a local, national and international level.

CONVOCATION MEDAL

The Convocation Medal was established in 1991 and recognises graduates of Flinders University who have made a substantial and outstanding contribution to the local, national and/or international community.

“If there is injustice, you have to do something about it.”

DR RUTH MITCHELL



Dr Ruth Mitchell
BM, BS(GradEntry) '07

Awarded for her outstanding contributions to the global community through humanitarian services and activism as a member of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN).



Professor Justine Smith
PhD(Med) '99

Awarded for her outstanding leadership in the field of ophthalmology, serving as a tireless mentor and role-model for young clinician-scientists, especially women.

DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARD



Anastasia Bougesis
BHIthSc(Paramedic) '10
BNg(GradEntry) '12
Awarded for her distinguished leadership in disaster relief, both as a volunteer and employee, bringing together a passion for emergency management, community service and women in leadership.



Felicity Crowther
BDisComRehab '12
Awarded for her distinguished leadership and advocacy in driving an inclusive practice for people with an intellectual disability in South Australia.



Dr James Doube AAM
BSc '96, BM, BS(GradEntry) '02
Awarded for his distinguished contribution to rural and remote medicine and environmental conservation efforts.



Dr David Jeffery
BTech(Forensic&AnalyticalChem) '01
BSc(Hons) '02, PhD(Chem) '05
Awarded for his distinguished contribution to grape and wine research and teaching.



Kim Anastasiou
BNutDiet(Hons) '18
Awarded for her significant advocacy and research in creating environmentally sustainable diets and improving healthy food systems.



Assistant Professor Suvimol Charoensiddhi
PhD(Med) '17
Awarded for her significant contribution in the field of marine bioproducts for human health and nutrition and for actively contributing to the wider scientific community.



Rikki Cooke
BBehavSc(Psych) '14, MSW '17
Awarded for her significant commitment and dedication to improving the lives of vulnerable South Australians by establishing Treasure Boxes, a vital, practical and life-changing organisation.



Laura Drexler
MAUD '20
Awarded for her significant research that promotes and protects hearing health and the development of innovative communication strategies, including the Ambient Menu.

“As I’ve learned, if you can see it then you can be it.”

ANASTASIA BOUGESIS



Hannah Kent
BCreatArts '07
BCreatArts(Hons) '09
Awarded for her distinguished service to arts and culture as a writer and champion of emerging literary talent in Australia.



Helen Leake AM
BA '83
Awarded for her distinguished service to, and continuous fostering of, business and innovation within the film industry.



Dr Brittany Johnson
BNutDiet '11, PhD '20
Awarded for her significant contributions within the field of public health nutrition and behavioural change that support children and families to establish positive health behaviours.



Anthony Robinson
BCreatArts(DigitalMedia) '19
BCreatArts(Hons) '21
Awarded for his significant contributions to the creative industries sector as a storyboard artist and independent game developer.



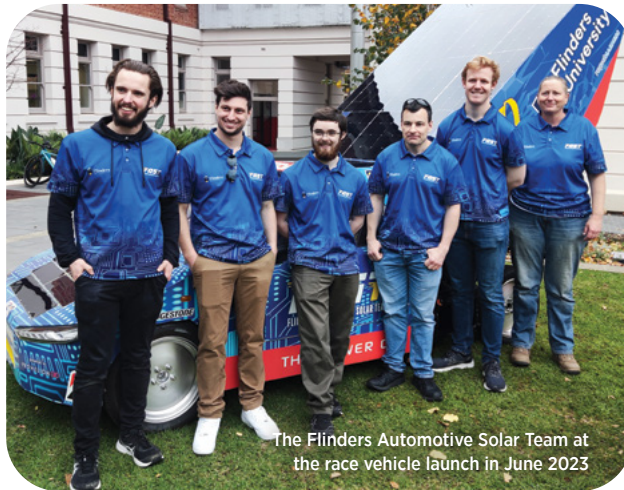
Read the inspiring stories of our awardees

FLINDERS.EDU.AU/ALUMNI-AWARDS

FAST track to industry know-how

Flinders University students are bringing their learning to life through the hands-on development of a solar car to compete in the Bridgestone World Solar Challenge.

BY LEONARD ROWE



The Flinders Automotive Solar Team at the race vehicle launch in June 2023

This October, the Flinders Automotive Solar Team (FAST) will make the trek north to Darwin and begin its 3000km journey back down to Adelaide as part of the 2023 Bridgestone World Solar Challenge.

It will be the third Flinders University vehicle entered since 2016, taking on teams from around the world to push the limits of technological innovation and travel the outback in a car powered only by the energy of the sun.

Flinders Electrical Engineering student Jamie Jackson believes this one-of-a-kind experience is the best way to put into practice the skills he's learning in the classroom while at university.

Jamie initially spotted the FAST stall at O'Week and joined soon after attending his first meeting in 2019.

"I definitely think joining a club like this has helped me better understand course topics," Jamie says.

"Over the past few years of doing FAST, I've learnt more and more techniques and tricks to use CAD programs efficiently in designing usable products for 3D printing and sheet metal."

He has worked his way up from team secretary to now manage a big chunk of race preparation as FAST Vice-President.

"It's actually more of a rally – during the day you're on the road between 8.30am and 5pm," he says.

"The team has checkpoints to reach every two days or risk disqualification, and that's where we plug in by the side of the road. If you only make three quarters of your planned distance by 5pm, that's where you must stop."

Support from University staff and such experts as Electrification Hub Supervisor Rob Chadwick, who has managed numerous racing teams previously, help shine the spotlight on this growing program, which also showcases STEM opportunities at schools along the pre-race route.

