



**Southern
Cross
University**



Southern Cross Matters

February Edition 2026

From the Vice-Chancellor

Dear Colleagues,

It is truly exciting to be able to foreshadow this first edition of Southern Cross Matters for 2026, which you'll notice is in a new and easier to navigate format.

Just as in previous years, you'll find plenty of information about things that are going on in and around our campuses, and that speak to the nature and the impact of the University that we are building together.

There has been so much happening around the University already this year, including some remarkable achievements in research, some milestones with our campus facilities – including for accommodation and teaching & research purposes and a great deal of hard work invested in transitioning hundreds of our units of study to a contemporary, far more powerful learning management system environment.

We've seen really solid demand for our course offerings from domestic and international students alike, and it is genuinely exciting that we will be welcoming so many hundreds of newly commencing students to our campuses for half one orientation in just a few days from now.

We spoke a great deal in 2025 about the deep significance of working creatively and with purpose to ensure that we deliver the best possible experience to these new students, and those who joined us in earlier years – and as I'll explain in the first Vice-Chancellor's Town Hall for 2026 (that you should already have an invitation to), we've had some really encouraging feedback on this in the latest national student experience survey.

We have a real opportunity to keep up the progress in the months that lie ahead and I have really come to believe that the emergence of more and more powerful and accessible

technology is opening up more than ever opportunities to really understand and respond to the needs of our students in dynamic and increasingly personalised ways.

And through building still closer connections to industry and key international partners, we are really creating the conditions in which we can do even more impactful research, and continue to grow our reputation.

Although there are some very real challenges before us and other Australian universities at present, I maintain an enormous sense of optimism at what we can accomplish together this year. Our region is truly dynamic and growing quickly and with our focus on excellence, care, trust, boldness and ownership, we have the capacity to work through periods of volatility and crystallise enduring value for our students, our people and our community.

I hope you really enjoy this first edition for the year, and I do look forward to receiving your ongoing feedback about the topics that are of interest to you for future editions.

Warmest wishes

Tyrone



Sirius Student Accommodation in Lismore during the 2022 floods and after.

Students set to return as Sirius rebuild reaches final stages

After sitting empty since the 2022 floods, Sirius Student Accommodation is nearly ready to welcome students back to Lismore.

The refurbishment, delivered entirely by local trades and suppliers, shows how the University is rebuilding smarter, with more resilient design and improved living spaces for students.

With housing pressure still high across the region, the return of 27 student apartments will make a real difference for students and the wider community. Read more about the rebuild and what it means for Lismore's recovery.

[See our progress](#)



You're invited to join executive leaders and peers across March.

Have you registered for 'One SCU' yet?

The One SCU Roadshow is taking place in March. These in-person sessions are an opportunity to hear more about the University's priorities for the year ahead, how our Employee Value Proposition is shaping staff experience, and how our collective work supports student success and our communities.

Register for the session that suits you best: Gold Coast (17 March) [9am](#) or [1:15pm](#); Lismore (18 March), [9am](#) or [1:15pm](#), and Coffs Harbour (19 March), [9:45am](#).

Spotlight stories



Research focused on improving outcomes for children in the family law system has secured Associate Professor Georgina Dimopoulos a *Discovery Early Career Researcher Award* grant from the Australian Research Council.

[Read more](#)



Innovative research, hard work and supervisor support were acknowledged when PhD candidates Chris Klaas and Muhammad Islami were jointly awarded the *Emeritus Professor Bruce Thom AM Student Research Award*.

[Read more](#)



Tiny organisms living in the bark of trees are quietly helping to purify the air we breathe. Groundbreaking research has revealed their impact on hydrogen, the gas that might be super-charging climate change.

[Read more](#)



Think hypnosis is all stage shows and pocket watches? In an Australian university first, we're launching a professional certificate in clinical hypnosis focused on pain management, anxiety and patient wellbeing.

[Find out more](#)

Excellence in action



Karime (Kimy) Silveira, one of the 2025 Service Excellence award recipients. Full list below.

