



**Southern
Cross
University**

Southern Cross Matters



March Edition 2026

From the Vice-Chancellor

Dear Colleagues,

There is a particular kind of energy that returns to our campuses at this time each year - a mix of noise, life, and a very genuine sense of anticipation for the journey ahead. Seeing so many students arrive for Term 1 orientation across the Gold Coast, Lismore, and Coffs Harbour was a powerful reminder of what we have to offer, and it was so wonderful to see so many of our academic and professional staff engaging with our commencing students with such warmth and care.

How our students begin with us matters so much and from everything I saw as I visited our campuses to welcoming incoming students, we can be genuinely pleased with the foundation we have laid for them.

There has been so much hard work over the summer months to ensure that Term 1 began on such a positive footing, and as I have observed in my Town Hall presentations and in earlier editions of Southern Cross Matters, I continue to see very positive momentum building across the institution. That momentum springs from a clear, shared intent: a belief that we are at our best when we focus on driving excellence and impact through our education and research.

There has been so much going on across all of our campuses this year, but as you will see as you read this month's edition, our Lismore campus has been the focal point for some particularly exciting developments. Welcoming our inaugural veterinary medicine cohort into their new, world-class teaching facilities is a milestone we should all be proud of, along with the re-opening of a beautifully refurbished Sirius College providing accommodation for 60 students have been particular highlights.

I want also to reflect on the spirit of enquiry and collaboration that was so evident in the OneSCU events held across our Gold Coast, Lismore and Coffs Harbour campuses last week.

I want to extend my sincere thanks to the team who worked so hard to make these days happen and to everyone who invested their valuable time to participate. The openness and the generosity with which you shared your insights made the many conversations that flowed across the three days very memorable and valuable.

I hope you really enjoy the content of this month's edition of Southern Cross Matters, that you learn new things about your university and that these are inspiring for you – and helpful when you are speaking with family, friends and community members about the work that we do together at the University.

Warmest wishes

Tyrone



Vice-Chancellor, Professor Tyrone Carlin, with commencing students at Northern Rivers Orientation.

Enrolment numbers up as thousands of new students start their Southern Cross journey

More than 5,000 students have begun their studies for 2026, including the first Veterinary Medicine cohort in Lismore and a new Physiotherapy program on the Gold Coast.

Alongside the new programs, this year's intake also includes a significant number of first-in-family students. Take a look at the numbers shaping the new cohort.

[Find out more](#)



First cohort of Veterinary Medicine students at Northern Rivers campus

Paws-itive start as Veterinary Medicine launches

The first cohort of students in the Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine (Honours) has begun classes at the Northern Rivers campus, with new teaching facilities in U Block officially opened this month by Federal Member for Page, Hon Kevin Hogan MP.

The program launches as many regional communities face growing veterinary workforce shortages, with the new training model designed to help build the next generation of vets in the regions where they are most needed.

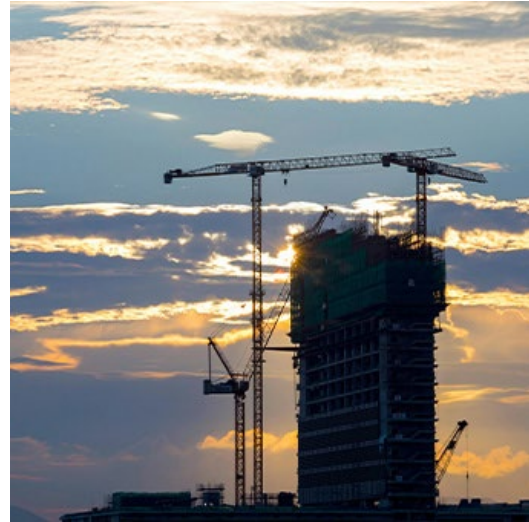
[Find out more](#)

Spotlight stories



A new international study warns the current massive 'broadcast baiting' campaign to tackle Red Imported Fire Ants in Queensland may be doing more harm than good.

[Find out more](#)



Our engineering and building control specialists have helped develop a world-first International Model Building Act, to strengthen accountability and global building regulation.

[Find out more](#)



Chancellor Sandra McPhee AM has a simple message for emerging leaders: back yourself sooner, sharing lessons from her career at a recent International Women's Day leadership event.

[Find out more](#)



Regional mental health services are under increasing strain, but new research is working with frontline social workers to find practical ways to keep them in the communities that need them most.

[Find out more](#)

Excellence in action



Southern Cross University and NSBM Green University representatives at the official launch of the Bachelor of Business in Sri Lanka.

NSBM Partnership goes live. We've formally launched the Bachelor of Business in Sri Lanka with NSBM Green University, a major transnational education partnership showcasing strong bilateral support, bilingual academic access and new pathways.

[Celebrate here.](#)

International Women's Day (IWD). Research ranging from white shark behaviour and environmental change to new approaches in mental health and inclusive healthcare has earned three Southern Cross scholars International Women's Day scholarships. [Read more.](#)

AAUT Citation. Congratulations to our Anatomy and Physiology Curriculum Development Team, who've earned a national AAUT Citation for transforming anatomy and physiology learning. [Share the news.](#)

Solving for sovereign citizens. Associate Professor David Heilpern outlines how growing 'sovereign citizen' activity is clogging courts through pseudo-legal arguments, highlighting an urgent need for action. [Read more.](#)

Addressing the robot in the room. Extending our warm welcome to Adjunct Professor Anne Hardy, The Hotel School, who spoke on CNN, and in print, about AI "hallucinations" in travel planning. [Don't get lost!](#)

University updates

2026 World Surfing Conservation Conference. Held just steps from North Kirra Beach within the Gold Coast World Surfing Reserve, our campus provided an ideal setting for the event. The key takeaway was clear: protecting the world's surf breaks requires evidence-based research, community advocacy, and collective action. [Read more.](#)

Research Futures Scholarship Program. Does an anti-inflammatory diet reduce anxiety, and what is the psychology behind a simple cup of tea? Students in the Research Futures Scholarship Program explored these questions and more as part of a six-week intensive designed to spark the next generation of researchers. [How it's shaping the future.](#)

Hidden Disabilities Sunflower initiative. Some challenges aren't visible but affect daily life, and we're proud to have joined the Sunflower initiative to support, educate and celebrate. [Get involved.](#)

Our Media Centre. Want to know what else we've been up to? [Check our Media Centre.](#)



Out and about: Snapshots from the Outreach team, who travelled 5,980+km to visit 8,670+ high school students - championing regional futures with energy and heart.

People and culture

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

Dr Nayalin Pinho Feller, Lecturer

Declan Forrester, Lecturer in Educational Psychology

Beth Read, Professional Experience Coordinator

Chloe Eastburn, Technical and Laboratory Officer

David Havard, Manager Technical and Laboratory Services

Dr Jess Colton, Research Fellow

Briony Knox, Lecturer

Amie Steel, Professor

Natasha Reddrop, Educational Designer

Tamara Hamilton, Communications Officer

Blake Toohey, Associate Lecturer (Teaching Scholar)

Helen Payne, Workplace Health and Safety Business Partner

Reyna Ruperto, Student Administration Officer

Nicole Li, Student Administration Officer

Carol Azambuja Barbieri, Student Administration Officer

Sonu Dua, Student Administration Officer

Elissa Reibelt, Student Support Officer (Wellbeing)

Dr Zoe Brett, Inclusion Support Officer

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.