"You're in the middle of the desert, so if something goes wrong you can't just pop down to the shops to grab something and fix the issue!" says Jamie.

"Planning is imperative – taking the right supplies with you, but not too much either. It's all part of the challenge."

Organisation and communication skills are tested throughout the entire program, allowing students to experience working with others to achieve a common goal. This, in turn, makes their classes more engaging as they put theory into practice in real world situations.

"I believe joining an engineering club at Flinders, whether that's the solar team or not, is literally the best thing you can do for your education." JAMIE JACKSON

Given that Jamie is essentially working on the future of engineering today, his thoughts on how the industry may change in years to come are positive.

"In the last 30 years alone, we've gone from most tasks involving manual labour to now using computer-aided design," he says.

"Large simulations, which allow you to predict the outcome of what you're designing before you even build it, are going to play a key part in the future of engineering."



FLINDERS.EDU.AU/FAST



Artist's impression

Flinders' new city campus: Where potential meets possibility

Opening in 2024, Flinders at Festival Plaza represents a new way of learning in the heart of Adelaide.

Our amazing new campus, designed for collaboration, flexible learning and unrivalled connection with industry, isn't just for current and prospective students – it also provides a wealth of opportunities for alumni!

Set over eight levels, every aspect of this space has been designed with purpose and possibility in mind. At Festival Plaza, old-style lecture theatres have been superseded by multiple state-of-the-art teaching spaces, with advanced technology and a high-end WiFi system enabling seamless connectivity between the city and Flinders' other campuses. Informal learning areas across each level provide opportunities for students, staff, alumni and visitors to interact and share ideas.

Festival Plaza's central location offers easy access to industry. The campus sits at the epicentre of Adelaide's most vibrant and connected cultural hub, surrounded by key arts, business, sports and government institutions.

"Crucially, the location of Festival Plaza adjacent to the Adelaide Railway Station means our new vertical campus will be just 19 minutes by rail to Tonsley and 22 minutes to Bedford Park, where our transformational Flinders Village development is about to take shape," President and Vice-Chancellor Professor Colin Stirling says.

"Together, these initiatives will create the largest integrated health and education network in South Australia."

A dedicated events space, library, flexible meeting rooms and workspaces all combine to offer a range of facilities that can be used for networking, mentoring, training and more.

Flinders at Festival Plaza is a place where potential meets possibility, and where alumni can continue to connect, grow, share their knowledge and celebrate their achievements. We hope you'll take the opportunity to explore this amazing campus in 2024.

FLINDERS.EDU.AU/FESTIVAL-PLAZA

Vital support to reach graduation

Matthew Flinders Scholarships assist students in financial hardship, funded by community donations.

BY LYNDA ALLEN

Growing up in the produce-abundant Barossa Valley and with a health-focused mother, Ella Kretschmer was destined for a nutrition-related career.

“My mum used to be a naturopath and as I was growing up, she ensured I understood the importance of good health through good nutrition,” says Ella.

Her passion for food and interest in promoting good health led Ella to study a Bachelor of Nutrition and Dietetics at Flinders University, which included hands-on, real-world learning through full-time intensive placements to gain a deeper understanding of future roles.

Ella relished these opportunities and was especially looking forward to her final placement in community and public health at the regional Yorke Peninsula Council in Maitland.

With a seven-week full-time placement so far from home, she secured accommodation in Port Vincent, but it was still a 1½ hour return trip each day. With sky-rocketing fuel prices, Ella was concerned about the crippling costs on her already tight budget.

Ella was also worried about having suitable clothes for the professional setting – she wanted to make a good impression.

“I was quite stressed and anxious before my final placement – I was really feeling the pressure of passing my degree. The biggest challenge during this time was keeping on top of my mental health.”

With the help of a donor-funded Matthew Flinders Scholarship, Ella’s stress was eased and she felt ready to embrace the opportunity of her rural placement.

“The funding provided me with money for travel to and from my placement, and with the high cost of fuel this was a great help,” says Ella. “It also covered my food and internet costs, plus I was able to buy suitable work clothes.”

During her placement, Ella led a community consultation to provide local councils with recommendations on building, managing and promoting a sustainable First Nations community garden – based on the understanding that good food choices can be inspired by knowing how food is grown.

She says, “I enjoyed researching, compiling and presenting information for the project. I also really enjoyed delivering a Healthy Eating for the Heart interactive presentation to a local organisation.”

Ella is grateful for the scholarship support she received at a critical point in her degree and wants to thank donors to the Matthew Flinders Scholarship for getting her to graduation.

“Your funds helped me greatly and ensured I had enough money to support myself during this time. Thank you.” ELLA KRETSCHMER

Buoyed by her positive experience in the country, Ella says, “I hope to work rurally in my career as a community and public health dietitian, promoting good health and preventing disease.”

Learn how you can help students in financial need get through a difficult time and reach graduation with a Matthew Flinders Scholarship.

[FLINDERS.EDU.AU/DONATE](https://flinders.edu.au/donate)

Reducing chronic bladder pain and harmful pain control

The power of Impact Seed Funding for Early Career Researchers.

BY LYNDA ALLEN

“Barely a day goes by without thinking about the positive impact this grant has had on my career. I will be forever thankful to the donors for the support I received.”

DR LUKE GRUNDY

Each year around 250,000 Australians develop urinary tract infections (UTIs) as a result of bacteria entering the urinary tract. It can be excruciating and, for some, UTIs lead to chronic bladder pain. In the absence of other viable pain control options, many resort to opioid-based painkillers.

But the long-term use of these painkillers can be addictive and hazardous to a person’s health.