Congratulations to the recipients of the Vice-Chancellor's Professional Staff Recognition Awards, celebrating exceptional service, innovation and leadership, and a commitment to safety. [Congratulate a colleague.](#)

Creativity and commitment were rewarded with our Organisational Development team taking home four Platinum LearnX Awards for their work supporting staff growth and capability. [Details on the win via LinkedIn.](#)

University updates

Graduate Certificates. We've launched four new Industry Graduate Certificates in Early Childhood Education Leadership, Neurodiversity, Circular Economy and Small Business Management. Find out how these short, practical programs could support professional development for you or your team. [Get in touch.](#)

Gold Coast Marathon. Achieve your health and fitness goals while representing Southern Cross and join Team SCU at this year's Gold Coast Marathon. Staff get 10% off their registration when signing up through SCU. [Sign up.](#)

Nursing scholarship. Know an amazing nurse? Bonnie Boezeman AO Leadership in Nursing Scholarship applications are open until late March. [Application details here.](#)

Law and lunch. You're invited to the inaugural Lunch Law Talk, 2pm, 10 March, Lismore. It's part of a series of topical conversations on contemporary legal issues hosted by Professor David Heilpern with guest speakers from across disciplines. [Find out more.](#)

Discovery goes global. Led by Professor Renaud Joannes-Boyau, a discovery identifying the world's oldest known rock art has attracted significant international attention, reaching an estimated global news audience of nearly five million people, attracting significant international attention to the research. [Read about the rock art.](#)

Better outcomes in maths. Mathematics is often taught in ways which can make students feel like they're 'not any good at maths'. Research Leader of TeachLab and Chair of Teacher Professional Learning, Professor Karen Skilling, focuses on teaching approaches that help change this perception and rebuild confidence in the subject. [Meet Professor Skilling.](#)

International partnership. Milk thistle, tea tree, blueberry, avocado, rice and macadamia research were on the menu as we welcomed academic colleagues from Korea for the combined SCU–Sejong University Plant Science Symposium, part of collaborative efforts to establish deeper partnerships in crop research. [Read about the partnership.](#)

Celebrating student leaders. Dark clouds didn't dampen the celebrations when we welcomed the Gold Coast Secondary Principals Alliance to campus to celebrate their 2026 School Leadership teams this month. That's more than 15 schools' worth of principals and

families, along with the Vice-Chancellor and members of our Student Outreach team, celebrating each and every student leader.

Observing endangered sawfish. Your keen observations could provide information essential to saving critically endangered sawfish. Two of only five species worldwide are being studied at the National Marine Science Centre. [Find out how you can help.](#)



Out and about: The Future Students and Outreach team during annual planning on the Gold Coast.

People and culture

Whether you have questions about your superannuation or want to take a more proactive approach to planning your financial future, UniSuper consultants will be available across all campuses in March, as well as online at any time. Book an appointment or register for webinars on 'Women and Finance', 'Super Fundamentals', and 'Retirement'.

For savings on everyday costs like groceries, fuel, phone bills, fashion, dining and vehicles, SCU partners with Flare. Visit our Flare page to find out more.

Welcome to those who've joined Southern Cross University in recent months:

Letisha Stevenson, Library Technician, Library Experience

Michael Sydes, Senior Manager, Research Impact

Karnika Bansal, Lecturer

Yulin Li, Lecturer in Business (Accounting)

Belinda Davis, Associate Professor

Reshma Musofer, Senior Lecturer

Matt Halper, Professional Experience Coordinator

Ginny Monteiro, Lecturer

Hanh Dao Tran, Lecturer in Nursing

Nnamdi Mgbemena, Lecturer in Physiotherapy

Sepi Jahandideh, Lecturer

Anastasia Ward, Lecturer in Biomedical Sciences

Vanessa Charlton, Senior Technical and Laboratory Officer

Bones Rathbone, Team Leader, Technical & Laboratory Services (Bioscience)

Ronald Webber, Professor of Building Construction Management

Lennard Garcia-de Heer, Research Fellow

Rania Shibl, Professor and Associate Dean Education

Amie Steel, Professor, Naturopathic Medicine

Nicole Steel, Fundraising and Outreach Officer

Callum Willmington, Facilities Officer (Safety & Security)

Angie Thorlund, Senior Manager, Revenue Accounting and Reporting

Rach Besseling, Future Students Officer

Zoe Andrews, Engagement Coordinator

Catherine Jost, Communications Officer

Bala Mohan, Enterprise Architect

Diego da Silva Sanches, Software and Integration Development Principal

Amy O'Reilly, Project Manager

Jayanti Reddy, Application Development & Engineering Principal

Monowar Mukul, Principal Cloud Engineer

Kori Nemme, Learning Advisor

Alex Grantham, Senior Inclusion Support Advisor

Anuradha Colombage, First Year Advisor

Bridie Allan, Inclusion Support Advisor

Have some news to share?

If you have some news or a story idea you'd like to share in an upcoming edition of SCU Matters, email us at content@scu.edu.au.