In 2019 Dr Luke Grundy received a \$10,000 donor-funded Impact Seed Funding for Early Career Researchers grant to understand why many thousands of Australians with UTIs are affected by chronic bladder pain.

“For the first time I was able to create and manage my own research project that explored how bladder infection can cause long-term changes to the bladder’s sensory nerves resulting in chronic bladder pain,” says Dr Grundy.

With a better understanding of bladder pain and better ways to treat it, Dr Grundy hopes to alleviate suffering for many Australians and people across the world – and to reduce their reliance on harmful pain control.

The pioneering study results have now been published in the international journal *Pain*, and Dr Grundy has since received a

three-year research fellowship focused on chronic bladder pain following treatment for bladder cancer.

He says Flinders’ Impact Seed Funding was fundamental to his research and career success.

“In our tough funding environment, grants like these are absolutely critical to the development of track records for early career researchers,” says Dr Grundy.

“They provide an opportunity to pursue independent research ideas and collaborations, develop the skills required to administer grants, and generate proof of concept data for larger grant applications.”

Based on his early research success, Dr Grundy is now applying for over \$1 million in grants from national funding bodies, that will greatly expand his work to reduce chronic bladder pain.

He says he would not be where he is today without the community’s support.

You can provide critical support for our early career researchers to explore new ground in research that changes lives and improves our community.

Donate today: [Flinders.edu.au/donate](https://flinders.edu.au/donate)



Encouraging students from different backgrounds

The Rachael Kirkham Speech Pathology Scholarship allows country students the opportunity to pursue their education and potential.

BY LYNDA ALLEN

Reverend Eric and Joan Kirkham

A generous bequest will honour the life of a speech pathology graduate and support a country student to achieve their degree in speech pathology.

Salt of the earth couple Reverend Eric Kirkham and Joan Kirkham have enjoyed a diverse life, from shearing sheep and managing a cluster of farms on the Eyre Peninsula while raising three daughters (Janeen, Lynda and Rachael), to both studying at Flinders University – Eric a Bachelor of Arts and a Bachelor of Theology (Honours), and Joan a Bachelor of Nursing.

“I came to Flinders in 1978 as a mature age student, so it was a complete change of life,” says Eric. “My later study in theology equipped me to pursue my calling as a minister in the Uniting Church.”

But Eric says there was more than just study to enjoy at Flinders; he also created many new friendships. “Study gave me the confidence to mix with others who were working toward other professions, some very different from the path that I was on.”

The couple also lived in England for five years, where Eric served in the Methodist Church and Joan worked as a nurse and community health professional. They returned to Adelaide in 1995 when Eric took up an appointment with the Woodville Uniting Church, where he served for the next 10 years and has remained connected ever since.

Years later, in 2007, their youngest daughter Rachael followed in her parents’ footsteps by coming to Flinders University, studying a Bachelor of Speech Pathology after completing studies in the performing arts.

Upon graduating, she accepted a position as a speech pathologist in a rural town and for a decade enjoyed working with country families.

“Though Rachael spent many years in the city, her heart was always in the country and in country living,” says Joan.

“With her background in the performing arts she was particularly good at engaging with children who found it hard to communicate.”

However, in 2019 the Kirkham family were devastated when, after a short but severe illness, Rachael’s time on earth ended before she was able to achieve all that she wanted to in life.

“It was as we tried to make some sense of our loss that we as a family decided to make a bequest to Flinders University in Rachael’s name.” REV ERIC KIRKHAM

Included in their will, Eric and Joan’s bequest will fund the annual Rachael Kirkham Speech Pathology Scholarship at Flinders University.

“As a family we are hoping this bequest will help a student from a remote or isolated region who is studying speech pathology or an allied science,” says Joan.

“The scholarship may help with the cost of living, study costs or accommodation – wherever the greatest need lies – in order to allow the country student an opportunity to pursue their education and their potential.”

Eric and Joan hope the scholarship will allow Rachael to posthumously make a difference in an area of study and work that she was so passionate about, while also supporting a country student.



Rachael on her graduation day

“Flinders has always been open to encouraging students from different backgrounds and this will be a small way to help a country student who might otherwise not be able to pursue an academic career,” says Eric.

Now retired, Eric and Joan are still busy serving the church in a voluntary capacity, while working on their bountiful backyard which is full of fruit, vegetables and chooks.

Contemplating his accomplishments in life, Eric notes, “Life has many seasons but for me it is the people who I have met and helped, along with those who have helped me, that is our greatest achievement.”

Leaving a bequest in your will to support students or research at Flinders University creates a lasting and impactful legacy.

Contact Mark Goldsmith at mark.goldsmith@flinders.edu.au or 0421 818 130 if you would like to talk about a lasting legacy.



IMPACT of giving



Scan the QR code to learn how our donors are changing lives and improving the community.

[Flinders.edu.au/impact](https://flinders.edu.au/impact)

Thank you for supporting our mission for change!

Thanks to community support, Flinders University Museum of Art has been able to purchase the rare, final edition of the *Look Who's Calling The Kettle Black* series by r e a – one of Australia's most acclaimed experimental artists.

The ten digitally rendered photographs in the edition highlight the oppressive colonial to mid-20th century policies that forced countless Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and girls into domestic labour.

An invaluable resource for students, researchers and our community, these works invite engagement with First Nations knowledges and lived experience, helping to expand cultural understanding and drive reconciliation.

Thank you to our generous donors, who make acquisitions like this possible.

Join our mission for change:

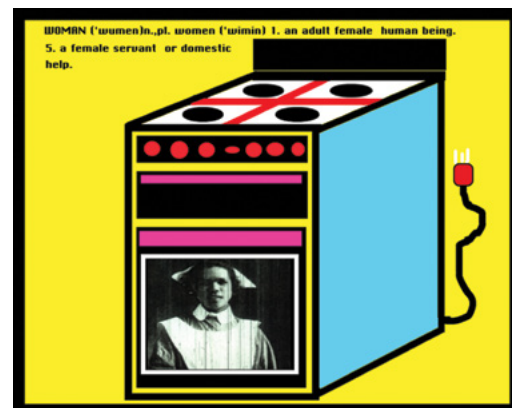
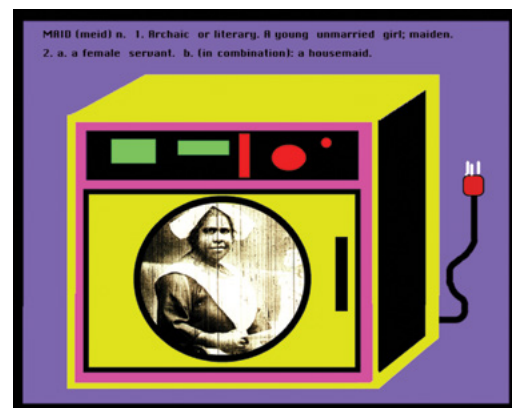
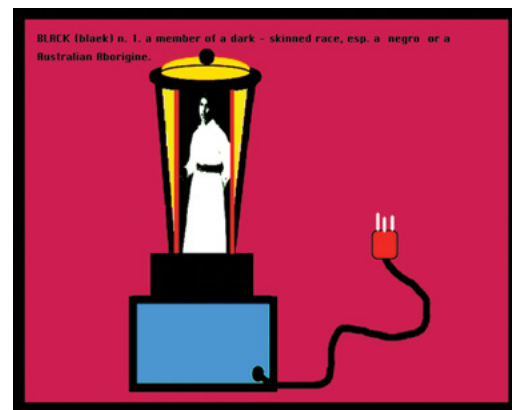
[Flinders.edu.au/FUMA/donate](https://flinders.edu.au/FUMA/donate)

Now on display in *New Acquisitions / New Perspectives* until 15 September 2023.



FLINDERS UNIVERSITY
MUSEUM OF ART

Social Sciences North Building | Bedford Park | Flinders University



r e a, Gamilaraay, Wailwan and Biripi peoples, *Blender, Washer and Stove* from the series *Look Who's Calling the Kettle Black*, 1992, coloured dyes on paper, 20.0 x 25.0 cm (image), Collection of Flinders University Museum of Art 5987, 5982 and 5985, purchased through the Flinders University Museum of Art Annual Appeal 2021-2022, © the artist

Cultural narrative shines through

A commitment to seek shared wisdom and guidance will ensure a connectivity to Country for the centrepiece of the University's Flinders Village development.

BY HANNAH WOOLLER

As a mark of respect for its location on Kurna Country, Flinders University has chosen to centre Kurna ways of 'being and doing' in the next stage of campus growth taking shape at Bedford Park – the Health and Medical Research Building (HMRB) at the heart of the future Flinders Village development.

Based on our deep understanding of the importance of collaboration and real-world impacts, we are building a place where research, education and clinical expertise can come together to create the next generation of health care.

More than 600 researchers and support staff across multiple health and wellbeing disciplines will be based in HMRB. It will be home to key research institutes, including the Flinders Health and Medical Research Institute and the Caring Futures Institute.

Thanks to shared wisdom and guidance from the Cultural Narrative and Indigenous Art Advisory Panel, which includes Uncle Lewis Yarlupurka O'Brien (DUniversity '11), HMRB's design does more than acknowledge Kurna heritage – it is integrated into the local landscape, aligned with significant Kurna sites, and seeks to work with Country rather than be imposed on it.

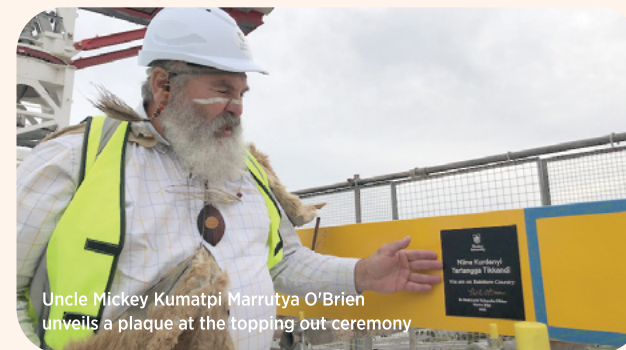
Uncle Lewis says Kurna Yarta (Kurna Country) had the most vibrant rainbow-coloured dunes, more than 20 feet high along the coastline, and was a place of shelter and community for Kurna people.

He explains the rainbow sand represents the past and makes sense of the place on Country. Sand, water, wind and rainbows are all shifting and moving and always becoming. The building will be a reflection of the rainbow sands and the rainbow in the skies, with the significance of double rainbows representing the Kurna way of knowing duality.



Taking inspiration from Rainbow Yarta, each level of HMRB corresponds with the rainbow sands and acknowledges what was once there, what is, and what will come.

HMRB's aluminium façade panels are aligned to draw the eye to significant Kurna sites and features a design by Indigenous artist James Tylor. Based on body painting from the traditional Kuri ceremony, the pattern represents the coming together of people to exchange knowledge and information; the point where songlines intersect and new ideas are shared, speaking to the intention at the heart of HMRB.



These themes extend to both interior artwork and to landscaping, where a traditional Indigenous medicine garden will serve as a reminder of the value of Indigenous knowledges and connection to Country.

Due for completion in early 2024, HMRB will be a place that truly represents Flinders' goal to change lives and change the world.



Free legal advice provides essential access to justice

A unique and practical Flinders University clinic offers Law students real-world experience with lasting community impact.

BY DAVID SLY

A decade of providing free, independent and confidential legal advice to the public has underlined Flinders Legal Centre's status as a vital resource in our community – and now this pivotal component of Law at Flinders University is making smart connections to the digital age.

Originally known as Flinders Legal Advice Clinic, which began in 2011, the Flinders Legal Centre provides clients with advice on such issues as financial loans and debt, employment contracts, relationships, car accidents, setting up a business, insurance, building, construction and accommodation – providing Flinders Law students with real-world experience that meets a crucial community need.

“We established the centre because we wanted our students to gain experience – but we also want them to understand access-to-justice issues in our community,” says Professor Tania Leiman (GradCertEd '10), Dean of Law at Flinders University.

“It's not until you work inside the legal system that you realise the difficulties many people have obtaining sound legal advice. It's complicated by lawyers' fees being out of reach for many people. For many, there is nowhere else they can go.”

“All people deserve competent, pragmatic, efficient legal advice but a lot of people can't identify their issues as having a legal solution, or they have a complex mix of legal, financial and social problems that are intertwined. This is where we can help.”

JO MILNE

More than 350 Flinders Law students have undertaken clinical legal education placements through the Flinders Legal Centre, which has provided more than \$3.5 million of free legal services – a powerful contribution to increase access to justice in our community.

“It started as an optional topic with capacity to take only small numbers of students each semester, but since 2020 it has been a core Law subject, which brings about 30 students to work in the centre each semester. Jo Milne has been Director of the Centre since 2013 and is also a supervising solicitor. She has helped countless law students transition to junior practitioners and is at the core of all the great work the Centre does.

“We have very robust policies and procedures for client management and there are many layers of support, providing our students with experience on giving high quality and pragmatic advice to people on real issues – making the vital connection between theory and the practical impacts that the law has on people's lives.”

Now with bespoke offices and consultation rooms located in the Mark Oliphant Building at Flinders University's Bedford Park campus, and using legal practice management software, the Flinders Legal Centre operations are modelled on those of a private boutique law firm.

People come to the service via a range of Flinders University student services and from many external referral avenues – including the Christies Beach Magistrates Court, the Marion and Onkaparinga councils, and other community legal centres – with very high levels of client satisfaction recorded.

“Our students have the time to listen to clients' stories, time that other community legal services providers may not have due to the large numbers of people trying to access those resources – and the clients are very grateful to be heard.” PROFESSOR TANIA LEIMAN



“In a classroom, legal discussion may sound esoteric, but when students are talking with clients and trying to unravel the complexity of their situations, the students make connections between the theory they are learning and the important practical impacts that things like contract law have on people's lives. This can be very transformational.”

The centre also has the flexibility to deliver special outreach programs to meet extreme need in regional South Australia, including a project on Kangaroo Island that provided vital support for the Bushfire Legal Help program in the wake of the devastating 2019/2020 bushfires.

Such results have seen the Centre earn significant respect within the legal sector. Several private law practices provide pro-bono assistance to the Flinders Legal Centre team for complex and difficult legal issues, and The Law Foundation of SA has supported it with funding since 2013.

“We are enormously grateful to the Law Foundation for their generous support over the past decade. It recognises the value that this university legal clinic provides to the community,” says Professor Leiman.

The Centre now aims to grow and provide more diverse services, including exploring legal tech opportunities. This aims to assist some of the more than 60 software applications, developed by Flinders Law students as part of the core topic Law in a Digital Age, to be commissioned and implemented for their clients.

Future philanthropic support will allow this new collaboration to grow and expand in response to demand – and increased funding will enable these apps to be implemented within the not-for-profit community, increasing access to justice. “It will be an exciting next step when we can help to not only provide, but also support, accessible legal technology for community organisations,” says Professor Leiman.

Far left (from left): Jo Milne and The Hon. Justice Judy Hughes, President of SACAT and Chair of the Law Foundation of SA Inc, at the Flinders Legal Centre 10th anniversary celebration.

Left (from left): Jo Milne, Bimaya De Silva, Andrew Craven, Tahlia Hart, Alex Loechel, Meshal Althobaiti, Aleesha DeGiglio, Latha Elenkovan and Caroline Deane.

Top right: Professor Tania Leiman (second from left) with current supervising solicitors (from left) Jo Milne, Tahlia Hart, Carmine Di Cesare, Julia Adlem and Linda Appelbee.

Streamlining our international pathways

The new Flinders University Academy is creating greater opportunities for students from overseas to study at Flinders.

Flinders University has increased its accessibility for international students to study on campus with the introduction of an exciting, streamlined pathway program.

Officially launched by Her Excellency The Honourable Frances Adamson AC, Governor of South Australia, the newly established Flinders University Academy offers an innovative pathway program for students from overseas, supporting them to achieve their ambition to study at Flinders.

TAILORED LEARNING

Taking control of pathway courses for international students at Flinders, the Academy is owned and governed by the University but operates independently. With this structural change to its pathways program, Flinders can ensure that each student is offered a tailor-made learning experience.

“In a highly competitive and mature market, this approach ensures that the changing needs and demands of international students are able to be met quickly by the University, while still delivering a seamless transition from their pathway course to their chosen degree,” says Sebastian Ranekold, Vice-President and Pro Vice-Chancellor (International).

PATHWAY OPTIONS

Based in The Plaza at Flinders’ Bedford Park campus, and with options to study selected programs at Flinders’ new city campus from 2024, the Academy offers a range of diplomas – allowing students to easily transition to the first or second year of their chosen degree. A Pre-Masters Business program is also offered, in addition to Foundation Studies and English for Academic Purposes programs.



Mony



Grace

Pre-Masters Business program graduate Grace, who moved to Adelaide from the Philippines for her studies, strongly recommends pathway programs for those who don’t meet the entry requirements for their chosen degree, as it helps international students adjust to university life and develop essential academic skills.

“Because of Flinders University Academy, I feel like I’m more prepared in my studies.” GRACE

After successfully completing the seven-week Pre-Masters, Grace is now studying the Master of Accounting and Finance with Flinders.

English for Academic Purposes student Mony says, “It’s not a traditional teacher-student relationship; I feel like they’re my friends, who always provide me the opportunity to learn and develop myself.”

For Mony, moving from Cambodia to Australia has been a life-changing experience.

“I want to share this experience with people in my home country, to show them how Flinders takes care of us.” MONY

Celebrating our global alumni

With over 125,000 enterprising, innovative and curious thought leaders in more than 130 countries around the world, you can tap into this powerful global network and make connections wherever you travel.



Dr Lourenço Camnahas (BHLthSc ’02, MHLthAdmin ’08, PhD ’20) | Timor-Leste

A pragmatic academic and practitioner with more than 25 years’ experience in leading health administrative systems, Dr Lourenço Camnahas has built his career around the needs of his country – which have changed and evolved dramatically since the height of Timor-Leste’s struggle for independence from Indonesia, which led to the UN resolution in 1999 and the creation of a new sovereign state in May 2002.

Currently working at St John of God International Health, Dili, Dr Camnahas is focused on three development areas – healthcare standards and accreditation, education and training for nursing and midwifery, and pathology services.

“As a Flinders graduate, I am most proud of finishing my PhD and being able to work on, and compete with, the same level as people from developed countries.”



Assistant Professor Suvimol Charoensiddhi (PhD (Med) ’17) | Thailand

Focusing on marine bioproducts for human health and nutrition, Assistant Professor Suvimol Charoensiddhi’s research on the biorefinery of South Australian brown seaweeds has for the first time demonstrated significant gut health benefits and established a key research platform for the future.

As a result, Assistant Professor Charoensiddhi has published ten high-impact papers, including eight first-authored. She actively contributes to the scientific community, organising training workshops and seminars, delivering presentations in her home country and abroad.

“My supervisors always gave me the opportunity to grow in taking up my own research responsibilities, they promoted positive teamwork and a supportive workplace environment.”



Munkhzul Chimid-Ochir (MEnvMgmt ’18) | Mongolia

After experiencing our arid landscape firsthand, Munkhzul Chimid-Ochir was inspired to establish a water dialogue partnership between her home country of Mongolia and Australia in the hope of creating a sustainable and healthy environment for future generations.

As a climate change and environmental professional, Munkhzul has continued to champion ground-breaking initiatives in environment management and policy coordination in her home country for almost two decades.

“My Flinders experience broadened my horizon, helped me to think outside the box, and encouraged my motivation and confidence.”



Thao Hoang (MSW ’21) | Vietnam

The need to support families from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and see them receive the same level of guidance as others has always been the underlying reason why graduate Thao Hoang embarked on a career in social work, or better put, a fight for social justice.

Thao has remained in South Australia in a role within the Department for Child Protection, predominantly aiding the Vietnamese community, for which she recently won the 2022 Premier’s Excellence Award.

“For an international student who will be studying overseas, away from family like myself, an inclusive and hospitable environment is one of the crucial factors in choosing an academic institution and Flinders had ticked that box.”



Presenters (from left) Professor Romy Lawson, Dr Richard Fejo, Professor Simone Ulalka Tur, Leanne Liddle, Amy Smith, Stephen Gerlach AM, Dr Aunty Pat Miller AO, Nadia Metzger, Petiola Wilson, Professor Colin Stirling and Billy Greet at the launch of Flinders University's second Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan.

Launching our second Reconciliation Action Plan

Flinders University is taking another step on our journey towards reconciliation as we seek to embed Indigenous strategies and cultural perspectives in everything that we do.

During National Reconciliation Week, the University launched its second Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

Complementing the theme of the week, *Be a Voice for Generations*, our second Innovate RAP has been developed from the valued input of the staff, students, alumni, and Elders on Campus, to ensure that Flinders University is able to make a tangible difference in the lives of our community.

Crucial support, guidance and wisdom to set the path came from respected Elder and leader Professor Tom Calma AO, Co-Chair of Reconciliation Australia, and Co-Chair of the Indigenous Voice to Government initiative.

His input has helped develop an exceptionally strong plan, one which aims to embed cultural learning across all Flinders University campuses, while acknowledging the long-held philosophies, knowledges, research strengths and contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, together with a determination to detect and address unconscious bias and structural discrimination.

We encourage you to review the Reconciliation Action Plan and learn more about Flinders' commitment to reconciliation.

The RAP Oversight Committee, led by Co-Chairs Professors Simone Ulalka Tur and Jonathan Craig, played a huge part together with the RAP Working Group, to develop the second RAP by holding consultations, writing groups and design workshops to prioritise the next chapter of this important endeavour.

All corners of the University look forward to walking together as we deepen our commitment to First Nations peoples and their knowledge and cultures in a spirit of equity, integrity and unity.



Scan QR code with your mobile to watch the launch

Vale Uncle Clifford Coulthard

**Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers are advised that this article contains the name and image of a deceased Elder, used with the family's permission.*

It is with great sadness that we acknowledge the passing of Uncle Clifford Charles Coulthard. Known to many as Cliff, Cliffy or Uki, he leaves the world a poorer place for his absence.

Cliff will be remembered as an important Adnyamathanha miru, a man whose connection to country and the stories it carries was pivotal for his people, for scholarship, and for reconciliation. This connection was the catalyst for some 40 years of dedicated effort to uncover, record and conserve the cultural heritage of Vulkathunha, the region more commonly known as the Flinders Ranges.

His affinity with Country has informed discoveries of global significance, including the excavation of the Warratyi rock-shelter that produced the earliest evidence of human occupation of inland Australia. Such was the magnitude of the find that it resulted in a paper in the prestigious journal *Nature*, which Cliff co-authored. This amazing story was featured in our *Encounter* 2022 magazine, with Cliff's image gracing the cover.

In 2022 Flinders University awarded Cliff an honorary doctorate for his lifetime of commitment to Adnyamathanha scholarship, his mentoring of Adnyamathanha students, his support for researchers and generosity in sharing his knowledge with others.

To all at Flinders University, Cliff will be remembered as warndu watya miru – a great man. His legacy and presence will be echoed in the adnya (rocks), awi (water), ngurru (grass) and the milyara (wind) through the wida (gum trees) of the Country he loved.



Understanding the Voice to Parliament

Flinders University acknowledges as a nation we are at a watershed moment with the call for an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice to Parliament, to be enshrined in the Australian constitution.

Emanating from The Uluru Statement, a Voice to Parliament is one of three key aspirational elements of reforms intended to represent a unified position for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

As an institution of higher learning and scholarship we recognise we have a pivotal role in leading fearless conversations on the principle for an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice within the Commonwealth Parliament of Australia, through a national referendum.

We are committed to freedom of speech grounded in the Flinders University values of integrity and courage. With this intent we acknowledge that there will be differing opinions, and therefore support dynamic and full spirited perspectives within a respectful and safe environment.

The call for a Voice to Parliament is also an opportunity to enhance cultural learning and further support the vision of the University's inaugural Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan, 'in building understanding and acceptance of our shared histories, as we work towards a shared future'. The University envisions that this historic call is an opportunity for allyship and self-learning.

Flinders University, as part of its role as a civic institution, is actively facilitating conversations through education and awareness raising programs.



Guest speaker Sarah Brown AM



Panelists discuss the topic of Leadership in Nursing

Inaugural Joan Durdin AM Oration

This event honoured a South Australian who has played a major role in uncovering the historical legacy of nursing and has championed the advancement of nursing through the development of advanced education in the higher education sector.

Held in May, the inaugural Flinders University Joan Durdin AM Oration was hosted by Professor Tiffany Conroy (BNgPrac '94), Deputy Dean for Nursing Leadership and Innovation. Guests heard from Sarah Brown AM (GradDipHlthAdmin '15), CEO of Purple House, on her topic *'The Challenges and Joy of Being a Disruptor: How nurses can change the world (or at least their little bit of it)'*. We were honoured to be joined by Joan Durdin AM (DUniversity '94) for the oration.

Following Sarah's presentation, a panel discussion took place, centred around leadership in nursing and moderated by Associate Professor Karleen Thornton (BNg(PostReg) '94), Teaching Specialist (Academic). A Nursing Leadership Mentoring Program was also launched on the night by Professor Alison Kitson, Vice-President and Executive Dean of the College of Nursing and Health Sciences.



Joan Durdin AM (centre) in the crowd



Professor Alison Kitson launches the Nursing Leadership Mentoring Program



Above (back row from left): Associate Professor Grant Davies, Associate Professor Christine Dennis (GDipHlthServMgmt '98, MHLthServMgmt '05), Alison Kitson (Vice President and Executive Dean, College of Nursing and Health Sciences), and Professor Tiffany Conroy (Deputy Dean for Nursing Leadership and Innovation, College of Nursing and Health Sciences). **(Front row from left)** Associate Professor Karleen Thornton (BNg(PostReg) '94), Dr Joan Durdin AM, Sarah Brown AM (GradDipHlthAdmin '15), and Adjunct Associate Professor Jenny Hurley (MHLthAdmin '12).

Left: Dr Fathimath Shifaza (Senior Lecturer, College of Nursing and Health Sciences), Dr Joan Durdin AM, Associate Professor Pauline Hill (Teaching Program Director, Nursing, College of Nursing and Health Sciences), and Mr Guy Peacock (Senior Lecturer (Teaching Specialist (Clin)), College of Nursing and Health Sciences). Fathimath, Pauline and Guy are the working group for the Nursing Leadership Mentoring Program that was inspired by Joan.



A chance to reflect

Having witnessed a striking transformation of Flinders University, retiring and longest serving Chancellor Stephen Gerlach AM reflects on his 13-year tenure as a memorable era of growth and prosperity.

BY DAVID SLY

Mr Gerlach led an extremely busy corporate life from the 1980s – initially as a lawyer and Managing Partner of legal firm Finlaysons, then as a board member and chair of prominent companies including Santos, Elders and Southcorp. He says he was greatly surprised in 2010 to be invited by Flinders University to replace retiring Chancellor Sir Eric Neal, and admits he initially couldn't imagine himself in the role.

"I was flattered but it did take some consideration," he says.

"Then I realised it was comparable, in many ways, to what I had been dealing with in corporate life. Flinders was a growing organisation, and therefore it had challenges ahead. I could see that Australia's tertiary sector was becoming more internationalised, and while Flinders had a strong reputation and a good culture, it had to grow and expand – which meant it had to change if it was going to realise the emerging opportunities.

"This not only meant growing the number of students attending the University, but also reviewing the student experience, the teaching quality and growing our research output, to show that we were investing in the communities we work within."

Mr Gerlach says that his strategy and planning skills across a broad range of national and international businesses – from resources, wine, manufacturing, finance and banking – are attributes that a good Chancellor needs, in addition to building strong relationships with people at all levels of the University, supporting freedom of speech and academic freedom, and ensuring good governance.

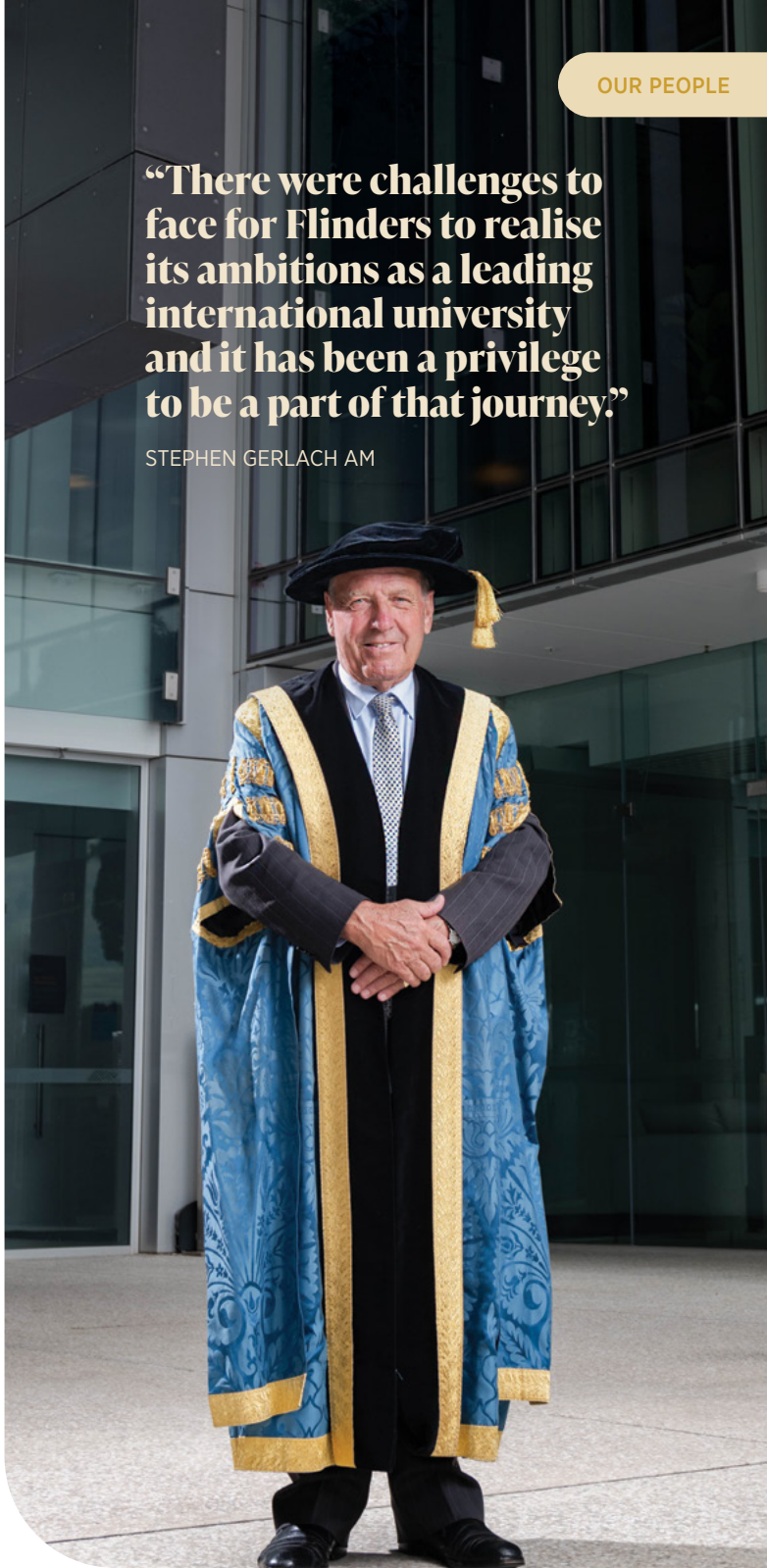
Reflecting on significant changes that have occurred during his almost 14 years at the helm, Mr Gerlach says he is especially proud of Flinders' key role in developing the Tonsley innovation precinct – "a statement that Flinders stands tall in pivotal areas of industry and science" – and its recent surge in research success, with annual research income growing 140% over the past five years to some \$114 million.

He also highlights the continuing work in rural and remote parts of South Australia and the Northern Territory to improve Indigenous health, especially through teaching more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander doctors. "We built it up from modest beginnings and now it continues to grow stronger."

As Chancellor, Mr Gerlach found it especially rewarding to be involved in so many Flinders University graduation ceremonies. "I am so happy and proud to have shaken the hand of so many Flinders graduates, who stand as proof of our outstanding

"There were challenges to face for Flinders to realise its ambitions as a leading international university and it has been a privilege to be a part of that journey."

STEPHEN GERLACH AM



teaching results. I loved witnessing the joy surrounding the first in a family to graduate, and the great celebrations of people from so many different cultures."

Now, as he steps back from the Chancellor's role, Mr Gerlach notes that the new Health and Medical Research Building and city campus at Festival Plaza on North Terrace represent powerful symbols of Flinders University's ambition to continue its trajectory of success. "With its focus on quality in everything it does, Flinders will continue to have a leading role to play in South Australia and the Northern Territory, across Australia and on the international stage."



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